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# RED STAR

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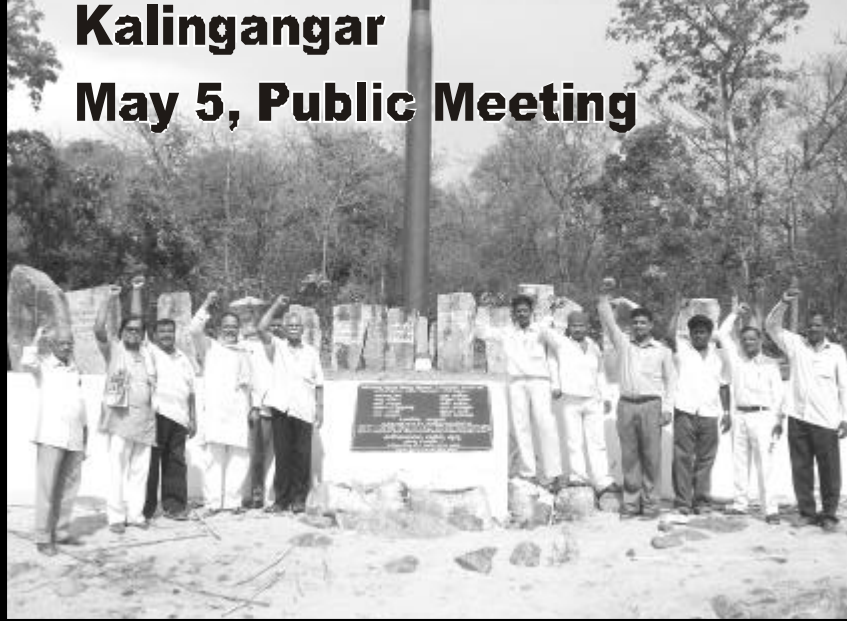
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**Kalingangar**  
**May 5, Public Meeting**



# Odisha: Massive Meeting at Kalinganagar Resolve to Continue Mass Resistance

**S**INCE last 6 years Kalinganagar adivasis are fighting against displacement from their land, village, life and livelihood. In this struggle they sacrificed many things. On 9th May 2005 three adivasis became martyr in police firing in struggle against Maharastra Seamless Company. Again on 2nd Jan 2006 14 adivasis became martyr in police firing. After that Tata company goons killed 2 adivasi leaders of *Bistapan Virodhi Jan Mancha* (BBJM). Since then people of Kalinganagar led by BBJM, Sukinda is struggling restlessly against their forcible eviction and against the loot of iron ores by Tata.

Under Navin Patnaik led state government Odisha has become occupied enclave of Tata like corporate houses and continuing repressive policies against people's movements. Again on 30th March, 2010 thousands of armed police forces forcibly entered their villages in the name of constructing 'common corridor road'. Suddenly entering into Baligotha village they started firing with rubber bullet and chhadra (lead) bullet. House were burnt, rice, paddy and other food items destroyed, killed goats, cocks were taken away, bulls and cows were killed, utensils were destroyed. In this firing more than 30 people including women got injured. Villages were surrounded by armed police forces. Those who are coming out for market, medical, school, college, are arrested. If any guests and relatives are coming to their villages, they are taken to police station, beaten and harassed by keeping them for 3-4 days in illegal custody. No one is able to go for treatment. Without proper treatment around 15 people including children died.

The collector of Jajpur district is working day and night to repress the as the Chief Executive Officer of Tata Company and the Superintendent of Police is working as Chief Security Officer of Tata. They are terrorizing the people. Hundreds of cases are registered against the leaders of the movement. At present 34 people are in jail. Again on 12th May there was police firing in which Laxaman Jamuda died and 25 others injured. The comprador Odisha government with a foul motive is ready to kill the tribals of Odisha in the interests of MNCs and corporate companies.

Against this displacement and repression on the democratic movements of tribals on 5th May at Bamiagotha of Kalinganagar area a massive public meeting was organized. Thousands of tribals with their traditional arms participated (a view of meeting on front page). The public meeting was addressed by CPI(ML) General Secretary com. KN Ramachandran and CPI(ML) Odisha state secretary com. Sivaram including other leaders of various organizations and mass movements. Com. KN

Ramachandran declared full support to the movement of the adivasi people and condemned the repressive measures of government and the globalization policies leading to this situation. In support of Kalinganagar movement and other people's resistance movements of Odisha and of other states, in support of all those who are struggling against imperialist loot and displacement, movements like the ones against Posco, Vedanta, Sterlite, Mittal etc. CPI(ML) declared to observe Nation-wide protest day on 25th May on the Naxalbari day.

To make this call effective, the CPI(ML) Odisha state committee published more than ten thousand leaflets and distributed statewide and prepared all its committees and organizations to observe programme in various forms.■

## State level Convention Against Repression on Mass Movements

**CPI(ML)**, CPI(ML) Liberation, CPI(ML) New Democracy, SUCI(C), Samajbadi Jan Parishad and Lokshakti Abhiyan jointly organized a statewide Gana Convention on 16th May at Lohiya Academy meeting hall, Bhubaneswar against brutal repression by the Navin Patnaik government against Kalinganagar anti-displacement movement and anti-Posco movement. A 6-members presidium including com. Harihar Sahoo, state committee member of CPI(ML) conducted the Convention. Representatives of these 6 organizations and leaders of Posco Pratirodh Sangram Samitii, Tata power plant virodhi movement of Naraj, Katak Jal Surakshya Janmancha, Niyamgiri Surakshya Samiti of Kalahandi, Paschim Odisha Krushak Parishad, Mittal Virodhi Movement of Keonjhar, Basti Surakshya Mancha of Bhubaneswar, Tribal peoples's movements of Sundargarh and various other mass movements and mass organizations participated in Conventions and shared their views. Prominent leaders like Prafulla Samantara, Lingaraj, Udhav Jena, Sivaram, Bhalachandra, Radhakanta Sethy, and senior journalist Prasanta Patnaik, Rabi Das, Chandra Mishra, Scientist Asutosh Parida, Senior advocate Guru Prasad Mohanty spoke. Independent tribal MLA George Tirky and many other professors, intellectuals, poets, writers participated also participated. Convention severely condemned the repression and appealed to the people of Odisha to come to the streets against this repression. This Convention also called to observe statewide protest day on 20th May against this repression. A large number of people beyond the capacity of the hall actively participated in the convention. After the Convention participants took out a silent protest march from Lohiya Academy and reached before state assembly and held demonstration there. ■

# **Manmohan Government Again Surrender to US Dictates on Iran**

**T**HAT the so-called *Vienna Group* consisting of US, Russia, France and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) through its dictates to Iran for transferring its 1200 kg of low enriched uranium to Russia and France or face more stringent sanctions was yet another US-led bullying was abundantly clear. In this situation, the diplomatic initiative of Brazil and Turkey leading to the agreement to transfer this Low Enriched Uranium of Iran to Turkey until its eventual transfer to Russia and France in exchange of 19.55% enriched Uranium rods for Iranian Research Reactor is a positive step forward within the existing global order as it defuses the international tension on this question and prevents US dictates for further sanctions against Iran.

But the Obama administration has arrogantly turned down this Tehran deal arrived at by Iran, Brazil and Turkey. It has again called for imposing new sanctions against Iran with the support of Russia and China. In this way when the US imperialists are trying to impose its dictates with the support of other major imperialist powers, the Manmohan government is siding with the US instead of supporting the Tehran agreement. It is proving that as in all other policy matters it is nothing but a lackey of US imperialism. This policy of shameless surrender to US interests by the UPA government should be unequivocally condemned by all progressive forces. ■

## **On Maoists Blasting of Passenger Bus**

**T**HE blasting of the passenger bus at Dantewada on 17th May evening by the Maoists is the latest action in their petti-bourgeois anarchist approach to revolution, reducing it merely to a militarist one, abandoning the mass line. As a manifestation of this approach they have the illusion that the ever-intensifying state terror can be challenged through such actions and annihilation of so-called 'police informers'. We once again unequivocally condemn these anarchist practices of the Maoists and again appeal to them to abandon this sectarian, adventurist approach which in effect only helps the ruling system to further intensify its imperialist dictated neo-liberal policies and the state terror to suppress the growing people's resistance struggles against them.

The counter-revolutionary consequences of such anarchist actions could be easily understood from the fact that if the 'action' took place at 4.15 PM by 5 PM the hundreds of TV channels had started airing their reactionary analyses against revolutionary struggles reducing all Marxist-Leninist activities and people's resistance movements against displacement and other neo-liberal policies as terrorist, anti-people paranoid, inhuman activities, act against civilians etc. In that bid the fact that half of the passengers in the bus were SPOs, local youth recruited to spread state terror to isolate the Maoists, and many others who had gone for getting recruited as police constables was concealed. Similarly, the atrocities committed for years in the name of *Salwa Judum* in that area were also not even mentioned. Soon the TV channels organised their own kangaroo courts

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with ruling class politicians to judge so that in a short time a consensus was being created for all round ruthless suppressive actions by the state forces including aerial surveillance and assistance by the Air Force. Home minister Chidambaram cleverly sought and obtained favourable opinion for all round intensification of state terror also in the course of these stage-managed 'debates'. Meanwhile the Congress and BJP spokespersons came out with unequivocal support in one voice for all actions taken by the central and state governments to suppress Maoists, meaning their support to state forces to indiscriminately attack all people's struggles in the name of suppressing Maoists.

There was a uniformity of approach by these *Kangaroo courts* in presenting some individuals from any NGO or civil right activist as a whipping object to attack all those who oppose state terror as apologists of the

Maoists. The home minister and ruling class politicians including TV anchor men or women repeatedly sought to show that it is due to the unnecessary noise created by these the annihilation of the 'extremists' are delayed resulting in such attacks on even civilian targets. The attempts by the corporate media, the leaders of ruling class parties and government spokespersons to reduce all opposition to state terror to these NGOs and petti-bourgeois intellectuals and to create public opinion to suppress all people's opposition and resistance against reactionary neo-liberal policies of the central and state governments by dubbing all of them as Maoist activities were once again repeated in a frenzied manner. Under a cloud of sentimentalism and anti-terrorist feeling whipped up utilising this Maoist blast the license to kill the people, to terrorise them, to commit any atrocities against the adivasis and other oppressed peoples, especially against women is granted to the central and state forces. In this manner the central and state governments are creating public opinion to convert the so-called 'Maoist infested areas', in the name of 'reclaiming them', to killing fields for state forces as they have already turned Jammu & Kashmir and the Northeast for the last five decades with immunity.

This vicious, barbarous policy of the anti-people ruling system to perpetuate and intensify the neo-colonial slavery in the name of suppressing Maoists should be uncompromisingly opposed. We condemn the monstrous policy of concealing the horrific atrocities committed by the central and state governments to suppress the numerous people's resistance movements in different parts of the country, whether at Kalinganagar, Psoco, etc. in Odisha or in other states, by the government agents and the corporate media, by whipping up people's sentiments to cloud the real issues. The anarchic, sectarian actions of Maoists should not be allowed to be utilised in order to weaken the people's resistance against the imperialist dictated, anti-people policies of the central and state governments. ■

## On Including Enumeration of Caste in the Census

**T**HE caste system is a reality in India which nobody can just wish away. The first prime minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru had said: "A caste ridden society is not properly secular. When a person's beliefs become petrified in caste divisions, they affect the social structure of the state and prevent us from realising the idea of equality which we claim to place before all else". But neither his government nor the consecutive governments did anything substantively to wipe out this social anomaly, this serious disease. As a result, even after allowing the SCs/STs reservation in local bodies at numerous places, the dalits are not allowed to function as *sarpanchs* or in other positions. The caste based atrocities still persist barbarously, sometimes in newer forms in spite of many economic,

social and political changes. Neither the SCs/STs reservation nor the OBC reservations following the acceptance of the *Mandal Commission Report* has made any significant improvement in the casteist divisions, casteist oppression and atrocities against the lower castes or in the superstitions, beliefs, customs etc. including the *khap panchayat* dictates like atrocities.

So, as the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are enumerated in the census, if the enumeration of other castes and sub-castes which was stopped after 1931 census is re-started in the present ongoing census there is nothing wrong in it. It will help to find out the present strength of various castes and sub-castes enabling the determination of those in the SCs, STs and OBC categories. It will also help to find out how many people have rejected their enumeration in one or other caste also. So the hue and cry created by a section of the media and the upper caste elite sections against introduction of enumeration based on caste as if it will further encourage the caste based division and casteist hierarchies is meaningless. It is a repetition of the same alarmist propaganda let loose by these sections while the Mandal Commission Report was adopted and the reservation for OBCs was introduced.

But contrary to the hue and cry of these elite, upper caste sections two factors call for serious consideration. Firstly, it is not out of any anti-caste sentiment or anxiety to know about the present caste based divisions or to eliminate the caste based oppression the UPA government has accepted this

proposal on the last day of the budget session of the parliament. It is to appease the casteist lobby of Mulayam, Lalu, Sharad Yadav like forces who along with BSP and JMM bailed out the government while the opposition moved the cut motion on price rise, and helped it to present US-dictated *Nuclear Liability Bill* in the Lok Sabha, this proposal was adopted. Secondly, neither Congress, and other UPA constituents, nor the caste based parties including BSP like parties nor BJP which is advocating caste based enumeration for last so many years have any intention to take forward a campaign to annihilate the medieval, barbarous caste system and the inequalities based on it. On the contrary, all of them promote caste divisions and rely on caste based vote bank in varying degrees. An enumeration based on caste is not going to be utilised for a progressive attack on the caste system and all caste based oppressions, but its

findings are going to be utilised to divide the people further based on caste.

The progressive forces should be vigilant against the pernicious intentions of all these reactionary parties. They should uncompromisingly struggle against the caste system, starting with the struggle against caste-based oppression in all forms. ■

## *May Day Observed with revolutionary spirit*

### **May Day Campaign in Karnataka**

**THE** Trade Union Centre of India (TUCI) Karnataka state committee effectively observed the 124th world workers day on 1st May 2010. More than ten thousand leaflets were published and propagated from April middle calling for state-wide observation of May Day. Campaign was organised in Bangalore city, Raichur, Koppal, Chikmagalur, Gadag, Bellary, Kodagu and other districts. Leaflets explained the great historical working class movements and challenges before the workers today. TUCI and Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages workers' union and Herebagnal contract workers union jointly organized big rally at Koppal district headquarter. Huge procession with red caps wearing women workers and drum sets of Jana Sanskritik Sangha (JSS) reached the venue of public meeting at Ashok circle. There red flag was hoisted and martyr comrades of working class movement were remembered. TUCI state president DH Poojar addressed the rally.

**RAICHUR:** May Day was observed in all talukas of Raichur district like Lingsugur Raichur, Sindhanur, Manvi,

Devadurga and Hatti gold mines (Lingsugur taluk). Rally and public meetings were organised in the heart of the towns and city. TUCI state secretary Chinnappa Kotriki, district president Shakeel Husen Basha and other leaders addressed them. Comrade R Manasayya called on the workers to fight against imperialism and neo-colonial exploitation.

**CHIKMAGALUR:** TUCI Chikmagalur district committee organized the May Day rally. TUCI State vice president KN Ramesh, C Jagadeesh, Rukmini, Annappa addressed the public meeting. Coffee garden workers, Malenadu timber workers, construction workers, Auto-rickshaw drivers participated in the public meeting. ■

### **May Day: Bengali Organ Uttran Released**

**MAY DAY** 2010 was observed by the State Organising Committee of CPI(ML) West Bengal through a convention held at Bharat Sabha Hall, Kolkata. The topic was 'Build up a revolutionary alternative of workers and peasants; Resist the ruling class in the electoral arena too'. The main speaker at the convention was party general secretary Comrade



K.N. Ramchandran. He emphasized the importance of rejecting revisionism on one hand and the anarchist line followed by the Maoists on the other and practise a correct revolutionary line with due import to parliamentary struggle. Other speakers included West Bengal state secretary Comrade Alik Chakroborty, Comrade Sumanta Das and Comrade Ajoy Bera (erstwhile CPIM leader from Arambagh in Hooghly district). The first issue of the Bengali organ of the West Bengal State Committee – *Uttaran* – was also released on the occasion. ■

### UP: Kanpur Gharelu Mahila Kamgar Union's Militant May Day Rally

**THE** May Day was observed in a very militant way at Kanpur with thousands of members of *Gharelu Mahila Kamgar Union*, members of other unions of unorganized workers and large number of unemployed participating in it raising revolutionary slogans and waving hundreds of red flags. After assembling at Baradevi Jangleshwar Ramlila Ground the workers marched many kilometers to Geeta Nagar Vikas bhavan where the mass dharna started addressed by the secretary of GMKU com. Meenu Sur, its president com. Rajendri Devi, CPI(ML) state secretary com. Mona Sur, TUCI leader com. Vijayshankar, AIKKS president com. Satyapal and other leaders of the Party and trade unions.

