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Militant demonstration of thousands of workers at Silvass, capital of Union Territory of Dadra Nagar Nagar and Haveli on 7th March under the banner of TUCI

TUCI CALL ON MAY DAY 2011 : BRING THE WORKING CLASS TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS

TODAY we are living through tumultuous times. If 2010 was the year of price rise, misery and massive job losses, then 2011 has burst upon the scene as a year of massive peoples uprisings. In continuation of the call of Karl Marx, “Workers of all countries, unite”, the Third International had expanded it to “Workers and Oppressed Peoples of the World, unite!” And such were the massive uprisings in Western Asia and the Maghreb. The scent of the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia spread to Egypt, Bahrain and even Libya. The fact that the US and other imperialist powers are trying to subvert the uprising in Libya by trying to enforce a “regime change” there, does not belittle the expanse of the revolt of the people of Libya against dictatorship, price rise and corruption.

The popular “movement against corruption” led by Anna Hazare, which has been promoted by the media as if it was paid advertisement campaign, has fizzled out with Anna Hazare sitting with the drafting committee to make the Lokpal bill, after having given “good governance” certificates to fascist Modi and the anti-people Nitish Kumar. This struggle did not address the primary question of the exploited classes and does not include in the definition of “corruption” the legally permissible loot of labour. The minimum would be to include in the definition of “corruption”, the non-payment of minimum wages in any industry. This movement has only “achieved” the drafting of one more new – and impotent – bill, as against the movements in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya where, at least, the fascistic leaders are being forced to step down.

However, it is doubtful whether even the movements in Tunisia and Egypt will be able to achieve an end to corruption, price rise and dictatorship. Where they are headed seems to be simply the replacement of one dictator by another. Imperialists led by the US seem poised to co-opt these movements. If such massive movements also cannot remove these evils then is there any hope for the workers and the oppressed peoples? The weakness of the movements in Western Asia and the Maghreb is that though the working class has played a massive role in these movements, the working class has not had the leading role. Such a leading role, to the extent that it exists, in the face of the evidence of such massive spontaneity, was left to middle and upper class intellectuals, operating either under the ideology of Islam or of some other pro-capitalist ideology. Such massive movements of the workers and the oppressed

peoples can never succeed unless they are under the leadership of the working class and have socialism or new democracy – the rule of the workers and the oppressed people – as their clear aim. It is only the class conscious working class which can play the role of providing such leadership. What these movements expose, most clearly, is the failure of the left in West Asia and the Maghreb in building up such a working class leadership.

Though the movement against corruption which was growing in India has been, to an extent, diverted by Anna Hazare, the fact is that recent events has shown that there are millions of people in our country ready to come onto the streets to fight corruption, price rise and anti-democratic measures. It is the task of TUCI in the coming period to make the working class of our country capable of providing class conscious leadership to such movements of the oppressed people in our country.

Another important task of the working class has also been highlighted by the recent Tsunami which hit Japan and the nuclear plant at Fukushima. It shows that even the movement for preservation of the environment is an important task in which the class conscious working class will have to provide leadership to the oppressed people. Imperialism is bent upon wringing our earth for the last drop of “profit” in its quest to end its crisis. The people of the world will never allow this. But this movement also can never succeed, unless it is led by the class conscious working class and has as its aim the establishment of socialism and a genuine democracy.

Our call to the working class this Mayday therefore is clear. Unite with the oppressed people in their fight against all anti-democratic and destructive measures – against price-rise, against corruption, against the degradation of the environment, against land-grabbing, and other such anti-people measures. Ensure that these movements will go along the direction of genuine democracy and towards socialism. TUCI has to build up such as to ensure that the working class is capable of undertaking these tasks. ●

Workers of the world, unite!

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world, unite!

**Fight imperialism and its exploitation of
humankind and nature!**

Fight for genuine democracy and socialism!