All the speakers compared the condition of workers even 4-5 decades before to their miserable condition today. Workers in every section, especially the vast majority compelled to work under contract system and among them especially the women workers are subjected to unprecedented exploitation and suppression of all rights. Only by getting organized in ever larger numbers and uncompromisingly fighting against the neo-liberal policies imposed ruthlessly even the minimum demands can be achieved. All the speakers reflecting the mood of the militant slogans continuously raised called for bringing back the revolutionary spirit of May Day movement to fight for the emancipation of the workers in all respect. ■



### Rajasthan: May Day at Ganganagar

**WORKERS** from sugar factory and unorganised workers from different sectors participated in the May Day rally and public meeting at Ganganagar in front of the TUCI office near the Sugar Mill. It was addressed by com. Mahesh Maharshi, Syam Sundar, Mahendra Pal, Sarvesh Singh, Asha Devi and Kamla. All the comrades called for intensifying the struggle against anti-working class policies of central and state governments. ■

### Jharkhand: May Day Dharna at Ranchi

**HUNDREDS** of workers participated in the May Day rally through main streets of Ranchi culminating with a mass dharna. The workers including large number of women raised militant slogans demanding putting an end to neo-liberal policies and contract system. Rally was addressed by TUCI general secretary com. Sanjay Singhvi and Anjani Kumar and leading comrades of TUCI. ■

### MP: Contract Workers Rally at Sidhi

**THE** May Day was observed at Sidhi district headquarter in which comrades from different parts of the district participated. Com. Badri Prasad, TUCI central committee member, com. Guruprasad, CPI(ML) district secretary and other comrades addressed the meeting calling on working class to intensify struggle against contract system. At Bhopal, May Day was observed at Gandhinagar slum area with rally and public meeting. Public meeting was addressed by com. Vijay, general secretary of RYFI, com. Rajesh, district secretary of CPI(ML) and Laxman of Jan Ekta Manch. ■

### Chhattisgarh: May Day Observed at Jagadalpur and Durg

**BASTAR:** The May Day rally organised by TUCI, Bastar district committee along with AICCTU starting from Star Petrol Pump at Jagadalpur went round the main streets and culminated at City Ground where the public meeting was held. Hundreds of workers participating in the rally raised militant slogans hailing May Day, called for unity of working class at international level against imperialism and





its lackeys, called for kicking out imperialist globalisation and for fighting Operation Green Hunt and other black laws.

The public meeting was addressed by comrades Soura Yadav, CPI(ML) state secretary, Tejram, AIKKS state secretary, Chandrashekhhar Dhruv, AIKAM state secretary, Gopaldhar of AICCTU and leaders of TUCI. All the speakers emphasised on intensifying working class struggles to end the anti-people ruling system.

**DURG:** the TUCI district committee organised the public meeting at main bus stand. Comrades Bharat Bhushan Pandey, TUCI state president, Adv. Dilip Ingle, Ramratan Kaushal, Jynesh Dubey and others addressed the workers rally calling for recreating the revolutionary May Day spirit. ■

### Tamilnadu: May Day Observed

**AT** Chennai on May 1<sup>st</sup> red flag was hoisted by by TN state committee member Kalan Durai amidst militant slogans. On May 2<sup>nd</sup> a public meeting was organised at MGR Nagar. The Meeting was organized by TUCI Chennai committee. At Kanyakumari the May Day programme was held as hall meeting. TUCI State President com. Palraj addressed the comrade explaining the tasks before working class. In Coimbatore May day was observed on May 9<sup>th</sup>. TUCI committee organized a public meeting to uphold the May Days' revolutionary orientation. Meeting was addressed by com. Moorthy, RYFI state secretary Vellimalai and TUCI state secretary Balasubramanian. ■

### Maharashtra: Rallies at Silvassa and Bhivandi

**MAHARASHTRA** state committee of TUCI organised May Day rally at Silvassa (Dadra Nagar Haveli) in which nearly one thousand workers from various factories participated. The factory owners who are leaving Mumbai city are developing this area fast in to an industrial centre employing tens of thousands of workers, exploiting them more than ever. Speakers called for intensifying the struggles to capture their rights.

At Bhivandi in Thane district about 1500 workers participated in the May Day rally, drawn from various



industrial units and belonging to construction worker. The rally through main industrial areas culminated in a public meeting addressed by TUCI leaders. ■

### Kerala: May Day Programmes

**TUCI** district committees organised May Day programmes in Wynad and Ernakulam with *Prabhat Pheri* and demonstrations, while at Kozhikode and Trichur demonstrations and public meetings were held. Com TC Subramanian inaugurated the public meeting at Kozhikode and com. Sivaraman at Trichur. The May Day campaign focussed its attack on imperialist dictacted neo-liberal policies and called on the working class to get organised to throw out the reactionary ruling system. ■

### AP: May Day Rally at Hyderabad

**THE** TUCI, AP state organizing committee and the South Regional Committee of All India Nepali Ekta Samaj (Mool Pravah) jointly organized May Day programme at Hyderabad with a well attended rally and public meeting addressed by leaders of both organizations. The participants marched from P. Sundarayya Park to Ram Nagar Chowrasta to Bagh Lingampally. Besides TUCI SOC secretary com. GV Narayan Gowd and Mool Pravah leader com. Praveen Poudel, com. Mallepally Prabhakar, SOC secretary of CPI(ML) and com. Padmakka, convener of SOC of AIRWO also addressed the public meeting.

Speakers pointed out how all the rights won through a century of struggles were snatched away under neo-liberal policies and millions of workers are thrown out of jobs. In SEZs, under contract system and *hire and fire* policy the exploitation of workers have intensified many times. The organized sector is weakened day by day and contract system is fleecing the workers, depriving them all democratic rights. The 8-hour work demand of May Day struggles are not even heard now-a-days. In this situation the May Day spirit of the first half of 20th century should be rekindled. All the speakers called for militant struggles and politicization of the working class to reverse the present reactionary trends and to once again march forward with revolutionary May Day spirit. ■



**I**T WAS on the 17th August night in 1998 comrade Souren Bose left us following a massive heart attack at Mumbai. He had gone to Mumbai for a seminar on rebuilding the Marxist-Leninist movement and to attend a study class of Party activists. As comrade Sanjay Shinghvi and other comrades with him in the flat he was staying stated, he was happy about the programmes and had talked about the need to intensify the offensive in the ideological field and to carry forward Party re-organisation. He had to leave next day morning when his death happened. He lived the life of a revolutionary till his last day, inspiring the comrades through his activities.

When the inner-party struggle started developing within the CPI(M) following its 7th Congress in 1964 under the leadership of com. Charu Majumdar in West Bengal, especially in Darjeeling district committee, along with coms. Kanu Sanyal, Jangal Santhal and others com. Souren Bose was also in the forefront as a district committee member. He played a significant role with others in mobilising the landless-poor peasants of Naxalbari area for the great uprising of 1967. In organising *Naxalbari Krishak Sangram Sahayak Samiti* and later in the formation of *All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries* also his role was significant. Wanted by the police he had gone underground. Following 1968 Burdwan Plenum when the neo-revisionist line of CPI(M) was fully exposed in its approach to *Great Debate* against Soviet revisionism and through the functioning of the United

# In Memory of Comrade Souren Bose

K.N. Ramachandran

Front government in West Bengal which refused to go for revolutionary land reforms and suppressed Naxalbari uprising, along with comrades Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, Sushital Roychoudhary and a large number of CPI(M) members he had left CPI(M) paving the way for formation of the AICCCR.

In the ideological struggle that took place within it for the formation of the CPI(ML), he was with com. CM and when it was formed on 22nd April 1969 he was among its front ranking comrades. When the 8th Party Congress took place in 1970 he was elected to the polit bureau of the Central Committee. Soon he was assigned with the responsibility of going to China for a discussion with the CPC along with two other comrades. Though both of them could not reach China, he reached and held detailed discussions with leading comrades like Chou-Enlai and Kang Sheng and briefly could meet Mao Tsetung before his departure. He succeeded to return safely and give the report of his discussions to com. Charu Majumdar. But soon he was arrested. He was charged with com. Kanu Sanyal and others in the Parvathipuram Conspiracy case and spend long years in Visakhapatnam and other jails till 1978 when he was released after the CPI(M)-led ministry came to power following the revocation of emergency rule.

After his arrest in 1971, in the jail he also became critical of com. CM for not convening the CC and presenting the CPC suggestions for discussion. He also signed the letter of the six leading comrades from jail calling for a rectification of mistakes including the pursuit of annihilation line. In spite of these criticisms, unlike com. Kanu Sanyal, he did not denounce com. CM or the formation of the CPI(ML). So when he came out of the jail he did not join hands with all those who denounced com. CM alone for the severe setbacks suffered by the movement and the formation of CPI(ML). At the same time, even while maintaining comradely relations with all the CPI(ML) groups and other Communist Revolutionary organisations, he did not join any of them. He remained active in the *Prisoners' Release Committee* and in the struggle for democratic rights. After 1990 for 4-5 years he became the president of IFTU, the trade union front led by CPI(ML) New Democracy, but did not join ND. He was in search of an ideological-political line overcoming the weaknesses of the line adopted by the CPI(ML) in its 1970 Congress.

It was in 1994 I could meet com. Souren Bose for the first time in his DumDum house where he was staying with a sister and her son. His wife had died earlier and he had no children. Thereafter I became a regular visitor to his house. Though I was in West Bengal from 1968-'72 working in Farakka Barrage Project and was a firm supporter of the communist revolutionary forces, I was not directly involved in the movement. I was only assisting it as a supporter. By 1972 immediately after Charu Majumdar's martyrdom when I took the decision to resign the job and to become a full time activist of the CPI(ML) going back to Kerala, most of the senior comrades were either killed by the state forces or were in jail. So I could not meet any of them.

Similarly after the emergency was withdrawn when from Kerala committee of the CPI(ML) we decided to meet the senior comrades who had come out of jail, our line that relations should be established only with those forces and individuals

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who have denounced the capitalist roaders in China who had usurped power there and their *Theory of Three Worlds* and who have a positive approach to 'Charu Majumdar's revolutionary line' created obstacles for meeting and holding discussions with many of the comrades who had come out of jail, but had different approaches to Party reorganisation. Besides, the entry of com. SA Rawoof, a veteran comrade from AP with die-hard sectarian positions to CRC, CPI(ML) and he continuing in CPI(ML) Red Flag later till 1998 played the major role of a dampener in taking a creative approach to Party reorganisation even after 1982 Conference initiated an in-depth discussion on the concrete situation at international and national level. Com. Rawoof and those pursuing his line had created obstacles to contact comrades like Souren Bose whom they had dubbed as revisionist.

My first meeting with com. Souren Bose itself was very positive. I found him entirely different from com. Rawoof. He was ready to come out with full details of his experience in 1960s and 1970s in a self-critical manner. Though he was critical of the line pursued under the leadership of com. CM, he did not put CM entirely responsible for it as some others were doing. Similarly he upheld formation of CPI(ML) as a historic step forward. By that time he had already come to the understanding that the Dengists had degenerated China to capitalist path and it is no more a socialist country. Though he had attended a few programmes organised by some of his close friends who were working in NGOs or NGO-like organisations, he was very much critical of them. Similarly though he had participated in a programme organised by *Narmada Bachao Andolan*, he was critical of the stand taken by Medha Patkar and criticised it as an NGO stand which ultimately serve the ruling system.

In the course of discussion, the CPI(ML) Red Flag's understanding about the dissolution of the Comintern, the need to reorganise the Comintern, the erroneous stand of obliterating the contradiction between imperialism and socialism from among the fundamental contradictions at international level, the transformation of imperialist plunder from colonial to neo-colonial forms in the post-World War II period, the counter-revolutionary nature of the 'de-colonisation' or transfer of power to imperialist *dalals* in the colonial countries and the changes that took place in India after 1947 under neo-colonisation were taken up and by 1996 com. Souren Bose almost came to agreement with the 'Red Flag' line. He agreed to become part of the CPI(ML) Red Flag and a West Bengal state organising committee was formed under his leadership. In 1996 he participated in a three-day discussion in Kerala on the changes that had taken place in the agrarian sector following the imperialist dictated 'land reforms from above' including land ceiling acts and the *Green Revolution*. Based on this discussion an approach paper for building a revolutionary agrarian movement was drafted with his participation. In drafting the international document adopted by the Fourth All India Conference (republished in Vol. 2 of *The Marxist-Leninist*) of CPI(ML) Red Flag in 1997 also he played an important role.

In the 1997 Fourth All India Conference process com. Souren Bose actively participated. The sectarian line put forward by com. Rawoof on all questions were overwhelmingly defeated. Com. Souren Bose was elected to the new Central Committee and its Central Executive Committee. In spite of his advanced age, he started actively participating in the ideological-political offensive and organisational activities. He visited many states as a part of it. He addressed a well attended seminar in JNU City Centre at Delhi in 1998 beginning on *Post-War Changes in Imperialist Plunder and Marxist-Leninist Approach to Them* also. It was in the course of these activities he had gone to Mumbai and he departed creating a big loss to the revolutionary movement.

The difference between com. Souren Bose and most of the those veterans of

1960s who have left us or who are still living is that unlike them when he found the *semi-feudal, semi-colonial/protracted people's war* frame of the Chinese path mechanically copied by the CPI(ML) in 1969 under the influence of the left sectarian line which had come to dominance in the CPC during its 9th Congress in the name of Mao including the *new era* concept is contrary to the concrete conditions at international and national level, he had no hesitation to reject them and join CPI(ML) Red Flag which was trying to develop the Party Programme, Strategy and Tactical line based on the new understanding about imperialist plunder. He used to say that within the jail and after coming out of it he had started questioning the line pursued by CPI(ML) from its formative period. He was trying hard to arrive at a new perspective of Marxism-Leninism according to present conditions. "Since I have got it now I shall work with full spirit".

It is a matter of great significance that unlike many others he did not surrender himself as a prisoner of the old frame of thinking mechanically copied as Chinese path which caused havoc to the movement. It is a great misfortune that he could not play a leading role in developing the Marxist-Leninist understanding and practice for long. The whole Party should observe **August 17 as comrade Souren Bose Day** taking up programs to highlight the ideological-political line put forward by the 2009 All India Special Conference of CPI(ML) through the four basic documents. ■

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# ***Be United on the Question of Muivah's Visit to Manipur***

*[We are reproducing below the statement of Committee for Peace and Democracy in Manipur (CPCM) issued on 5th May, 2010 to understand the situation created there after the proposed visit of Muivah, general secretary of NSCN - Red Star]*

**T**HE proposed visit of the General Secretary of NSCN(IM) to Manipur from 3 to 10 May 2010 has invoked severe unrest and tension in Manipur. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had earlier acknowledged the proposed visit and had shown green signal. However, with the subsequent rise of opposition the MHA have changed the signal colour to red. Preventive measure to ban entry of Muivah to Manipur is being stage managed by the Manipur government on the border areas of Senapati and Ukhrul Districts. Whereas Naga based civil societies have sought for the entry of Muivah to Manipur, several non-Naga based civil societies have strongly boycotted to it. Supporters to Muivah's visit have imposed economic blockades to Manipur and other forms of protest. The situation may turn out to be violent and may culminate into communal conflict if not handled in an amicable manner. The CPDM, in its press statement, dated 5 May 2010, would like to share thought about its interpretation and ideological stand point on the issue.

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## **Legality or illegality of Muivah's visit to Manipur**

The Government of India (GoI) and NSCN-IM are under certain formal agreements and, therefore, legality or illegality within the framework of India's law regarding the general secretary of NSCN-IM Thuingaleng Muivah's proposed visit to Manipur is being preconditioned by the provisions of the agreement. Many are being kept in the dark about terms of references mentioned in such agreement between GoI and NSCN-IM; and yet the lifting of ban imposed upon NSCN-IM would logically imply for Muivah's right to freely move in any areas where the Indian constitution is being practically enforced. Manipur being strictly bound by the Indian laws, if the law grants, Muivah has the right to enjoy all the rights that are being enjoyed by every Indian citizen. No citizen of Manipur who is loyal to the Indian constitution has legal legitimacy to boycott Muivah from either entering into Manipur or carrying out his activity on the basis of adherence to the norms and prescriptions within the framework of the Indian law.

## **We would like to encourage Muivah to visit Manipur for the following reasons:**

(1) Muivah has grown up in Manipur and he had missed Manipur for several years. He is a human being who loves to visit his home, meet his relatives and dear ones. We would not oppose anyone visiting his home on humanitarian ground.

(2) Muivah should be allowed to visit his base areas and deal with the ugly trend of class formation and class contradiction not only among the ranks and files of his cadres but also among the Naga population that had posed a serious challenge to peace & democracy. He should also be given a chance to study and rethink if his proclaimed Christian Socialism would be able to bring practical solution to the communal crisis among the communities constituting the overarching *Nagahood*.

(3) Muivah should be allowed to visit every part of Manipur and interact with various sections of the people and be an eye witness to internal dynamics that had been fast developing towards a stage of interdependence and interaction among co-existing communities. Should an exclusive *Nagalim* be possible against the objective realities of internal and external dynamics have to be decided on the basis of objective realities, and he must be allowed to see it.

(4) Since the Naga question in Manipur directly or indirectly invokes sentiment and would have material impact upon other communities, it can only be resolved through understanding and cooperation among co-existing communities. If Muivah represents Naga politics he is the legitimate person to broaden the horizon of campaign for support among the Meeteis (including the Meetei Panggal), Kukis / Thadous, Paites, and other communities who do not subscribe to his political ideology. He should be allowed to speak to the Manipur public and at the same time he must also respond to several questions in public appearance.

## **We have reservations with the protest against Muivah's visit to Manipur for the following reasons:**

(1) The territorial integrity of Manipur cannot be disintegrated as long as material condition of co-existence founded on the practical basis of interdependent

mode of production and distribution among the people cutting across community & administrative boundaries prevails above mechanical divisive politics. Territorial area could be expanded or reduced or fluctuating or totally extinct or newly emerged depending upon the changing material relation among communities. The material relation that forges psychological unity among communities would promote voluntary unionism and it is the precondition for territorial integrity. Right of self determination of other communities and rights of secession have to be recognised on the condition that such secessionist claim is not chauvinistic and territorial secession do not affect the physical survival and economic livelihood of co-existing communities.

(2) If the fear for Muivah's visit to Manipur is based on the thinking that he would be able to disintegrate Manipur along communal lines then the whole articulation about 2000 years integrity of Manipur become self-defeating. Leaders are not to become effective upon a community of people by sheer articulation of idealism. No political rhetoric or propaganda could permanently divide people nor disintegrate territory if the material relation among co-existing communities is based on economic cohesion and other socio-cultural bonding.

(3) Neither durable peace could be established by imposing a version of territorial integrity nor could chauvinistic approach achieve a practical peaceful solution to any integrity question. An open confrontation with communal organization renders the politics of opposition communal. Campaign for protest would generate communal sentiment, would organize people along communal lines and illustrates reservation to the possibility of dialogue and consensus. Such open confrontation would act as surrogate to the articulation of dichotomy theory and the entire episodes of protest would be summed up in constituting a history of communal confrontation.

#### **Safety valve policy of the government centred on Muivah**

However, the sequences of events such as the Union Minister of Home Affairs' instruction to the DGP of Manipur to arrange security for Muivah's visit, the programme list of Muivah's public meeting delivered by the MHA, MHA's advice to Muivah to cancel his trip to Manipur; the Manipur state cabinet decisions, deployment of forces, flag marches, imposition of curfews and other preventive measures in Senapati and Ukhrul districts to prevent Muivah from visiting Manipur; all these sequences of overlapping events which have created communal unrest in Manipur seemed to be a fallout of well prepared political manoeuvring aimed at dividing public opinion on the issue of territorial integrity or disintegration, invoking communal sentiment, diverting attention from the burning economic issues, and also to win sympathy and trust for Manipur police and Ibobi government from amongst certain sections of the residents in the valley districts hitherto indifferent towards Ibobi government and state terrorism.

#### **Who have benefitted from the economic blockades and who are the losers?**

Economic blockades on the national highways and setting ablaze of stranded goods laden trucks have benefitted the material interest of the blockade supporters. It does not affect the economy of the entrepreneurs and the upper class in Manipur. The truck owners would receive compensation from the insurance company or increase the price of fare to recover the loss; the business entrepreneurs at varying levels would increase the retail price of the goods; the corrupt government servants, contractors, political leaders, doctors, lawyers and so on would have means to increase their income. But the majority of peasants and workers at the receiving end who have no means to increase their income are the worst affected section in course of artificial price rise due to blockades and destruction of goods. Therefore the political economy of blockades and

destruction of consumer goods has class implication and it is characteristically anti-poor.

#### **Who have benefitted from the ongoing security built up at the border?**

Over the last few years the moral legitimacy of the SPF Government under the leadership of Okram Ibobi have been seriously challenged and shattered beyond recovery. State terrorism, economic crisis, displacement policies, corruption, and administrative failure have generated a situation of unrest. Severe forms of protests have been carried out by various sections against the government. Coincidentally most of the powerful populist protests were urban based and largely organised in the thickly populated valley districts of Manipur dominantly inhabited by those who believe in defending the territorial integrity of Manipur. Since the integrity question is both imaginative and emotive Ibobi seems to have instrumentalised the issue of integrity in order to divert public attention. He colluded with the central government in building up security measures in the Senapati and Ukhrul areas on the pretext of preventing Muivah from entering into Manipur. The flag march, frisking of civilian & Assam Rifles vehicles by Manipur Police Commandos, and their bunkers were being telecast in local TV channels. Such stage managed plot could have visual - psychological impact upon majority of the population who are motivated to take side with him on the issue of integrity. All these were aimed at recovering the image of

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the Manipur Police Commandos and depiction of Ibobi's own image as a patriot who would dare to confront with central govt. in defending Manipur. Is he campaigning in advance for the proposed general election in 2012?

### **Who have benefitted from communal campaigns and who are the losers?**

Communal campaigns would culminate in the creation of communal leaders and strengthen their narrow politics. Subsequent counter-productive and sectarian campaigns could lead to communal clash. Over the last 18 years some of the events that are being technically referred to as Naga-Kuki conflict 1992-96, Meetei-Meetei Panggal conflict 1993, Kuki-Paite conflict in 1997-98, Moreh Killing of 2007, Meetei- Naga tension since 1997 and so on had shown to us that all those events had killed civilians, displaced several marginal peasants, destroyed properties, and created tension and unrest. Communal leaders had not targeted the oppressive & exploitative system towards a revolutionary change. They are either sponsored by the state or part of the ruling class or worked in collusion with the ruling class to fulfil their self interest.

All that the communal leaders do is undermining of the growth of class consciousness by articulating communal propaganda. They carry out psychological propaganda against other communities, charged other communities as responsible for unrest and poverty, and they asserted themselves to the level of communal leader to gain power and material

benefit in the name of community growth. Conflicts are being hatched up by communal protagonists and its price is being heavily paid by the vulnerable sections that would never benefit from communal politics. Does the communal leaders has any clear cut political-economic programmes to adequately address the issue of subjugation, oppression and exploitation of lower class community members by the ruling class in their respective communities? The ruling class of all communities are common in character and their overall reactionary policy irrespective of communal boundaries perpetuates class rule.

### **What is the role of the Indian state and who has succumbed to its policy?**

Sixty two (62) years of imposition of Indian capitalist path of development in Manipur have contributed not only in the rise of communalism but also geometrical rise in the number of Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs), proletariat and marginal cultivators who may statistically be grouped in the category of below poverty line. Whereas class consciousness that could have united the democratic forces against class rulers is being deliberately withheld from being articulated, leaders who benefitted from perpetuating class rule within communities are negating historical materialism but articulating projected sovereignty and territorial integrity of their concerned communities in such a way that such articulations are mixed up with communal stereotyping and created a situation of unrest among co-existing communities from time to time.

While the Indian state have been colonial in character; the political economy of the rebelling national chauvinists as apparent in economic blockades, extortions or taxation along highways and from comprador bourgeoisie, community cleansing and terror in varied forms which have adverse impact upon the physical survival and economic livelihood of people who live by daily physical labour or who are at the vulnerable areas is symptomatic of bourgeois nationalism. Making of Muivah into either a heroic or devilish icon centred on his proposed visit to Manipur would be the handiwork of communal protagonists of either sides who aimed at promoting class rulers by raising communal banner to temporarily divert attention from class question. Such politics could merely sidetrack the fundamental issues of impoverishment, insecurity, displacement of the peasants and workers who constituted the majority of the bulk of the subjugated, exploited and oppressed sections in Manipur. We condemn it.

### **To the workers and peasants of Manipur**

The bulk of the peasants and workers in Manipur who are subjugated, oppressed and exploited have nothing to gain from the politics centred on Muivah. Blind belief in communal propaganda would create communal wedge among your class and this would strengthen the pre-existing slavery and impoverishment that is being superimposed upon you. Let Muivah come and go as per his wishes. If he is the friend of workers and peasants he would definitely call for unity of the subjugated and oppressed cutting across community boundaries. If he is a part of the ruling class he is like any other comprador bourgeoisie who would enjoy a big material share from the Indian bourgeoisie at your expense. Do not believe in the commandos to protect you as it constitutes the backbone that defends the corrupt system that subjugates you.

Do not believe in the bourgeois political leaders who are always having double standard in dealing with your cause. They enjoy power and their class policy ruins your livelihood in the long run. But your future lies in the unity of the nationalities under your leadership against any form of colonial regime and exploitation. Unless you fight against the existing ruling system for a democratic change there can be no peace, development and unity. Fight for your respective democratic rights would be victorious only when there is unity of the subjugated, oppressed and exploited within and beyond your community boundary. ■

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## ***UPA Government at Centre and Ibobi Government in the State Are Responsible for Worsening Manipur Situation***

**A**N INDEFINITE economic blockade by various Naga tribal groups from April 11 demanding amendment of Manipur Autonomous District Council Act and the Manipur government's decision not to allow NSCN leader Thuingaleng Muivah to visit his birthplace has literally brought the state to a halt. Hundreds of trucks carrying essentials and medicines were stranded in the adjoining state of Nagaland with protesters laying a siege on National Highway 39 — the lifeline of Manipur — to protest the state government's decision not to allow Muivah, general secretary of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), to visit his birthplace in Ukhrul district, about 220 km from Mao Gate. The blockade has resulted in acute shortage of food, medicine and other essential commodities in the state and very soon the entire life support system in the state would collapse. A litre of petrol is selling at Rs.200, a cooking gas cylinder for Rs.1,500, while a kilogram of rice is selling at Rs.60 to Rs.70.

NH-39 is the principal highway from the rest of India into the State. NH-53 (the New Cachar Road) linking Cachar in Assam to Imphal is another lifeline, though it is longer and less preferred. There is yet another point of entry, going all the way into Mizoram and entering Churachandpur district. The uniqueness of the political geography of the State is that Manipur is at the end of a receiving chain of roads, and on the edge of the periphery of the Indian state. Most essential goods come into Manipur; few goods considered essential by the rest of the country leave it. Blockade of highways leading into and out of Manipur, which has become a routine phenomenon, only hurts the State, not the rest of the country. Blockades of Manipur do not inspire sense of urgency to the government.

The government of India which had forcefully integrated Manipur in 1949 to Indian union is pursuing a policy of allround suppression by imposing AFSPA in order to provide the occupying Indian military and para-military forces along with the police commando forces of the state government run by representatives of the elite classes of the state unlimited powers. But when it comes to providing essential commodities to the people, to maintain a regular surface transport to the state, it is least concerned.

The CPI(ML) Manipur state organizing committee has called on the people of Manipur to strongly protest against the fascist policies of occupation by the central government which is not bothering to provide even most urgently required essential commodities at reasonable prices to the people.

In a statement issued by Central Committee of CPI(ML) on 21st May it is stated that the latest flare up of tension along Manipur-Nagaland border has led to cutting off of all road links to Manipur and to unprecedented miseries to the people through intensified state repression and the trading of all essential commodities going to black market. From the experience of past decades the central government could easily evaluate that without taking initiative to resolve the contending issues, at least to start a dialogue between the states, it is extremely dangerous to plan a visit of Mr. Muivah, the leader of NSCN to his native village in Manipur. In spite of it, by encouraging such a visit the central government has committed the grave crime of deepening the fissures between the two states in line with the 'divide and control' policy the consecutive governments are pursuing from 1947 following the footsteps of British

colonialists. The Congress-CPI led state government, instead of trying to find an amicable solution to ease the dangerous situation, played its own pernicious game of intensifying the divide by encouraging chauvinist actions to consolidate its power.

As a result, it is the vast masses of Manipuri people whether Meeteis, tribals or others who are suffering. Their free movements are restricted. Workers are not getting jobs. Hospitals have no medicine and even oxygen cylinders. And the people have no food as they cannot afford the black market rates. Still the central government, which has deployed military and para-military forces to suppress the people and imposed AFSPA, is not taking any steps to get the economic blockade lifted and to airlift essential supplies urgently. Neither it is taking any urgent steps to ease the situation. The state govt. is also utilizing this situation to serve its nefarious goals and to fatten the hoarders and black-marketeers.

The CPI(ML) has demanded immediate action from the central government to get the blockade lifted and to make all essential commodities available. CPI(ML) demand that the state government should stop promoting chauvinist forces and stop black marketing.

CPI(ML) appeals to all section of the people to not fight against each other as the ruling classes and the central and state governments serving them want, but to fight against the central and state governments to ensure peace, food, employment and democratic rights. ■

### ***AIRWO Delegation's Visit to Imphal Postponed***

Due to the blockade of all land routes to Imphal and extreme political turmoil in Manipur, the proposed visit of AIRWO delegation of five comrades led by com. Sharmistha Chowdhary (as reported in May issue of Red Star) has been postponed. ■

**I**N ANCIENT India, education was the preserve of the Brahmin elite. Even then, real education was rare and education in the gurukul meant mainly learning by rote and unquestioningly. As with feudal and slave systems elsewhere, learning was restricted to only a very minuscule minority of the population and the common person had to be satisfied with religion which gave him a code for living.

Under the British, especially after the Woods Despatch of 1862, a more systematic method of education was adopted. However, the decision was to follow the Western system of education and to rely mainly upon missionary schools to impart the same. Though some innovations were made by many social reformers like Phule, Ambedkar, etc the western model of education became universal in India. The English increased the percentage of the population in primary and secondary education from 0.6% in 1867 to over 3.5% in 1941. True to colonial legacy, these figures were much lower than the corresponding figures for Europe where by 1911, between 8% to 18% of the population were in primary and secondary education.

Macaulay's Minute of Education is often cited to show that the aim of the British was only to impart education to a very few to create, "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect." However if we read the whole of that portion of the minute instead of just these words, the context of these words is better understood. Macaulay said,

*"...it is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste,*

# **Indian Education: How Much Have We Grown**

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**Sanjay Singhvi**

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*in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population."*

Needless to say, this great enterprise, of enriching the "dialects" and conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population was never accomplished.

In capitalist society, the ruling class never admits to the existence of class society. Capitalism destroyed the old feudal right and brought forth bourgeois democracy. In keeping with this change, capitalism has a philosophical commitment to a certain type of equality. That this equality gets skewed by the existence of private property is another matter.

## **INDIAN EDUCATION IN THE NEO-COLONIAL CONTEXT**

After the second world war, with the advent of the neo-colonial system, many changes took place in the education system all over the world. In the Atlantic Charter signed between UK and the USA, out of the eight points signed, two have a direct bearing on education. Point no. 5 recognised the importance of working for the advancement of social welfare and the global economic co-operation, whereas point no. 6 committed the signatories to work towards freeing the whole world from fear and want. That the USSR and India (though not independent by then) were also a part of the "united nations" which signed the Atlantic Charter subsequently (in 1942) must be remembered.

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the UN adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 26 of this states:

*(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.*

*(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.*

*(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.*

This was adopted in the the background of the socialist constitutions which governed almost a third of humanity by that time. The 1936 constitution of the USSR may be cited as an example. It was the first constitution to recognise the right to education with a corresponding obligation of the state to provide such education. It guaranteed free and compulsory education at all levels, a system of state scholarships and vocational training in state enterprises. Subsequently



the right to education featured strongly in the constitutions of all socialist states. Following this, FDR put the right to education in the “Second Bill of Rights” in the US constitution in 1944 and the principle of the right to free education (at least at the primary level) was adopted by the UN in 1948 as pointed out above.