CONCENTRATED EFFORTS TO DE-POLITICISE THE MASSES

WHEN the elections to the five state assemblies were announced, it was stated by the leaders of the ruling parties at center and in the states and the corporate media that it is going to be the quarter final to the final elections to the Lok Sabha in 2014. The elections to UP and few other states in 2012 is depicted as the semi final. If any one was fooled by these statements, by the time the elections to Assam, Kerala, Tamilnadu and Pondicheri is completed and the six face election to Bengal is going on, they must have become wiser. The major players in the field indulged in mutual mudslinging, personal scandals and petti quarrels and focussed on creating vote banks based on caste, religion and other separatist tendencies by using money, muscle and liquor, or by offering lavish promises like Rs. 2 per kilo rice or washing machines or color TVs, with the help of the print and electronic media, who excelled in celebrating the election campaign as a festival or as yet another cricket match.

When these elections were announced the country as a whole was witnessing the stalling of the parliament in the name of wanton corruption including mega scams and vote buying scandals in the Lok Sabha voting as once again exposed by the WikiLeaks. Prices of essential commodities had reached unprecedented sky high levels. Against the so-called development policy pursued by the central and state governments which is pauperising the masses and devastating the environment and consequent displacement of adivasis, dalits and all other oppressed sections protracted mass movements are taking place in most states. In spite of Fukushima meltdown, the central and state governments are competing with each other for installing more nuclear plants. The elections were also taking place at a time when all erstwhile welfare policies are cut down and social evils like consumption of liquor, caste based oppression and women's exploitation had gone sky high. The intensifying imperialist penetration through neocolonial methods and the neoliberal policies pursued by all those in power at center and in the states are creating an unprecedented situation in the country.

But from Congress, BJP to CPI(M), none of the major political parties who were trying to retain power or trying to come to power in these states tried to develop discussions on any of these cardinal problems. As all of them are united in implementing the neo liberal policies, and have no differences on any of the fundamental issues confronting the people and the country, they were also united in making the election campaign devoid of discussion of any basic problems. It was/is a conscious effort to de-politicise the election and politically disarm the people.

In the prevailing political situation in the country there were very little chances for Congress and its allies winning the election in any of these states. Similarly BJP and its NDA allies are traditionally weak in these states. Still if the CPI(M) led Left Front gets defeated in Kerala or Bengal, or in both these states, it will not be because of any virtue of its opponents, but because the ruling LF has degenerated as a B-team of the Congress. It is also because parties like SUCI which calls itself as 'the only communist party' has degenerated so much that it is in alliance with Trinamul Congress (TMC) in Bengal. The CPI (ML) Liberation went for seat adjustment with the LF in Assam, and it did not try to become part of the efforts to build a revolutionary alternative to the ruling class policies in

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any of these states. In Bengal, while the CPI (M) dissidents are with the Congress-TMC alliance, some of the former CPI(ML) activists and CPI(Maoist) are also with it. While it is a fact the LF has degenerated to social democratic positions, these pseudo left forces in the name of opposing it have degenerated to Congress camp.

It is in this situation, CPI (ML)

state committees are striving hard to politicize the campaign by putting forward Election Manifestos explaining Party's stand towards struggle in the parliamentary front and a revolutionary alternative to the ruling class and revisionist parties and alliances. Based on anti-imperialist and anti-state slogans Party also tried to build a people's alternative in the election campaign uniting revolutionary left and democratic forces. The task before the revolutionary forces is to intensify ideological-political struggle against all alien tendencies, strengthen the *Democratic People's Front* at all India level and develop the struggle in the parliamentary front along with struggles in other fronts, without deviating to either right opportunist or sectarian/adventurist positions. ●

ANNA HAZARE'S FAST AGAINST CORRUPTION

THESE are days when the Indian state and the ruling system as a whole has become rampantly corrupt with scams and scamsters a plenty. Instead of exposing those involved in corruption the government at the center and in the states are trying hard to save the corrupt, throwing the system more nakedly in to this dirty marsh. Even after I.76 lakh crores 2G Spectrum case or the ISRO bureaucrats transferring latest spectrum technology for a pittance to a company owned by a former chief of ISRO or the large number of scams involving army, navy and air force officers or the refusal of the UPA government to reveal the names of those who have stashed away billions in foreign banks or the numerous cases of scams at state level, the ruling system continues to remain least bothered about them.