Almost all of the neo-colonial countries have adopted the basis put forward in the Universal Declaration. In keeping with this Declaration, to which India was also a signatory, the Constitution of India, adopted on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1950 proclaimed in Article 45, “*The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.*”

In 1966, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the International Covenant on Economic, Social and cultural rights. This made it necessary for countries ratifying the covenant to adopt a detailed plan of action for introduction of free compulsory primary education “*within a reasonable number of years*”.

Following this, India adopted the first National Policy on Education in 1968. Among other goals, this policy put forward, as the first point on the agenda, the provision of free and compulsory education upto the age or 14 as promised by the Constitution. This was followed by the policy of 1986 which was amended in 1992.

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT

With such broad egalitarian policies governing education in our country, how do we look at education in the philosophic context. Is education today only to serve the interests of the ruling classes, or is there a certain universalisation of education? Can we say today that education is the preserve of the rich and wealthy alone? Has there not been a great democratic change in the concept of education?

Capitalism has everywhere destroyed the old feudal institutions. Under the old feudal institutions, learning was restricted to the Brahman. Today, the latest statistics of the Education Department show that the Gross Enrolment Ratio for the Scheduled Castes for standards I to VIII (6 to 14 years), 105.96, is higher than that for the General population – 97.08. The corresponding figure for Scheduled Tribes is even higher at 109.57<sup>1</sup>.

Does this mean that today caste exploitation is at an end? Does this mean that neo-colonial India is more democratic and more free than colonial India? No doubt, when capitalism destroys feudal institutions, it creates an impression of freedom and equality. However, as long as private property exists, this is not the truth. The driving force of society under capitalism, and under imperialism, is the need for profit. Even philanthropy is guided by the need for profit – as all philanthropy which does not lead to profit is doomed to failure as was proved by Robert Owen. As long as private property exists, profit will remain the peg for all democratic institutions, including education.

No doubt, capitalism destroyed the old feudal institutions. But it did not create real democracy. In the same way, neo-colonialism brought all institutions into the market. It brought education also into the market. In so doing, it has freed it from the clutches of the old type of feudal right based upon status. This does not imply that the resulting system is democratic, or even “more democratic”. This is not an assertion of doctrine. It is the aim of this article to analyse the state of education in our country today, to prove this point.

## EDUCATION IN INDIA TODAY

There are many ways of analysing the state of education in India today. No doubt, compared to 1947, we have a larger Gross Enrolment Ratio. Literacy has

gone up from around 12% in 1947 to around 65%. This, however, is no reason to pat ourselves on the back. The change from the colonial system to the neo-colonial system, where all exploitation was based upon the market, required a general and universal basic education. If for nothing else, at least so that workers have a minimum level of skill, so that they could operate the new heavy machinery developed. Hence there has been a general rise in the level of education all over the world. It is no use to compare literacy in India today with literacy in India in 1947. A more useful comparison would be to compare literacy in India today with literacy in other countries today. As per the UN Development Report of 2009, out of 179 countries in the world today (members of UN), India ranks at number 147<sup>2</sup>. We can compare this with Cuba, which had large illiteracy prior to the revolution in 1959. Before this, 22% of Cubans were illiterate and 60% were semi-literate. Today, Cuba ranks at number 2 in the world (behind Georgia) in literacy with 99.8% literacy. In terms of literacy all the top twenty countries in the world, according to the above UNDP report, were former socialist countries.

But let us compare with other neo-colonial countries. Samoa and most of the West Indies have literacy rates of around 97%. Myanmar (Burma), which was a part of India and had a similar colonial past, has a literacy rate of 90%. Thailand has a literacy rate of over 94%.

Even if we are to compare the growth in rates of literacy, India still comes off second best. China, which had a literacy rate of around 18% in 1945, today has a literacy rate of around 86%. Even the long dictatorship in Indonesia has fared better than India. Indonesia had a literacy rate of around 8% in 1947. Today it is at over 69%.<sup>3</sup> Of course the miracles wrought by countries like Cuba and Zimbabwe in literacy is not even to be mentioned as being far

beyond the reach of the Indian education system. This shows that what progress there has been in literacy in India is abysmally poor and points to widespread corruption as well as systemic failures.

## **GROWTH IN SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**

No doubt, as pointed out above, there has been a massive growth in gross enrollment ratios. However, even these figures are mere chimera. Under pressure of various incentives and threats, children are being enrolled in schools. This does not mean that they are actually attending the schools. There is much dispute about the reportage of the figures of enrolment in schools. In any case, all reports agree about the high level of school drop-outs. It is estimated that about 1/3 of all students drop-out during primary school and only half remain by the end of middle school (standard VIII). The Govt. statistics of 2006-07<sup>4</sup> say that the drop-out rate for primary school is 25.6% while that for standards I – VIII is 45.9%. The drop-out rates for SC and ST students are much higher at 35.91% and 33.09% for primary and 53.05% and 62.54% for standards I – VIII respectively. The expectancy of education life in India is below 10 years whereas in most countries of the world it has reached above 12 years. Only South Asia and Sub-saharan Africa are comparable to India.<sup>5</sup>

## **EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION**

The Kothari Commission or the National Education Commission of 1964 was that upon whose report was based the first National Education Policy of 1968. The Kothari Commission had recommended that 6% of the GDP must be spent upon education. This figure of 6% was adopted by the National Education Policy of 1968, the National Education Policy of 1986 (including after amendment in 1992) and also by the Common Minimum Program of the UPA in 2004. However the constant

repetition of this figure has assumed the nature of a mere chant or a mantra. Even 45 years after it was first recommended, it is nowhere near the actual reality. One author has put it thus:

*“We set the benchmark year for our discussion as 2000-2001 because; the post 2001 period witnessed major interventions like SSA and Mid Day Meal in the Education sector. The public expenditure on education has actually declined from around 3.23 percent of GDP in 2000-2001 to 2.88 percent during the UPA rule. As a proportion of total government expenditure, it has declined from around 11.1 percent in 2000-2001 to around 9.98 percent during UPA rule. As far as Union Government’s expenditure on education is concerned, it has registered an increase during the UPA rule from around 3 percent of total Union expenditure in 2000-01 to 4.75 percent during the UPA rule. However, such an increase in no significant way is sufficient to meet the promised 6 percent of GDP in education as the capacity of the state government to spend on education has declined over the period (primarily due to the faulty policies of the Union Government). The total state government expenditure on education as proportion of total state government expenditure has declined from around 18 percent in 2000-01 to less than 14 percent during UPA rule.”<sup>6</sup>*

Even Bhutan (17.2% of total Govt. expenditure), Bangladesh (15.8%), Pakistan (11.2%) and most of Sub-Saharan Africa spend a greater proportion of Government expenditure on education than us. When it comes to per capita expenditure on primary education, we spend almost the lowest in the world. Even if we correct the expenditure to Purchasing Power Parity, we spent, in 2005, only \$179 on each student in primary education (down from \$192 in 1999). Luxembourg spent \$11,519, the UK, \$8027, Fiji \$771, Malaysia \$1411, Brazil \$1257, Peru \$495, Maldives \$714.<sup>7</sup> As a percentage of GDP, Government of India spends only 0.37 percent on higher education compared to 1.41 in USA, 0.5 in China, 0.9 in Brazil, 0.6 in Russia and 2.7 per cent in Malaysia.<sup>8</sup>

## **PRIVATISATION OF EDUCATION**

Ever since the 1992 amendment to the National Education Policy, in keeping with the New Economic Policy and the neo-liberal agenda that it had put forward, the Government has been fostering privatisation in education in various ways. At first NGOs were accepted as partners in education. Now the whole of education has become a lucrative business field. Recently, in January, the Government has had to de-recognise about 44 deemed universities on the ground that they were blatantly flouting all academic norms.

## **PRIVATE EXPENDITURES ON EDUCATION<sup>9</sup>**

During the last two decades of liberalization, the burden of expenditure on education on the working class increased to around 13 times or by around 1150 percent. Even the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) highlighted that by 2001, the number of out of school children in India was more than 3 crores and most of these children were unable to afford the cost of education due to poverty and economic backwardness of their families. A cross country comparison of private educational expenditure also reveal that in India, the out of pocket expenses is one of the largest in the world, although the quality of education upon which such out of pocket expenses is incurred, is debatable. As can be seen from the table on next page, the private out of pocket education expenditure in India at primary level as percentage of GDP is around 1.1% in the year 2003 compare to only 0.4% in Argentina, 0.2 % in France and 0.3 % in USA. Similarly, Private education expenditure for primary and secondary education as percentage of total education expenditure in the economy is more than 29% in India compared to only 7% in France and 8.4 percent in USA.

The only clear meaning of the higher proportion of private spending on education in India is a larger profit from education in India.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

A 2005 NASSCOM-McKinsey study says only about 25 percent of the technical graduates and 10 to 15 percent of the general college students are suitable for employment in the offshore Information Technology and Business Process Outsourcing industries, respectively. Other Chennai based studies have also suggested only 15 percent of college graduates are proficient in English. Pegging the manpower requirement for the BPO sector by 2010 at 2.3 million, the NASSCOM report said there will be a shortfall of 0.5 million.<sup>10</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It is clear then, that the state of education in India today is quite bad, even compared to other neo-colonial countries. It is not mere chance that the state of Indian education is so abysmal. It may be that Indian politicians and administrators are more corrupt and inefficient than others, but such a supposition would be highly subjective. The reality is that the Indian masses are being kept in a state of abysmal ignorance and illiteracy since imperialism does not need them to be educated at this moment. Imperialism does need an expanding market. However, in the context of India, even 10% to 20% of India is a massive market for them, which is quite sufficient for the time being. Hence 80% of the country can easily be kept out of the labour market confined to merely eking out a subsistence. The same is true of most of South Asia and Africa. No doubt, as the need for a market grows, there will be a growth of education. One aspect of this to be considered is also the need for an expansion in the capital market. Education is becoming a juicy commodity in the capital (or investment) market. However, such market-driven expansions of education are not going solve the problems of Indian education. Sir John Sargent, in 1944 had put forward a scheme for total literacy in 40 years. This was rejected by the national leaders as they felt that 40 years was too long to wait. Now 66 years later, we are still at 65% literacy. The privatisation and elitisation of education is not at all any solution and will only further exacerbate the problem. What is needed is a resolve to take the system of education in hand and implement total

educational programs with a will as it was done in Russia, Cuba and other socialist countries. This can only be done by a Government led by the working class. ■

### (Footnotes)

1. All figures from the "Statistics of School Education 2006-07" on the website of the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resources Development, Department of Higher Education - <http://education.nic.in/stats/statpub.asp>
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_literacy\\_rate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_literacy_rate)
3. [http://india\\_resource.tripod.com/development.html](http://india_resource.tripod.com/development.html)
4. See note 1 above
5. Education for All Globalizing Monitoring Report, 2010 of UNESCO
6. Siba Sankar Mohanty, Network for Social Accountability.
7. Unesco study cited earlier
8. Siba Sankar Mohanty
9. Most of the section on Expenditure on Education is from Siba Sankar Mohanty
10. Krithika Ramalingam, India together 17 March, 2009 - <http://www.indiatogether.org/2009/mar/edu-chnschool.htm>

| Private Education Expenditure: A Cross Country Analysis       |                                                       |                         |                                                                                |                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Country                                                       | Private Education Expenditures as a Percentage of GDP |                         | Private Education Expenditures as a Percentage of Total Education Expenditures |                         |
|                                                               | Primary & Secondary                                   | All Levels of Education | Primary Secondary                                                              | All Levels of Education |
| Argentina                                                     | 0.4                                                   | 0.8                     | 12.3                                                                           | 16.9                    |
| Australia                                                     | 0.7                                                   | 1.4                     | 16.1                                                                           | 25.8                    |
| Austria                                                       | 0.1                                                   | 0.4                     | 4                                                                              | 6.7                     |
| France                                                        | 0.2                                                   | 0.5                     | 7                                                                              | 7.9                     |
| India                                                         | 1.1                                                   | 1.4                     | 29.3                                                                           | 28.1                    |
| Indonesia                                                     | 0.3                                                   | 0.6                     | 23.8                                                                           | 35.7                    |
| Korea, Republic                                               | 0.9                                                   | 3.1                     | 22.8                                                                           | 41.5                    |
| United Kingdom                                                | 0.6                                                   | 0.9                     | 13.5                                                                           | 15.6                    |
| United States                                                 | 0.3                                                   | 1.9                     | 8.4                                                                            | 26.2                    |
| Source: Taken from Edustat database in the World Bank Website |                                                       |                         |                                                                                |                         |

[Following article tries to summarise the main tendencies of class relations in Gurgaon and based on that to come to practical suggestions for local 'communist activities'.]

**G**URGAON, a satellite town in the south of Delhi became the symbol of 'Shining India'. Many people are dazzled by the glass-fronts of shopping-malls and corporate towers and fail to see the development of a massive industrial working-class behind the facade of 'post-fordist' display of consumerism. Together with industrial centres like the Pearl River Delta in China or the Maquiladoras in Northern Mexico the Delhi industrial belt has become a focal point of global working class formation.

#### **A GLOBAL WORKING CLASS IN LOCAL FORMATION**

In the industrial areas of Gurgaon a very particular class composition emerged. Hundred of thousands migrant garment workers work next to the assembly lines of India's biggest automobile hub and next to hundred thousand young workers sweating under the head-sets of Gurgaon's call centres. We are forced to re-think our traditional understandings of what 'workers' are, how they struggle and how this struggle can become a process of self-empowerment towards self-emancipation.

The specific structure of industry and the composition of the work-force first of all pushes us beyond the regional and national frame-work. On the most obvious level this happens through the global market. In spring 2008 the Rupee reached its peak to the US-Dollar, causing bad export conditions. The garment industry in Gurgaon dismissed thousands of workers and shifted orders to 'low currency' countries like Vietnam and Bangladesh. In autumn 2008 the Rupee plummeted, but together with it the US and European market crashed and sent shock-waves into the industrial areas of Gurgaon: credit crunch for the real

## ***Developing Unrest: New Struggles in Miserable Boom-Town Gurgaon***

estate, garment orders came down, US-banking services slumped. At one point in time, workers in one space - who might otherwise have thought that they have little in common but chai stalls - faced a common situation: cut in bonuses or piece-rates, abolishment of free company meals or transport, threat of job cuts. The potential for a socially explosive tea-party of english-speaking call centre night-shift youth, migrant garment and construction workers and young skilled workers in the car part plants entered the Industrial Model Towns - a mass base of actual 'internal threat'.

There is a second level on which the 'collective work-force' has to be grasped beyond the boundaries of factory walls or company units. This level is shaped by local, regional and global division of labour. Maruti Suzuki connects their assembly lines and welding-robots via transport chains with production units of hundreds of outsourced suppliers, reaching into the work-shop slum-villages of Faridabad or the green-field industrial areas along the National Highway. Assembly plants around the globe depend on parts manufactured in Gurgaon by companies like Rico or Delhi. IT and BPO offices cooperate closely with branches oversea, while production in the huge garment factories is supplied via supervisor middlemen with piece-work from working (wo)men stitching 'at home'.

On a third level the character of the work-force itself can not be grasped on a local level: the majority of workers are migrant workers, going back and forth between urban industrial life and village. Wages are too low to reproduce a nuclear family in Gurgaon, most workers leave their family in the villages. Similarly it is near too impossible to survive a longer period of unemployment - or for that matter, a longer period of strike - in Gurgaon. Though disintegrating, the village still functions as the main unemployment insurance. The changes in the villages, such as introduction of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme or the general development of the agricultural market, reverberates in the working conditions in Gurgaon and echoes back into the rural. Workers arrive in Gurgaon with hopes, which are in most cases disillusioned. They survive 16-hours shifts by keeping both village misery and glorification in mind. Their urge 'not having to be a worker anymore' expresses itself individually in plans to open a shop back home. Reality forces us to find a collective and social expression of this urge to abolish our existence 'as workers'.

Main element of this reality 'as worker' has been the casualisation of work-force. In winter 2000/2001 Maruti Suzuki used a labour dispute of minor importance to lock-out the permanent work-force and to replace them through compulsory 'Voluntary Retirement Schemes' with temporary workers. This has been repeated in other companies to a point where 70 to 80 per cent of the average factory work-force is nowadays hired through contractors - due to their mobility they have less interest in struggles for long running wage agreements and company pension schemes. They have more immediate desires and anger. The remaining casual and permanent workers are often young workers hired in various ITI-campuses all over India, employed with much less job security and lower wages than the old type of permanent work-force. In the garment factories the skilled tailors on piece-rate producing 'full-piece' garments are increasingly put under pressure by chain-systems employing 20 less 'skilled' workers to

produce the same garment in division of labour and by introduction of CNC-cutting and embroidery machines. In Kapashera - a workers' dormitory 'village' where about 200,000 textile workers and families live close to the main industrial area - dozens of 'CNC-courses' and six week basic tailoring courses are offered by small-scale informal schools.

Given this complex picture the majority of workers do not face a single 'company boss' in a formal way, they face many bosses. Due to the real estate boom which catapulted local farmers out of their fields into land-lordism and business a specific coalition of local political class, land-lords, labour contractors, police and company-hired local goons became a repressive front ready to quell expressions of workers' unrest. This local front of ruling class is complemented by a faceless front of multi-national investment and central government policies.

### **OLD TYPE OF STRUGGLES : LOCKED-OUT IN DEAD-ENDS**

Under these general conditions struggles which remain within the boundaries of classical type of company or trade union struggle normally end in defeats and/or institutionalisation. There have been many 'union' struggles in Gurgaon in the last years and they seem to follow certain patterns:

There is discontent amongst both permanent workers and workers hired through contractors. In most cases some 'under-the-surface'-struggles pre-date the 'official conflict, e.g. at Honda HMSI 'spontaneous' canteen occupations happened before the 'official' struggle for union recognition. In this phase certain sections of workers get in touch with union officials hoping that registration of a union will strengthen their position. Representatives emerge, member-lists are required for the application. The company tries to put pressure on the emerging 'leadership', in many cases provokes a situation where suspension of 'outstanding' workers can be declared. In many cases companies ask the remaining work-force to sign individual letters of 'good conduct', trying to single out supporters. Due to the unions self-interest they tell workers not to sign: a struggle in classical terms is easier to organise once workers are victimised, although their actual power might be greater once back inside the factory. An unofficial lock-out situation emerges, often workers hired through contractors - who expect less gains from a company union - either enter the factory or additional workers are hired to keep up production. Often these new workers are hired from the local population of surrounding villages - another division between them and the mainly migrant original work-force. Companies are normally prepared for the lock-out and subsequent problems in production, either by piling-up extra-stock or by getting parts from other suppliers. 'Unofficial unrest' turns into classical forms of struggle, often managed by the main union advisors: protests in front of the factory gate, demonstrations, meetings with political leaders - the martyrdom of workers becomes a stage for leaders. In most cases the conflict becomes a single company issue without attempts to connect it to the wider discontent. State and company are well capable to deal with these ritualistic forms of struggle, either through repression or through entangling it in a long legal dispute. The result of these disputes normally exclude the workers hired through contractors who had been part in the initial struggle and often the legal cases for re-instatement of victimised workers run for years. After recognition of a company union there tends to be silence afterwards.

Even once in the trap of a lock-out workers can do more than just wait for the next symbolic show of solidarity. In the case of the current lock-out at Maruti fuel-pump supplier Denso in Manesar 36 union members have been suspended on 17th of February 2010 and about 500 workers refused to sign papers of 'good conduct'. Since mid-February they have been sitting outside the factory while newly hired workers are kept inside for 24 hours. Already before the lock-out

Denso had ordered additional parts from its Thailand plant - an act of preparation. In nearby Faridabad workers of another Maruti supplier, AC manufacturer Sanden Vikas, were 'locked-out' at the same time. The union did not facilitate direct links between these two work-forces. The suggestion came up to write a common letter to Maruti Suzuki management - a rather symbolic sign of workers' coordination which could have had a small impact nevertheless. Another idea came up to go in small number of workers to stand with placards in front of Maruti or other local factories. Denso runs factories around the globe, some effort to let workers and management in these factories know about the situation in Manesar could have been made. Small steps which could help to spread the word and may be create direct links between workers of the supply-chain. This did not happen, instead we saw one or two union demonstrations of the classical type and bored young workers sitting and playing cards. According to information of a Denso worker, on 22nd of March 2010 the company took back 23 out of 36 suspended union reps and sent all Denso workers on one week training in a local 'World Spiritual University' ashram, to find a 'peaceful mind'. When they returned to the factory most of the workers were shifted to new jobs in different departments, at new machines, with new neighbouring work-mates.

## **Marxwadi- Leninwadi**

**Organ of Karnataka State  
Committee of CPI(ML)**

**"Marxwadi-Leninwadi"  
Kannada Monthly  
No. - 21,  
1st Main, 2nd Cross  
Hanumanathpuram  
Shrirampuram  
Bangalore - 560021**

## A NEW GENERATION OF WORKERS' STRUGGLES

We have to discuss about the short-comings of traditional forms of struggle together with workers - and we can discuss new forms on the background of actual experiences of wildcat strikes and factory occupations which happened in Gurgaon during the last years. These struggles have remained largely unknown to a 'wider public'. Unfortunately the left activists normally only get to know or interested in workers' struggles once they have reached the 'official' status, which generally means: when they are repressed. The lathi-charge at Honda in 2005 mobilised the left, so did the murder of a worker at Rico - the main left position concerning these incidents was a 'civil rights' position, not an attempt to analyse the basis for workers' power and self-activity. The struggles of a new generation already give some answers and ask many questions for the future, e.g. how struggles can be extended from the factory base avoiding 'unnecessary' direct confrontation with the state forces and pitfalls of formal representation.

In April 2006 more than 4,500 temporary workers occupied the Hero Honda Gurgaon plant for several days demanding higher wages and better conditions. The company cut water and electricity, but told the police not to enter the factory. No support from outside the plant. The workers sent a small delegation for negotiations,

which was bought off: the delegates returned promising fulfillment of all major demands after restart of production, they then disappeared. Only some demands were actually met by the management. When the factory occupation ended workers at Hero Honda supplier Shivam Autotech occupied their nearby plant raising similar demands. Workers at KDR press-shop in Faridabad, who supply Shivam Autotech with metal parts, worked reduced hours during these days. In September 2006, after temp workers at Honda HMSI Manesar were not included in a union deal they occupied the canteen of the plant supported from the outside by the next arriving shift. The company reacted by cutting water supply. The company and union asked them to go back to work. In January 2007 the 2,500 temp workers at car parts manufacturer Delphi in Gurgaon went on wildcat strike blockading the main gate. The company threatened to shut-down and relocate the factory and asked the union of the 250 permanent workers to get the temps back to work - after two days the blockade was lifted. In August 2007 the temps at Delphi struck again for few hours without prior notice, demanding the payment of the increased minimum wage and succeeded. Many of the workers lived together in back-yards of nearby villages, sharing food, mobile phones and information about jobs. In August 2007, after the Haryana government had increased the minimum wage, over a dozen companies in Faridabad and Gurgaon faced spontaneous short strikes by mainly casual workers, demanding the payment of the new wage. In most cases these actions were successful. In May 2008 after not having been accepted as members by the permanent workers' union the temp and casual workers at Hero Honda in Dharuhera went on wildcat strike and occupied the plant for two days. Management and permanent workers' union both promised betterments of the workers' situation. The temp and casual workers then tried to register their own union - a process which ended in suspension of leaders and a mass lock-out in October 2008.

It would be schematic to label these struggles 'spontaneous'. We need spaces to meet in the industrial areas for analysing the social production process and the already existing day-to-day experiences of organisation and subversion within: in factories, along supply chains, in the back-yard living quarters, in the common remote villages. If there will be a communist party it will be the celebrations of the collective worker, discovering themselves by turning their social cooperation against its proclaimed precondition: capital. Part of this proletarian self-reflection must be the development of a structure of mutual aid, practical support and coordination. ■

[\[www.gurgaonworkersnews.wordpress.com/\]](http://www.gurgaonworkersnews.wordpress.com/)

### Communist Canvas

Theoretical Organ of West Bengal State Committee

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West Bengal - 700 118



30 March, Police Station Gherao at Bhubaneswar by CPI(ML) against Kalinganagr police atrocities

# **Corporate Management: A New Avatar of Exploitation**

## **Changes in Production Relation in 'Technology Era'**

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**Moturi Krishna Prasad**

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**THE WHEEL** of change has increased its speed in the recent decades and this has contributed largely to changes that have occurred in many spheres of our society. The most significant change is noticed in production methods, in the emergence and vast expansion of the service sector and in what is being proclaimed as knowledge economy. Albeit, the changes in social relations or say in more concrete terms, the production relations, are so slow that they have become real fetters to unleash a change that in reality has to take place. No doubt, there are many changes in the social life including the family as predicted by Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* "The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation". But then, the changes that seem to have occurred need be scrutinized critically to understand closely our societal phenomenon at the present moment.

This paper is an attempt to have a look at the nature and role of the corporate sector in India with its so-called new methods of corporate management policies and practices particularly after neoliberal globalisation process speeded up in our country. To study the economic formation of India in the period of globalisation and see closely what changes have been effected in the social formation one has to study several aspects of Indian social processes. One such process is to see the nature and role of the corporate sector, both domestic and foreign. This paper focuses on the nature and role of the corporate sector in the overall scenario of production and the relations that get impacted in the process.

The technological innovation has increased rapidly and brought in many new gadgets to enable the luxurious life for humankind both inside and outside the site of production. There are many changes in the production norms, methods, and procedures. The reflection of these changes in the production relations, if any, needs careful examination.

The technological era — the buzzword of the corporate world — has brought in the speed of production, enhanced productivity several fold and this has led to the hunt for newer and newer markets. The quest for new markets has turned to be an unending gyre. To facilitate more expanse of market space for the multinational corporate houses which have saturated their existing market domains has become a challenge for their domestic governments. The multinational corporations have forced the politics of the globe to globalization of the economy in the form of ever-expanding and aggressive trade wars. The sole aim of this process is to allow free entrance of profit trade to promote goods and reap super profits. The search for markets and super profits has paved the way for development of strategies to deny the local products their right to market and compete.

The philosophy of curbing competition to monopolize market is the need of the day for practitioners of Market Economy. Hence new conditions are imposed which will be prohibitive for the local manufacturers to market and also export. One such condition is ISO 9000, i.e. standardisation at international level.

The standardisation programme has insisted on creating better working conditions for the workforce. As a result, the working environment which, hitherto, was comparable to slave-master mode has changed at least in some corporate houses. Though technological innovation has increased the productivity and reduced quantity of jobs, but the resultant market expansion has improved the quality of jobs in selected workplaces. The sites of production which were no better than sweatshops and the relationship no better than slave-master one have considerably changed in a section of corporate manufacturing.

Following the standardisation programme, the rest rooms were opened for workmen and workwomen and created other better facilities like better illumination and nourishment amenities. The wages have also improved considerably. But then what happens to this standardisation programme ultimately we will see a little later.

While the achievements of standardisation programme are being boasted about, the most modern methods of exploitation are being unleashed in the recent decades by giant corporations, which need to be examined.

Here, in the context of understanding the corporate houses, the service sector which has come to define itself as knowledge economy needs to be examined closely. The service sector which was less in volume than the manufacturing and agriculture in the GDPs in early 1950s have taken a leap and grown beyond



the primary and secondary sectors.

The service sector is supposed to render support to the primary and secondary sectors. But it has surpassed the basic sectors in volume of growth. If the service sector is still supporting the primary and secondary sectors they both must have been performing better in the GDP. But contrary to the expected result their growth and performance declined sharply. It is justified to question how the tertiary sector can achieve recorded growth at a time when the primary and secondary are on the decline.

The fact is that the tertiary sector in India has never been in support of the primary and secondary sectors. The tertiary sector has been dependent on global business. There are incidents when Chief Ministers have assumed new avatar of chief executive officers and pledged support to the globalisation process and World Bank in the pretext of promoting IT sector. The changes that reflected in the Sensex due to changes in US economy indicate us that we not only depend on US for business but also for capital. Upon careful examination of the IT sector growth, it has become evident that the growth is the result of the decisions made by US majors for their benefit. The IT revolution has demanded implementation of the software and IT projects into manufacturing immediately and on large scale, programmers were recruited across the globe and given better wage packages which attracted many Indian students to shift their education from engineering to software. U.S majors have realised that with the help of technology they can get their jobs done in India at a very low cost. The difference in cost was to the extent of spending only 25% of the wage cost that that need to spends on in their own country which means there is a huge saving on capital cost. By offloading, their software jobs and call centre jobs to India, U.S could not only achieve financial gains but also

restrict flow of trained manpower who may turn out to be future citizens of U.S. Therefore, outsourcing of IT jobs has emerged as a major political gain.

In India the aspiring middle class is happy about the situation because from no jobs, no income they have been moved to some jobs and good incomes which was overwhelmingly welcomed by the poverty-stricken and low income middle classes of India.

The growth in enterprises indicates the enterprising nature of the middle class Indians. There were large numbers of enterprises which do not possess any qualifications in IT but have started enterprises and operationalised the same successfully. The capital required for larger number of IT enterprises was from capital market, mostly invested by public savings. The large number of IT/software professionals who are working for minimally less wages when compared to their US counterparts show us that slightest elevation of living standard is also considered to be a great achievement in the countries like India.

In the highly industrial countries, the major industries have derived more profits by offloading jobs to the oppressed countries and the resultant effect is that the growth of the tertiary sector has become totally US dependent. This explains that the psychology of Indian enterprises was only to flock around rather than exploratory. The moment, the US enterprises achieve saturation of market in US and in the rest of the West, the programming of the production and all activity gets matured, the Indian enterprises would suffer close down. The enterprises might have earned their investment back but the job aspirants who might have invested huge amount to learn to do jobs for American companies would be doomed.

While the changes in the management practices are being viewed as a development in the thought process and elevation of quality of life conferred upon the working class, the facts speak differently. It is a novel method of exploitation developed and unleashed upon the working class. Sweat equity has been distributed to the workers to deprive the strength of collective bargaining. The workers who are offered equity do not have any control over the management of the corporate house because each individual holds a diluted little of the minority total probably the equity distributed among workers put together even if consolidated would not match the holding of an individual director of the corporate firm.

Workers were given shares of the company in lieu of wages and bonus which is defined as deferred wages as they are the hard earnings of the workmen. Workmen are often cheated because the time workers would like to transact their equity in the market the value of the shares would have declined to much lesser than the face value. The Enron's K410 is a clear case of the management cheating its workers in the transactions. The term corporate governance though appears to be democratic it has lost its relevance and became another tool of exploitation and appropriation of wealth. In the developing countries corporate firms have included neighbourhood into the term of stakeholder along with the workers and shareholders, the deployment of funds would not be larger than the savings accrued from payment of income tax.

These attractive terms would have been taken differently by now if the attitude of corporate houses changed from exploitation and appropriation to the creation of wealth and equity distribution. The very nature of capital does not allow this to happen. The competition to attract more investors by sharing more profits do not allow any reduction in the process of exploitation of the workmen, consumers or the small investors and appropriation of wealth by a handful of capitalists as individuals.

It is time and again donning of new masks to continue the process of exploitation which needs to be checked and exposed till a society is formed with emergence of social capital which do not possess the nature of compulsory appropriation of wealth.

In the early periods of industrial revolution, it was the investment of the trading classes and the profits of their units that were made of the unpaid share of workers' labour over a period that used to accumulate as capital which was being deployed to establish and operate enterprises further in an expanded production.

But the later modern corporate avatars have started increasingly procuring their capital also from the shareholders the majority of whom are middle class people who in the trail for more earnings lured to invest in the stocks which is often irrational when compared to performance related ratings. It is often never near any rationality regarding payment of dividend per share which is no way logical or nearer to the performance of the corporate firms. The pricing of the stocks is also not determined by the performance of the company, but performance at the stock exchange which is often rigged to make it attractive for the middle class investors who later succumb to the irrational fall which is resultant of the sudden splash sale by the promoters and riggers.

This exploitation of the gullible middle class investor and the retired people's pension fund is deplorable but irresistible because large corporate houses make profits from share bazaar more than from the real performance of the company.

Yet another form of appropriation by the corporate firms has more glaringly come out into the open recently. The recent meltdown of the global financial firms and after crash disclosures it has been revealed that many corporate firms which have gone bankrupt had paid its CEO's hefty sums towards bonus in spite of being on the verge of closure and bankruptcy. This is by no means a new form. This form of appropriation existed ever since corporates came into being.