In this situation, any voice in protest against the corruption raj is welcomed by the people who are searching a way to raise their voice. That is why when Anna Hazare came forward to start an indefinite fast to demand the enacting of the Lok Pal bill immediately with more teeth, it got

immediate support from the people. As a result, the UPA govt. had to swallow its earlier statements and agree to form a committee including 'civil society group' leaders to draft it and to enact it in the monsoon session of the parliament.

But all civil society groups, NGOs, petty bourgeois sections, and all brands of reformists are trying to project it as a great victory which will put an end to corruption. In the past, in early 1950s when Vinoba Bhave launched the Bhoodan movement claiming that it will solve the land problem of the landless, a similar euphoria was created. Similarly in 1970s when Jayprakash Narain launched the Sampoorna Kranti movement, once again euphoria was created that it is going to change the ruling system. While the passing of the Jan Lok Pal bill with more teeth and implementing it may help to create some fear among the scamsters, a cardinal question remains. Can a Lok Pal institution, however powerful it is made, solve the rampant corruption at all levels? In a situation when the virus of corruption has infected all levels of leaderships of the ruling parties, all levels of bureaucracy, the establishment, the armed forces and even up to the chief justice of the Supreme Court, how a Lok Pal institution, however powerful it is made, can contain the virus?

Leaders of the civil society groups like Anna Hazare sometimes ridicule bourgeois parliamentary system and elections for it as corrupt and project themselves as an alternative to it. At the same time he has projected Narendra Modi of Gujarat as the best chief minister in India for his so called 'Panchayat Raj' work. Within days he changed his earlier views and pledged loyalty to ruling system and expressed willingness to accept decision of the parliament on the Lok Pal question. These are nothing but gimmicks to fool the people and to divert them from the real struggle against the ruling system. Even when civil society groups are presented as the alternative to the parliamentary system, its leaders never do anything to go beyond the existing ruling system. What they are trying to cover up is that the only alternative to the bourgeois parliamentary system is the revolutionary capture of political power by the working class and oppressed masses, pursuing the path of socialism based on proletarian democracy overcoming the shortcomings of the socialism that was in practice in Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

While supporting any struggles which expose the degeneration of the ruling system to outright reactionary positions, it is the task of the revolutionary and genuine democratic forces to expose the reformist illusions created by the civil society groups, NGOs like forces and to lead them along the path of people's democracy and socialism. It is a question of unity with all forces who are opposing the anti-people policies of the central and state governments while struggling against attempts to create illusions among the popular forces so that the struggle for a people's alternative can be effectively carried forward. ●

**Breaking the
Shackles**

Organ of AIRWO

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ON BINAYAK SEN'S RELEASE ON BAIL

THAT the Supreme Court has given bail to Dr. Binayak Sen is a positive development and we welcome it. The comment by the SC that any dissent or even a sympathetic attitude to the 'Maoists' cannot be taken as anti national or seditious act for conviction is positive, provided the other courts and the central and state governments take this order in to serious consideration.

But the imprisonment of Binayak Sen is only the tip of the iceberg. What about the thousands of adivasis and others from the oppressed sections who are undergoing imprisonment and other miseries in the name of supporting the 'Maoists' or by using it as an alibi? What about the attack on adivasis, dalits, attacks on women and burning of their huts going on in the name of wiping out acts of sedition? This is the case not only in Chhattisgarh, but also in Jharkhand, Orissa, MP, AP and Maharashtra. Vast majority of them have not even any distant relation with the so-called Maoists. Similarly what about the thousands undergoing imprisonment and other tortures in Jammu and Kashmir and in the North Eastern states? What about Irom Sharmila continuing her fast for ten years under custody of state forces against AFSPA? On the other hand, those in the bureaucracy, in police, para-military and military services, and the political leaders in power who are attacking people in the name of acts of sedition and have unleashed state terror against the people are in leading positions of the rotten ruling system, playing major role in seditious acts like stashing away billions of Rs in foreign banks.