At the hands of this new avatar of exploitation, larger and larger sections of common people as shareholders, suppliers, employees, and consumers that succumb when a corporate dealer strategically embraces bankruptcy. Though this process of stocks has been propagated as the tickle down benefit of economic activity, in reality it is like the skimming of milk. In this process of skimming activity, foams are being gathered from all sectors of the society as cream is gathered at top of the milk when having being skimmed and the cream when taken out shall reduce the fat and protein value of the milk. The same method is adopted to gather wealth of the world across from all sections of people for appropriation by a few monopoly capitalists running the corporate business houses.

#### **THE SELF REWARDING SCHEME:**

The promoters and as well as the management of the corporate firms self-reward with huge salaries and bonuses, the huge salary of a CEO or the chairman in some companies' accounts is as much as of the large chunk of the employees' salaries put together.

Let us look at some case studies.

Sun TV promoters who hold 77% of equity (probably both are husband and wife) have drawn a remuneration of 23.26 crore rupees each for the year 2006-07. However, the highly remunerative person is Mukesh Ambani who has drawn 30.46 crore rupees as remuneration for the year 2006-07 with equity of 51.03%. Even a little known company like Madras Securities whose CEO Mr Ram

Subramanim Raja has drawn a remuneration of Rs. 24.79Cr in the year 2006-07 with an equity of 40.50%. There are incidents which have caught the notice of everybody where large sums of bonuses were withdrawn by the CEOs of "Gold Man Sachems" just before declaring the company bankrupt. It would be astonishing to note that the senior bureaucrat of the corporate had also been bleeding the investor's wealth like Mr Faltsow, the chief financial officer of Enron has declared himself eligible and withdrew 60 million US dollars for arranging and reorganizing capital for the company Enron just before its collapse.

The corporate structure enables the management to enhance its stocks in the company thus expanding its wealth base as the market capitalization of promoters in Reliance is Rs.169091crore where as average for small industries is 1.75lacks.

The idea of having independent directors on the board of the company to protect the interest of small investors has also turned out to be false like Ratan Naval Tata acting as an independent director of Bombay Dyeing whose chairman is Mr. Nusli Nevilee Wadia who had been an independent director in Tata Motors, Tata Steel, Tata Chemicals. All the above facts and figures indicate to us that often proclaimed free market has been never been free because this been handled and is under the clutches of large corporate houses who had been on the call of accumulation of wealth by all means depriving the democratic

## **Jan Vimukti**

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rights of the small investors with whose money the corporate houses flourish and with whose appreciation the wealth of the promoter is being evaluated.

*The corporate incomes are greatly concentrated in the hands of a small number of the top promoters cum majority shareholders. Compared to the inequalities in the corporate sector, the farm sector inequalities appear fairly light.*

*At least around 70 crore Indians who are subject to low, inadequate and uncertain income and little access to modern public and quasi public goods and services that can make for a reasonably tolerable quality of life. The most ominous part of the story is that their relative position is deteriorating and their absolute position is at a sub-human level and yet the policy makers often claim a reasonable success in their efforts towards making growth inclusive.*

**(Kamal Nayan Kabra 2007)**

## THE DECLINE OF EMPLOYEMENT

There had been a decline in the recruitment of large corporate houses in the past decade. If we evaluate the turnovers of the company with the number of employees and analyze, it is evident that as the turnover increases the number of employees decreases thus achieving more productivity per employee. There are no such incidents of increase of wages when the works load / productivity

increases. The hire and fire regime has increased huge unemployment. The slow down or the global financial crisis has become a pretext for cuts in jobs and an average by 25%. 43% of the working executives are scared of losing their jobs. In a survey conducted by outlook 49% of the employees preferred a salary cut rather than leaving the jobs. This indicates that there is a huge cut in the jobs. People are on the fear of losing jobs and add to the unemployed army. A number of corporate firms indulge in recruiting people on contracts which will enable them to retrench by circumventing all provisions of the laws because the rules of retrenchment law says that first come shall go last and all those who have completed service of 240 days are regular and retrenchment is not an easy task.

## CONTRACT JOBS

A huge number of companies had been getting their jobs done through contract workers who are employed by small firms as agents of the giant corporate houses. All business is the outsourcing of marketing jobs. The smaller firms which enable the large corporate to be safe and out of the procedures and processes of labour laws.

## DECLINING EMPLOYMENT POTENTIAL

The analysis of Indian population depicts as a young India with more hands seeking work, but the reality is something different, in spite of a tremendous income in high network individuals, the poverty is also huge, the growth of high worth individuals has grown 20% over last year but the earnings have all gone into real-estate which has less employment generation capacity.

There is an increase in enterprises but the employment is not at par and the wages paid also had decreased from 8.14% in 1998-99 to 6.9% in 2004-05, the manufacturing also registered a decline in wages – 243 points.

The corporate incomes are greatly concentrated in the heads of a small number of the top promoters cum majority shareholders. The dropout of income is high in corporate sector.

| Employment in organized sector (Lac persons) |               |                |               |                  |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| Year                                         | Public Sector | Private Sector | Manufacturing | Organised Sector |
| 1998                                         | 194.18        | 87.48          | 52.33         | 68.49            |
| 1999                                         | 194.15        | 86.98          | 51.78         | 67.47            |
| 2000                                         | 193.14        | 86.46          | 50.85         | 66.16            |
| 2001                                         | 191.38        | 86.52          | 50.13         | 64.43            |
| 2002                                         | 187.73        | 84.32          | 48.67         | 62.17            |
| 2003                                         | 185.80        | 84.21          | 47.44         | 60.04            |
| 2004                                         | 181.97        | 82.46          | 44.89         | 56.78            |
| 2005                                         | 180.06        | 84.52          | 44.89         | 56.19            |

**Economic survey 2006-07 quarterly employment review march 2005**

*“If despite the stagnation in employment compensation of employees in the private organized sector has gone up significantly. It is obviously not due to a rise in wages brought about by tight labour market condition; rather it is the salaries of an increasing proportion of white collar employees which would be the source of this increase in salaries”*

**(Surjit majumdar 2007)**

**Conclusion:** All the above data confirms us that the central idea of corporate management is appropriation of wealth by exploiting investors, workforce and the consumers. ■

## Red Star

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# BRAI: Mortgaging Indian Agriculture

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Damodar

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**I**n its all out effort to woo the multinational agro companies the UPA government is about to form a new regulatory authority — the Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI) to act as the sole agency responsible for the regulatory system, including research, transport, import, manufacture and use, of GMOs throughout the country.

**The BRAI would not be under purview of the Right to Information (RTI) and would have authority to override the decisions of state governments, thus reducing the states authority to that of mere spectator when it comes to the decision on introducing the Genetically modified food. It would also be empowered to bypass the provisions enumerated in the *Biological Diversity Act* and the *Environment Protection Act*.**

The BRAI is proposed to be under the Ministry of Science and Technology, which is **already responsible for promotion of GM crops. Therefore, the BRAI will be only an agency to stimulate investment in biotechnology, rather than to uphold the standard of GMOs regulation in the country.**

**This bill aims at introducing a drastic changes in the process of regulating the research, transport, import, manufacture and use of GM products in the country**

The Bill is apparently aims to lower the bar for introducing the genetically modified (GM) crops without taking into cognisance the impact on the health of people and environment. BRAI is contrived to prevent people of their right to grow, own, trade, transport, share, feed and eat food that nature has bestowed upon the humanity. The farmers would not have control on what they grow and the public on what they eat. All control and supply decisions would rest with the profit hungry agro giants and the people would be reduced to an expendable pawn in the hands of the capitalist and its agents.

In order to stifle any resistance the bill has a provision to imprison whoever criticises GM crops, The bill states *“whoever, without any evidence or scientific record misleads the public about the safety of organisms and products...shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than six months but which may extend to one year and with fine which may extend to two lakh rupees or with both”*. The government it seems has decided to put people’s health at stake to satisfy the greed of corporate sector

**The Bill will pave the way for cultivation of not only Bt Brinjal but also about 60 other kinds of GMOs. According to Dr. P.M. Bhargava, founder of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology: “There is no penalty if someone promotes GMOs without safety tests but there is a penalty if someone wishes to inform the public about the hazards of GMOs. Besides, who is to decide on ‘misleading’ and on what basis?”**

This brazenly pro-transnational corporation bill, virtually gives the multinationals a free hand to control the agricultural and food system of the country while abnegating every right to the farmers and the common people. The farmers would also loose their traditional right to save, exchange and replant seeds.

According to a press release of Greenpeace (India) *“....This draft bill further exposes Science and Technology minister Prithviraj Chavan direct links with the GM industry. Instead of working closely with the environment and health ministers to strengthen bio-safety regulation and safeguard human health respectively, Chavan is trying to change the rules of the game to facilitate the back door entry of Bt Brinjal and GM Rice.”*

Do we have no other option but to go for GM food and does the GM crops give better yield?

The International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development 2008, stated that **there is no evidence that GM crops increase yield; on contrary**, agro-ecological friendly practices have shown result of great increase in yield. Still the Indian Government is bent on giving a free hand to the agro-companies even though the effect of BT Cotton is a glaring example. Unfortunately the lesson of growing Bt Cotton in India —where the farmers have been forced to buy the expensive pesticides and seeds from the monopolies leading to mass suicides has been glossed over. India over the years has witnessed major crop failures in the three main cotton growing states of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh where the farmers adopted the BT cotton. The fourth state, Karnataka, banned the sale of Bt cotton seeds after much farmers unrest and resistance.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) will not only wipe out the native varieties but would make them unfit for growth thus forcing them on path of extinction. The world agriculture will become over-dependent on GM grains and the transnational corporations which monopolize the GMOs production would have stranglehold on the food system. The paranoia of the developed countries towards GM food can be ascertained from the fact that recently,

the European Union banned imports of honey from Canada because Canadian producers could not guarantee that their honey is free of pollen from GM plants that are not approved in Europe. But they have been promoting their own companies to turn the population of the poor countries into guinea pigs.

It is also worth mentioning the way BRAI would function; according to Mr. PV Sathesh, national convenor of South Against Genetic Engineering (sage), a coalition of civil society groups in south India, Once an application is received, it will be sent to BRAI's risk management unit. This unit will do a "science based evaluation" and submit a risk assessment report. Following this it will go to a product rulings committee for its recommendation. "When there is so much debate and a strongly expressed need for disclosure and scrutiny of the approval processes, the BRAI bill and the processes it prescribes, present no scope for this". Further more this bill envisages only an advisory role for states and completely bars intervention from non-official scientific and people's organisation. Thus the health and agriculture sector would be in hands of BRAI which in turn would be a front organisation of the profit hungry Multinationals.

An article on the effects of GM crops in India by the NGO GMWatch reveals that *...Corporations like Monsanto are keen to push their crops into India as quickly as possible as there is very little monitoring of the agricultural sector by any of the government authorities. Take the area of pesticides: large quantities of illegal pesticides are imported and used with impunity by farmers without proper supervision. Since a large number of farmers are illiterate they are unable to read the instructions for safe use. In a state like Punjab - which heralded the Green Revolution - exposure to deadly pesticides is generating a steady number of cancer*

*cases which are now being documented with horror by the medical authorities. Yet it is very rare to find a pesticide manufacturer or distributor in jail even though their activities harm both people and the environment.*

The neo-liberal agenda that this government is vigorously pursuing has to be opposed. From GHO (Green Hunt Operation) to GMO the government has revealed for whom it is accountable. Increasingly it has shed its pretension of being a government concerned with the well being of majority for the rich few. A broad based mass campaign uniting the peasants, workers and the intelligentsia can only resist this onslaught of the ruling class that is bent on mortgaging the country's agricultural health for corporate wealth. ■

#### Sources

*Green Peace, Frontline, GM Watch, thaindian.com, scidev.net, International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development Conference 2008 (Report by UN-World Bank).*

### "Say 'no' to Congress-BJP-Trinamool-Left Front"

#### CPI(ML) fields four candidates in municipality polls in Bengal

**U**RGING the people not to concede a single vote to the ruling class parties – Congress-BJP-Trinamool-Left Front – the CPI(ML) has fielded four candidates in the elections to the Titagarh Municipality in the North 24 Paraganas district of West Bengal. Three of these candidates, Shyam Sundar Shaw, Akhtar Hussein and Peer Mohammad, are party members from the working class, while the fourth, Khodaija Khatun, is an RYFI activist.

For the first time, the Titagarh Municipality polls (scheduled for May 30) will see a revolutionary party seeking votes on a revolutionary agenda, drawing a clear line of departure from reactionary, ruling class politics. The CPI(ML) has called upon the people of Titagarh to reject all those parties which have been the cause of their misery in myriad ways and consolidate working class unity against the ruling class by casting their vote in favour of CPI(ML). Here it may be kept in mind that Titagarh is essentially a working class region with several jute and other mills and has, over the years, seen the systematic and ever-intensifying exploitation of the mill workers at the hands of industry barons with full support from the state and central governments. For the last five years, however, the picture has been markedly different. With the erstwhile CCR(ML) and present-CPI(ML) beginning operations in the area, jute workers have united against the heinous policies of the government as well as the mill owners. There have been fierce workers' struggles under the leadership of unions acting under the guidance of the Party. Quite a few victories have been snatched from the reluctant hands of the ruling class. While the workers of the Kinnison unit of National Jute Manufactures Corporation wrested VRS dues and more from the government, workers of Loomtex jute mill battled for three years before forcing the owner to pay up years' old gratuity and provident fund dues. The Party has also been in the forefront of democratic struggles against police high handedness and local issues like hooliganism other anti-social activities. Hence, the CPI(ML) is well known in the region as a party committed to securing the rights of toiling people and raising high the banner of revolution. The people's mandate in the elections will show whether or not the masses are ready to challenge the ruling class in the electoral arena as well. ■

# Children of War

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Nirmalangshu Mukherji

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**T**WO recent articles—Arundhati Roy’s “Walking with the comrades” and Gautam Navlakha’s “Days and Nights in the Heartland of Rebellion”, both based on extensive travels in Maoist territory in Bastar—throw significant light on Maoist operations there. The articles themselves are polemically designed to portray the Maoists as “Gandhians with guns” and as champions of tribal welfare. However, rhetoric aside, a very different picture emerges from the facts reported in these pieces.

The Maoists have been operating in that area for close to three decades. Roy reports that the authority of the Maoist party now ranges across 60,000 square kilometers of forest, thousands of villages, and millions of people. These are Maoist numbers as told to the visiting intellectuals. Assuming, in the absence of contrary evidence, that these numbers are not inflated to impress the outsiders, we can now ask what the Maoists have achieved for these millions of people.

Consider the health situation in Bastar. The articles do not mention even a single health centre initiated by the Maoists in that vast area in all these years. All we are told repeatedly is that people have been advised to drink boiled water. Navlakha reports that lately the “revolutionary people’s committees” have initiated a scheme of “barefoot doctors” in which some tribals are trained to apply some medicines (distinguished by their colour) for afflictions such as malaria, cholera and elephantitis, the three most dreaded illnesses. We are not told about the extent of these efforts.

We get a more concrete picture from the reports of a doctor Roy met; incidentally, a doctor was visiting that area after many years. The doctor said that most of the people he has seen including those in the guerrilla army, have a haemoglobin count between five and six (when the standard for Indian women is 11). There is extensive tuberculosis caused by more than two years of chronic anaemia. Young children are suffering from Protein Energy Malnutrition Grade II. Apart from this, there is malaria, osteoporosis, tapeworm, severe ear and tooth infections and primary amenorrhea—malnutrition during puberty causing a woman’s menstrual cycle to disappear, or never appear in the first place. “It’s an epidemic here, like in Biafra,” the doctor said. “There are no clinics in this forest apart from one or two in Gadchiroli. No doctors. No medicines.” Gadchiroli is in Maharashtra, not in Bastar.

Notice that most of the severe conditions are caused by acute malnutrition—especially in women and children. Words like “famine” and “sub-Saharan condition” are frequently used in the articles. The words are of course polemically directed at the state: ‘Look, what the Indian state has done to the tribals’. Any index on quality of life certainly brings out what the Indian state has done to its people, not just the tribals. But the area at issue concerns essentially the Maoists “with a history of more than two decades where the party has been able to create an alternative structure, virtually uncontested”, as Navlakha observes.

An even more sinister picture emerges from facts about Maoist armed forces. Even if we set aside earlier, unconfirmed reports of children being snatched away from tribal families at gunpoint, the documents provide a range of evidence about extensive involvement of children in the war. Roy describes a young boy, Mangtu, who appears to be one of the conduits between nearby towns and the guerrilla army. Next, she describes another “slightly older” person, Chandu,

with a “village boy air”, who actually belongs to a militia and can handle every kind of weapon except an LMG. Then, of course, there’s this much talked about (and photographed) young girl, Kamla. At the time of reporting, she is 17, and is already a hardcore member of the guerrilla army with a revolver on her hips and a rifle slung on her shoulder. We can only guess about her age when she joined the armed forces.

These are not isolated examples. Roy’s narrative and the accompanying photographs furnish the distinct impression that most, if not all, of the people in the militias and guerrilla army are aged between mid-teens to early twenties, and most of these have been part of the armed forces for several years. Roy’s motherly instinct wells up as she prepares to sleep in the forest amidst hundreds of armed guerrillas: “I’m surrounded by these strange, beautiful children with their curious arsenal”.

Recruiting children for warfare seems to be an established practice in the Maoist scheme of things. Comrade Madhav, who has now risen to be a commander of a guerrilla platoon, joined the Maoists at the age of 9 in Warangal in Andhra Pradesh. The entire thing is carefully organized. While the general tribal child has no school to go to, Maoists have initiated Young Communist Mobile School (or, Basic Communist Training School) that host select groups of 25-30 children in the age group 12-15. These children receive intensive training for six months in a curriculum consisting of basic concepts of Marxism Leninism and Maoism, Hindi and English, maths, social science, *different types of weapons*, computers, etc., Navlakha reports. Roy writes that, once they pass out, “they trail the guerrilla squads, with stars in their eyes, like groupies of a rock band”.

Navlakha also reports that, as with any regular army, recruitment drives are frequently conducted with meetings and leaflets. One of the

leaflets, directed at “unemployed boys and girls of Bastar”, says “you will not get any salary but food, clothes, personal needs will be fulfilled and your families would be helped by the Janatam Sarkar”. Elsewhere in the essay, Navlakha reports on the food supplied to the guerrillas: breakfast can vary between ‘poha’, ‘khichri’, etc., mixed with peanuts and followed by tea. Lunch and dinner consists of rice with dal and subzi. Once a week they get meat. Sometimes more than once if fish is available or there is pork, which is provided by the Revolutionary People’s Committee. Even with this impressive food intake, most of the guerrillas have less than half of the normal count of haemoglobin, as noted. One can only imagine with horror the condition of these children when they joined the forces.

With no schools to go to, no opportunities in hand, and with sub-Saharan conditions prevailing in their families, which able-bodied tribal child can resist the temptation of assured food, clothes, peer company, and the ability to roam the forests with a rifle slung on shoulders? Naturally, when the state attacks and the economic lives of tribals are further disrupted, enrolment for militia and guerrilla army increases sharply. The more the repression by the state, the bigger the “people’s army” of starving children.

The total strength of the militias and guerrillas currently adds up to about 60,000, with many more in the waiting. Assuming as above that most of them joined the forces when they were children, it follows that the Maoist leadership—consisting of Ganapathi, Koteswar Rao, Kobad Ghandy, Azad, and others in their polit bureau and central committee—deliberately planned to deny normal childhood to a vast number of tribal children. They never went to school, never learned about life outside the forests, never glimpsed the pluralistic complex of Indian society, never acquired the skills to become a participating citizen,

never allowed to make up their mind. All they know is how to fashion an IED, how to clean and fire a rifle, how to ambush, how to kill. They form the frontline—and get maimed and killed—when the police, the greyhounds, the CRPF and special operations forces encircle them. As for Kamla, Roy observes that “if the police come across her, they’ll kill her. They might rape her first. No questions will be asked”. Kamla won’t be the only one.

The basic picture is abundantly clear from these documents. Taking advantage of the historical neglect and exploitation of the tribals by the state—the “root cause”—the Maoist leadership ensured the support of hapless tribals with token welfare measures while directing most of the attention secretly to construct guerrilla bases. In the process, they lured a large number of tribal children with assurances of food and clothing. These children have now grown into formidable militia and guerrilla forces. After committing atrocious crimes in the name of “revolutionary violence”, these youth brigades are now facing the wrath of the mighty Indian state. It is reasonable to infer that millions of tribals continue to side with the Maoists largely because their children are with them. ■

## ***Karnataka: AIRSO State Conference***

**T**HE first Karnataka state conference of All India Revolutionary Student Organisation (AIRSO) was successfully held on 2nd May at Khudiram Hall at Bangalore. Total 70 delegates from Gulbarga, Yadagiri, Gadag, Koppal, Kudagu, Chikkamangalur, Raichur and Bangalore participated in it. AIRSO flag hoisting was done by com. M. Nagaraj. Com. Sandeep gave welcome speech. The Conference was inaugurated by com. B. Rudraiyya, state secretary of CPI(ML). Com. Basavalingappa, all India president of RYFI also spoke. AIRSO programme was presented by com. Sandeep and Constitution by com. Hanumesh Poojar. State organisational report was presented by com. M. Nagaraj. Student delegates actively participated in discussion. The new state committee was elected with com. M. Nagaraj – president, Sandeep – secretary, Sharanabasava – vice president (North Zone), KH Mahesh – vice president (South Zone), Hanumesh Poojar – organising secretary and Mahesh – treasurer.

Before the state conference district level conferences were held. On April 5th Raichur district conference was held at Zilla Manoranjan Kendra. The conference was inaugurated by com. Shekharayya, dist. secretary of CPI(ML). 40 students participated from different talukas. Koppal district conference was held on 11th April. Gadag district conference was held on 18th April. On 24th April Chikkamangalur was held in which 30 delegates were participated. Conference was inaugurated by dist. Secretary of CPI(ML) comrade Umesh. Similarly, on 25th April Gulbarga district conference was held at Kristan Bhavan in Gulbarga university. Students from Bidar district also participated in this conference. ■

## **Karnataka Panchayat Election Campaign**

The state government which had postponed the panchayat elections on flimsy grounds earlier, announced to hold it in the second week of May hastily only one month before to fulfill the time schedule stipulated by the Election Commission. As a result the state committee did not get time to publish the Election Manifesto. The candidates were selected and campaign was organised without much preparation. Still the Party fielded 67 candidates in 29 panchayats of Kodagu, Chikmagalore, Koppal and Raichur districts with the slogan: Defeat the ruling class parties, Elect CPI(ML) candidates to build up people’s alternative. The party committees organised a campaign against the main ruling class parties in the state, BJP, Congress and JD(S). When the election results were announced on 17th May, Party candidates has won in 18 seats. ■

## Odisha: AIRSO Odisha State Conference

**O**N 20th May 2010 at Dolasahi of Bhadrak district AIRSO 1st Odisha state conference was held successfully. The conference started with remembering martyrs and welcome speech given by com. Ashok Senapati. CPI(ML) Odisha state secretary com. Sivaram inaugurated the conference appealing to students to fight against privatization and commercialization of education and for free equal and scientific education for all. 24 delegates from different districts participated. The conference elected a five members state committee of AIRSO with com. Jayanti Jena as President and com. Prasanta Kumar Purti as secretary. It also elected 5-members delegation to attend AIRSO All India conference to be held at Mumbai. The conference took resolutions opposing government's inhuman repression on Kalinganagar anti displacement and Posco Resistance movements. It also resolved to bring students to the forefront to fight against this imperialist loot and against projects which destroy life and livelihood of the people. Before state conference of AIRSO Bhubaneswar city level conference held on 15th May at Inquilab Bhawan and elected 5-member district committee.

### CPI(ML) Observed 20 May as Protest Day

As per the declaration at the state-wide Gana Convention, the CPI(ML) Odisha state committee started campaigning to make this success. On 20th May at Bhubaneswar CPI(ML), CPI(ML) Liberation and SUCI(C) jointly took out a rally from Bhubaneswar Railway Station and it reached Before state assembly. A protest meeting organized there. CPI(ML) leaders com. Harihar Sahoo, Pramila, Gopinath Nayak led the rally and Com. Pramila spoke in the protest meeting. At Bhadrak a massive rally started from Serapur reached at Dolasahi Bazar with shouting slogans. At Dolasahi Bazar square a protest meeting organized. The rally was led by CPI(ML) Bhadrak district secretary com. Susanta Jena, AIRWO state secretary com. Indumati, Jeevan-Jeevika Surakshya Samiti leader Tunilata Jena, AIRSO State President com. Jayanti Jena and state secretary com. Prasanta Purti. CPI(ML) state secretary com. Sivaram participated in protest meeting. ■

## TN: Protest Against Kalinganagar Firing

**C**HENNAI: On May 18<sup>th</sup> a public meeting was held at Chennai by CPI(ML) Chennai district committee against the police firing on Kalinganagar tribal people in Odisha in which one tribal comrade was killed.

The Meeting was presided by Chennai district secretary com. Gajendra kumar who stated that the comprador ruling class sold India and also the wealth of forest. Now the state wants to remove the adivasi peoples. CPI(ML) Chennai district member com. Vedanayagam opposed Operation Green Hunt. CPI(ML) state secretary com. PT Shanmuga Sundaram called for on unity for struggle against the state terrorism. Party state executive committee member com. Kalan Durai opposed state terrorism under which adivasis are suppressed in the name of Maoist. Com. Priya, RYFI state president gave vote of thanks.

Condemning the Kalinganagar police firing killing a tribal comrade at Combatore CPI(ML) district committee members Vellimalai, Moorthy, TUCI state secretary com. Balasubramanian and CPI(ML) district secretary Shanmugam held a demonstration on May 14 at railway junction. The police arrested the 4 comrades and released them in the late night. Kanyakumari CPI(ML) activists held demonstration on 14<sup>th</sup> May against brutal kill. Dingugal district committee organised poster campaign. ■

## W. Bengal: Dharna Demanding Withdraw forces from Junglemahal

**O**N May 6, 2010, the Co-ordination of Struggling Left Forces in West Bengal – comprising CPI-ML, (PCC) CPI-ML, MCPI, CPI-ML (New Democracy), CPI-ML (Janashakti), and CPI-ML (Class Struggle) – held a day-long sit-in demonstration in Midnapore town, the district headquarters of West Midnapore district in Bengal. (Lalgarh, and the now famous 'junglemahal' is situated in this district.) Following Chidambaram's trip to Lalgarh last month and his 'appeal' to political parties to visit Lalgarh and host programmes there, the Co-ordination of Struggling Left Forces had formally requested permission from the state home department to visit Lalgarh on a fact-finding tour. Expectedly, the permission was not granted. Obviously, Chidambaram's 'invitation' was extended only to ruling class parties and not revolutionary forces.

However, the Co-ordination of Struggling Left Forces was not deterred by the government's arbitrariness and went on to stage a day-long *dharna* at the district headquarters with a view to taking the issue to the masses and also submitted a deputation to the Additional District Magistrate (ADM), urging the administration to withdraw forces from *junglemahal* and seek a solution through discussions. The ADM revealed a significant aspect of the Centre-State joint operations now in force in Lalgarh and surrounding areas. He said that the SP had been put in charge of the joint operations and not the District



Magistrate, and so it was beyond the jurisdiction of the DM's office to intervene in the matter. He pointed out, though claiming to speak off the record, that the excesses committed by the joint forces were due in large part to the fact that the police department headed it instead of the administration. The police are bound to be far more ruthless and high handed than bureaucrats in the administration, he stated. The interview with the ADM thus revealed how the government had taken every step to ensure that there would be no checks on the ruthlessness of the joint forces. The ADM also divulged the government's plan to grant monetary aid to the tune of Rs 3 lakh in case of death (or permanent incapacitation) due to Maoist violence. However, when asked how the government planned to compensate the families of those killed at the hands of the joint forces or the CPI(M)'s private army, he said that that was beyond his jurisdiction! So the state and the ruling party can kill with impunity, but not an anti-state force! An example of bourgeois justice indeed!

The *dharna* continued from 10 in the morning to 5 in the evening and attracted the general masses. It was also widely covered by the local media as a programme by a force which belonged to neither the right nor the parliamentary left, but to the real, struggling left. Among those who spoke on the occasion were Comrade Santosh Rana of (PCC) CPI-ML, Comrade Pradip Singh Thakur of CPI-ML (New Democracy), Comrade Shankar Das of CPI-ML (Red Star) and Comrade Somnath Ghosh of MCPI. The speakers strongly demanded the immediate withdrawal of the joint forces from *junglemahal*, disbanding of CPI(M)'s private army and cessation of the process of taking over of the villages by that private army. The Maoists, too, were criticized for their mode of action and urged to positively come forward and take necessary steps for a proper solution to the problem. ■

### **TUCI West Bengal Committee Formed**

On May 2, at George Bhavan in Kolkata, a few struggling unions in the rice, jute and tannery sectors united to form the West Bengal state committee of TUCI. In stark contrast to the compromising nature of the ruling party-led central unions like CITU, INTUC, INTTUC, BMS, etc., the West Bengal committee of TUCI has been formed with a view to uniting workers in the field of struggle. The workers' meeting in which the state committee was formed resolved to build up united struggles with other fighting unions against the various anti-worker policies of the government and the ruling class. The aim of building up a countrywide united centre of workers' movements was also put forward. In the presence of TUCI general secretary Comrade Sanjay Singhvi, a 7-member state organizing committee and 21-member state council were formed. Comrade Alik Chakroborty was elected state secretary of TUCI. ■

## **On Demonstrations of May 5 in Greece**

**[Statement of Communist Organization of Greece, Athens, 5 May 2010]**

**T**HE Communist Organization of Greece condemns the IMF-EU's government for its policy of annihilation of the society and the orgy of repression unleashed against the people. The death of the three bank employees because of fully condemnable acts provokes sorrow and anger, which are added to the wrath felt by the whole society against the government of the Quisling Papandreou.

This cynical government, assisted by the mainstream Media that remind us of the dictatorship's TV, has the cheekiness to put the responsibility for the death of the three employees on the hundreds of thousands of demonstrators, on the mass movement and more concretely on the Left. It is Papandreou himself who is igniting the tension and the violence because of the measures adopted by his government. No matter how many excuses he will invent in the Parliament, no matter how many appeals for social consent he will make, Papandreou will remain in history as the would-be gravedigger of the Greek people.

Athens and the whole country lived the biggest demonstrations of the last 30 years, with half million marching for six hours in Athens alone. The people demands that Papandreou and those MPs who intend to vote in favor of transforming the society into a human waste bank, account for their crimes. Those who handed over the country and the people to the hyenas of the capital and of the markets, those who attempt to condemn the workers and the youth to extermination, will account to the people.

The police attacked brutally the biggest demonstrations of the last 30 years; it transformed Athens into a huge gas chamber, and also attacked brutally the marches in Thessaloniki and Patras. The Minister of Repression shall account for this!

We hold accountable as well the owner of Marfin Bank, this unsolicited "savior of the Nation" who obliged his employees to remain inside the concrete branch, despite the fact that he knew the danger was imminent. Obviously, human life is cheaper for the capital than the daily profits of a bank branch.

The coordinated effort of the government, of the right-wing opposition and of the extreme right-wing to exploit the death of the three employees in order to stop the torrent of the popular anger, will not go unanswered. The wrath and the despair that coexist in society will send to hell Papandreou and any MP who will vote in favor of the Greek people's annihilation. ■

# Victory Speech by Comrade Stalin

***[On the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the victory of the socialist Soviet Union led forces against the fascist forces in the Second World War we are reproducing below the broadcast from Moscow on May 9, 1945 and an address to the people on September 2, 1945 by comrade Stalin]***

Comrades! Men and women compatriots!

The great day of victory over Germany has come. Fascist Germany, forced to her knees by the Red Army and the troops of our Allies, has acknowledged herself defeated and declared unconditional surrender.

On May 7 the preliminary protocol on surrender was signed in the city of Rheims. On May 8 representatives of the German High Command, in the presence of representatives of the Supreme Command of the Allied troops and the Supreme Command of the Soviet Troops, signed in Berlin the final act of surrender, the execution of which began at 24.00 hours on May 8.

Being aware of the wolfish habits of the German ringleaders, who regard treaties and agreements as empty scraps of paper, we have no reason to trust their words. However, this morning, in pursuance of the act of surrender, the German troops began to lay down their arms and surrender to our troops en masse. This is no longer an empty scrap of paper. This is actual surrender of Germany's armed forces. True, one group of German troops in the area of Czechoslovakia is still evading surrender. But I trust that the Red Army will be able to bring it to its senses.

Now we can state with full justification that the historic day of the final defeat of Germany, the day of the great victory of our people over German imperialism has come.

The great sacrifices we made in the name of the freedom and independence of our Motherland, the incalculable privations and sufferings experienced by our people in the course of the war, the intense work in the rear and at the front, placed on the altar of the Motherland, have not been in vain, and have been crowned by complete victory over the enemy. The age-long struggle of the Slav peoples for their existence and their independence has ended in victory over the German invaders and German tyranny.

Henceforth the great banner of the freedom of the peoples and peace among peoples will fly over Europe.

Three years ago Hitler declared for all to hear that his aims included the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and the wresting from it of the Caucasus, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Baltic lands and other areas. He declared bluntly: "We will destroy Russia so that she will never be able to rise again." This was three years ago. However, Hitler's crazy ideas were not fated to come true—the progress of the war scattered them to the winds. In actual fact the direct opposite of the Hitlerites' ravings has taken place. Germany is utterly defeated. The German troops are surrendering. The Soviet Union is celebrating Victory, although it does not intend either to dismember or to destroy Germany.

Comrades! The Great Patriotic War has ended in our complete victory. The

period of war in Europe is over. The period of peaceful development has begun.

I congratulate you upon victory, my dear men and women compatriots!

Glory to our heroic Red Army, which upheld the independence of our Motherland and won victory over the enemy!

Glory to our great people, the people victorious!

Eternal glory to the heroes who fell in the struggle against the enemy and gave their lives for the freedom and happiness of our people! ■

## **Address to the People on 2nd September 1945**

Comrades! Fellow countrymen and countrywomen!

Today, September 2, political and military representatives of Japan signed an act of unconditional surrender. Utterly defeated on sea and land, and completely surrounded by the armed forces of the United Nations, Japan has admitted defeat and has laid down her arms.

Two hotbeds of world fascism and world aggression had been formed on the eve of the present World War: Germany in the West and Japan in the East. It was they who unleashed the Second World War. It was they who brought mankind and civilization to the brink of doom. The hotbed of world aggression in the West was destroyed four months ago and, as a result, Germany was forced to capitulate. Four months later the hotbed of aggression in the East was destroyed and as a result, Japan, Germany's principal ally, was also compelled to sign an act of capitulation.

This signifies the end of the Second World War.

Now we can say that the conditions necessary for peace all over the world have been gained.

It must be observed that the

Japanese aggressors inflicted damage not only on our Allies - China, the U.S.A. and Great Britain. They also inflicted extremely grave damage on our country. That is why we have a separate account to settle with Japan.

Japan commenced her aggression against our country as far back as 1904, during the Russo-Japanese War. As we know, in February 1904, when negotiations between Japan and Russia were still proceeding, Japan, taking advantage of the weakness of the tsarist government, suddenly and perfidiously, without declaring war, fell upon our country and attacked the Russian fleet in the region of Port Arthur with the object of putting a number of Russian warships out of action and thereby creating an advantageous position for her fleet. She did, indeed, put out of action three Russian first-class warships. It is characteristic that 37 years later Japan played exactly the same perfidious trick against the United States when, in 1941, she attacked the United States naval base in Pearl Harbour and put a number of American battleships out of action. As we know, in the war against Japan, Russia was defeated. Japan took advantage of the defeat of tsarist Russia to seize from Russia the southern part of Sakhalin and establish herself on the Kuril Islands, thereby putting the lock on all our country's outlets to the ocean in the East, which meant also all outlets to the ports of Soviet Kamchatka and Soviet Chukotka. It was obvious that Japan was aiming to deprive Russia of the whole of her Far East.

But this does not exhaust the list of Japan's aggressive operations against our country. In 1918, after the Soviet system was established in our country, Japan, taking advantage of the hostility then displayed towards the Land of the Soviets by Great Britain, France and the United States, and leaning upon them, again attacked our country, occupied the Far East and for four years tormented our people and looted the Soviet Far East.

Nor is this all. In 1938 Japan attacked our country again, in the region of Lake Hasan, near Vladivostok, with the object of surrounding Vladivostok; and in the following year Japan repeated her attack in another place, in the region of the Mongolian People's Republic, near Khalkin-gol, with the object of breaking into Soviet territory, severing our Siberian Railway and cutting off the Far East from Russia.

True, Japan's attacks in the regions of Hasan and Khalkin-gol were liquidated by the Soviet troops, to the extreme humiliation of the Japanese. Japanese military intervention in 1918-1922 was liquidated with equal success and Japanese invaders were expelled from our Far Eastern regions. But the defeat of the Russian troops in 1904 during the Russo-Japanese War left bitter memories in the minds of our people. It lay like a black stain on our country. Our people believed in and waited for the day when Japan would be defeated and the stain would be wiped out. We of the older generation waited for this day for forty years, and now this day has arrived. Today Japan admitted defeat and signed an act of unconditional surrender.

This means that the southern part of Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands revert to the Soviet Union and henceforth will serve not as a barrier between the Soviet Union and the ocean and as a base for Japanese attack upon our Far East but as a direct means of communication between the Soviet Union and the ocean and a base for the defence of our country against Japanese aggression.

Our Soviet people spared neither strength nor labour for the sake of victory. We experienced extremely hard years. But now everyone of us can say: We have won. Henceforth we can regard our country as being free from the menace of German invasion in the West and of Japanese invasion in the East. The long awaited peace for the peoples of all the world has come.

I congratulate you, my dear fellow countrymen and country-women, on this great victory, on the successful termination of the war, and on the ushering in of peace all over the world!

Glory to the armed forces of the Soviet Union, the United States of America, China and Great Britain which achieved victory over Japan!

Glory to our Far Eastern troops and our Pacific Fleet, which upheld the honour and dignity of our country!

Glory to our great people, the victorious people!

Eternal glory to the heroes who fell fighting for the honour and victory of our country! May our country flourish and prosper! ■

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# Post-Election Scene in Sri Lanka

[Editorial of New Democracy, May 2010 issue, Organ  
of New Democratic Party, Sri Lanka]

**T**HE chauvinistic ruling class which caused the war, led it to victory and cares little for the disastrous consequences of the war is back in the saddle. Likewise, the Tamil political leaders who led the Tamil people towards loss of life and property and disablement are back in their parliamentary seats. Muslim and Hill Country Tamil nationalist leaders, who get elected to parliament for their own advancement and not that of the people, too have returned to parliament.

It is almost a year since the war ended. But the national question is nowhere nearer a solution than before the war. The people who lost most by the war are still in a state of misery. Close to a hundred thousand are still behind barbed wire fences, unable to return to their homes. Those allowed to return have not been provided with necessary resources to return to normal existence. Much of the war ravaged Vanni, mainly to the east of the A-9 highway, is still unavailable for resettlement by its former residents and has a strong military presence. The government policy on resettlement and rehabilitation is guided by chauvinistic considerations.

The country's foreign and domestic debt are at crisis levels and there is rising pressure from lending agencies on the government for 'reforms' — meaning economic hardships for the people and the economy being subject to foreign control and domination.

The number of persons detained by the police and the armed forces without formal inquiry or trial is unknown, but has certainly risen from hundreds to many thousands. Very little information is available on the whereabouts of people reported missing since the end of the war and reportedly taken for questioning about connections with the LTTE. Detainees also include many Sinhalese, Muslims and Hill Country Tamils held in remand prisons and detention centres for several years. Legal intervention has enabled the release of only a minority of detainees.

Corruption, crime and social violence have escalated in the past few years and the media has been particularly targeted for attack. The legal system of the country is a shambles and the police and the judiciary, with some remarkable exceptions, are severely politicised. The number of active soldiers per million of population is among the highest in the world and set to rise even after the end of the war.

Given the steamroller majority that the ruling alliance has in parliament and the number of opposition MPs waiting to cross over, there is little excuse for the government not to find a just solution to the national question. But that is unlikely to happen, and excuses will be made of chauvinist dissent to finding a viable solution. Foreign meddling including Indian pressure — motivated by considerations other than concern for Sri Lanka's Tamils — can at best lead to eye wash reforms that will go nowhere towards a solution.

More importantly than before, disaffection with government is bound to grow on the economic front when the government, in the process of dealing with its fiscal problems and imperialist pressure, begins to burden the working classes. Protests and strikes have never been treated kindly in the past and the treatment is likely to be harsher as the protests increase in

numerical strength, intensity and frequency.

The state will adopt a combination of strategies to deal with protests. Firstly, it would seek to divert attention away from problems by pointing to residual terrorist problems, and secessionist efforts — although confined mainly to a section of the elite among the Tamil diaspora.

Secondly, it will resort to repression. Intimidation of the media is likely to be followed by near absolute control of the media and suppression of dissenting views. The police and armed forces that had been built up in the name of fighting a war against terrorism will be turned against protesters. That is not something new to the country, which has seen the legislation against Tamil terrorists being used to kill tens of thousands of Sinhalese youth in the South less than a decade later in 1988-89.

Although the national question remains the main contradiction, its resolution cannot be isolated from issues of economics, democracy, and human and fundamental rights and, as importantly, political, economic and military domination and intervention by imperialist and hegemonic powers.

The post-war situation is one of impending national crises on several fronts, whose solution demands mass political struggle based on and guided by the broadest possible and principled alliance of the left, progressive and democratic forces of the country. ■

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**A**T LEAST six people were killed and more than 60 injured on 19th May when the Thai army cracked down on anti-government ‘red shirt’ protesters who had been camped out in Bangkok’s Ratchaprasong commercial district for weeks. The military had besieged the protest site over the past week, cutting off food, water, power and mobile phone services. In a display of overwhelming force, armoured vehicles smashed through makeshift barricades followed by heavily-armed troops who fired live rounds at anyone showing signs of resistance. Military helicopters circled overhead to track the movements of demonstrators. An estimated 3,000 to 5,000 protesters were present as the soldiers moved in.

The United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD) leadership appeared to have lost control of the protesters, many of whom were determined to resist the army. The **New York Times** reported that UDD leader Jatuporn Proman was booed off the stage as he declared, just prior handing himself in: “We cannot resist against these savages anymore”. As the article reported, his call was not heeded. Some protesters reported to an army-designated assembly point, but others began setting fire to nearby buildings. One told the newspaper: “Everyone feels that our leaders betrayed us. We want democracy. True democracy, free democracy. Why is it so hard, why?” “If you don’t want to fight then get out,” one demonstrator yelled. The newspaper reported those on the stage had lost control. A section of the crowd ransacked the nearby CP Fresh Mart and KBank, which protesters “regarded as supporters of their political enemy”.

Dense plumes of smoke rose above the city as angry protesters set fire to at least 27 buildings in the capital, including the luxury Central World and Siam Paragon shopping malls and the library at the Thai stock exchange. The Channel 3 television station was torched and the staff of

## Thai military crushes Bangkok protest

the **Bangkok Post** and **Nation**—English-language newspapers known for their hostility to the UDD—were evacuated after demonstrators appeared near their offices. The government of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, which had already imposed a state of emergency in the capital and 23 of the country’s 76 provinces, imposed an overnight curfew throughout these areas.

While the government has managed to break up the Ratchaprasong protest, none of the political and social issues which fuelled two months of anti-government protests has been resolved. The UDD, which is aligned with former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, began the demonstrations in March to demand immediate elections. As protests in the Bangkok’s glitzy commercial and tourist hub were joined by rural and urban poor, issues of social inequality emerged prominently.

The death toll over the past month will only heighten social tensions. At least 25 people died and more than 850 were injured in street fighting on April 10 when soldiers attempted to clear another protest site near the Phan Fah bridge in central Bangkok. Another 51 people died after a compromise collapsed and Prime Minister Abhisit shelved his offer to call an election in November.

In the rural north and northeast, where many of the UDD demonstrators came from, there have been protests and skirmishes with security forces. Protesters set fire to government offices in Udon Thani and damaged the City Hall in Khon Kaen. The government buildings in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai were reportedly torched. Business commentators voiced fears that the unrest was far from ended. Kongkiat, CEO of Asia Plus Securities, told Reuters: “This isn’t over. The government is really going to have to look at the grassroots problem and what these people are calling for... The social division, as we see it, is way too deep.”

The bitter infighting between the pro- and anti-Thaksin factions of the Thai ruling establishment has continued for the past four years. Thaksin, a telecom billionaire, was ousted in a military coup in September 2006 following sharp differences over economic policy. The traditional Thai elites that had backed Thaksin in 2001 turned on him when he continued to open up the economy to foreign investors and undermined the patronage networks that favour the military and state bureaucracy. Despite 14 months of military rule and a new constitution designed to keep Thaksin’s supporters out of office, the pro-Thaksin People Power Party (PPP) won the election in December 2007. The PPP drew its support from the rural north and north east provinces where rural poor had benefitted from the Thaksin govt’s limited handouts and provision of cheap health care.

Even if the rival factions of the ruling elite reach a compromise, neither the government nor the opposition parties is capable of resolving the social crisis facing workers and rural poor. The ruthless army crackdown on protesters 19th May is a warning to the working class in Thailand and internationally of the measures that will be used increasingly to suppress any opposition to the impact of the worsening global economic crisis. Though the military has apparently crushed the two months old rebellion of the people the contradictions which have led to this revolt in this country which is projected for long as a role model of US aided developmental projects are more deep rooted. The intensification of these contradictions have created a situation in which all the elite classes including the compradors, the royalty, the bureaucracy and the military are increasingly hated by the people. In spite of the present setback, these revolts are going to come up again with more intensity in coming days. ■

# Convention against Neo-colonization for a Revolutionary People's Alternative

**U**NDER the auspices of CPI (ML) Kerala State Committee, a massive People's Convention against neo-colonization and for building up an anti-imperialist revolutionary people's alternative was held at Adhyapaka Bhavan (Teachers' Hall) Ernakulam on May 14, 2010. Hundreds of party members, representatives of class/mass organizations from all over the state and hundreds of landless and homeless poor people from surrounding areas of the city of Kochi participated in the one-day convention. The convention was the culmination of a month-long state-wide campaign led by the Organizing Committee constituted by the CPI (ML) State Committee for the purpose.

The People's Convention is politically significant in the background of the ideological, political and organizational clarity arrived at the All India Special Conference of CPI (ML) held at Bhopal during November, 2009 regarding the Path of Indian Revolution in the concrete neo-colonial context today. Under neo-liberalism, while India is experiencing an ever-intensifying process of neo-colonisation, Kerala has actually become a 'show case' of neo-colonialism with all the harmful consequences of speculative finance capital such as land mafia, food crisis, price rise, unemployment, mafia culture, etc., have assumed hegemonic position in Kerala society.

The Convention was formally inaugurated by Com. KN Ramachandran, General Secretary, CPI (ML). Tracing the history of CPI (ML)'s anti-globalization struggles right from its inception in 1991, Com. KN emphasized the cardinal significance of ideological-political positions in waging continuous struggles against neo-colonisation and characterized the convention as a launching pad for intensified agitations for building up a revolutionary people's alternative as chartered by the Path of Indian Revolution adopted at the All India Special Conference of

CPI (ML). Noted writer and cultural activist P Surendran, social activist and leading lawyer Sivan Madathil, Advocate Sabi Joseph, TUCI Executive Committee Member and President, Lawyers Initiative for Civil Rights and Democracy, Com KS Sindhu, Convener, AIRWO State Organising Committee, Com. Sumi Surendran, Convener AIRSO State Organising Committee, Com MK Dasan, State Secretary, RYFI, Com Vinod Ramantholi, Convener, Cultural Forum, Com. Rajesh Appatt CPI (ML) State Executive Member, and Com. Sunny Ambatt, State Committee Member, AIKKS addressed the Convention. Com PN Provint, State Acting Secretary, CPI (ML) put forward the Convention theme in the form of a Resolution and was adopted by the Convention. Com PJ James concluded the deliberations. Convention was presided over by Dr. G Sadasivan Nair, former Director School of Law, Cochin University. Com. TC Subrahmanyam welcomed the gathering and Com. MK Krishnankutty proposed the vote of thanks. In a Resolution unanimously adopted by the Convention, A People's Commission of Enquiry was constituted to go into the whole aspects pertaining to the police atrocities at Kinalur, Calicut district including the unholy nexus between land mafia and the state administration there. Cultural activities also were performed. ■

## NAXALBARI DAY AS PROTEST DAY

**FOLLOWING** the CPI (ML) Central Committee's call to observe Naxalbari Day as All India Protest Day Against Displacement and Imperialist-Corporate Loot, the State Committee organized state wide campaign declaring solidarity with Kalinga Nagar and other People's Resistance Struggles all over the country. A central poster was printed distributed among District Committees for the campaign. As part of the campaign public meetings were arranged in Kottayam, Ernakulam, Trissur and Calicut. ■



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**May Day Rallies and Demonstrations at Kanpur and Silvasa**