Those petti bourgeois elements and other reformists who see the imprisonment of Binayak Sen as an isolated case and celebrate his release, forget about the thousands suffering worst incarceration and other punishments

in these states. It exposes the way the so called civil rights movement functions in this country. They approach the problem in a one sided, abstract way, with a definite elite class inclination, while the toiling masses continue to suffer behind the bars or in the streets or jails.

There should be a powerful people's movement to compel the government to stop state terror and to release all those who are jailed for struggling for democratic rights, against the state terror, for the right of self-determination, and standing on the side of people's cause. Civil rights movement should not stop with the release of Binayak Sen. It should be transformed in to the beginning of a powerful democratic movement to get all black laws scrapped and to get all those arrested for opposing the state terror and neo liberal policies of the state released immediately. ●

OPPOSE THE ANTI-LABOUR BILLS INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT

EVEN when the BJP had stalled the proceedings of the parliament joining hands with other opposition parties based on the WikiLeaks expose, the UPA government could get its support for moving two anti-labour bills in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on 23 and 24 March. On 23rd March Labour Laws (Exemptions from Furnishing Returns and Maintaining Registers for Certain Establishments) Amendment Bill, 2011, was introduced in the Rajya Sabha with the support of BJP. It exempts employers of establishments employing up to 40 persons from the obligations of almost all the basic labour laws governing matters such as minimum wages, payment of wages, working hours, contract work and payment of bonus. Though the earlier exemption of up to 500 is reduced this bill shall affect about 78% of the working force in the country. Since a large number of the employers employing more than 40 workers are also going to use many loopholes in the bill, overwhelming majority of the workers will be affected by the provisions in this bill.

Another bill was introduced on the next day in the Lok Sabha, again with the help of BJP, called the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PERDA) Bill. It gives an opening to private players and help cutting of government expenditure on pension contributions. All government employees except of armed forces shall come under National Pension Scheme. Pension

shall be disbursed to employees at a rate of return determined by the market, with no implicit or explicit assurance of a guaranteed return. If in many European countries this pension scheme had to be shelved due to powerful agitation by the trade unions, here the bill was introduced easily as the main trade union centres have not come out against it in a powerful agitation. If enacted this bill will go against all the pension benefits enjoyed by the employees to a considerable extent.

As Congress led UPA government and the main opposition BLP led NDA are united in passing these bills, only through a mighty agitation they can be defeated. ●

WHY THE LEFT MATTERS

Prabhat Patnaik

Left Really Matters

Prabhat Patnaik is vice chairman of the Kerala State Planning Board for last five years, is a famous economist and one of the intellectual pillars of the CPI(M). We are reproducing the article written by him: Why the Left Matters? in Indian Express of 17th March, which was reproduced in the Mainstream dated 26th March along with a rejoinder by the noted journalist Barun Das Gupta. We are reproducing them along with a rejoinder by com. KN Ramachandran inviting a debate on this issue. Readers comments and rejoinders are invited — Red Star

INDIA has witnessed a veritable social transformation in the 20th century. A society characterised for millennia by institutionalised inequality in its most grotesque forms, like “untouchability” and “unseeability”, has made a transition to juridical equality, a set of fundamental rights for all citizens, and a form of government based on parliamentary democracy with universal adult franchise. The significance of this transition, despite the fact that it still falls far short of authentic equality, cannot be overstated. It constitutes a part of our long democratic revolution.

This democratic revolution needs to be carried forward, for if it is not, then there will be an inevitable slide-back. Revolutions do not stand still; they either move forward or are overwhelmed by counter-revolutions. The Indian democratic revolution today is faced with the prospects of being so overwhelmed: counter-revolution is gathering strength, and the main reason for this lies in the shift in the position of the bourgeoisie.

HOW, it is worth asking, does the big bourgeoisie manage to impose upon society such massive increases in inequality, even though the people enjoy formal democratic rights? What, in other words, are the mechanisms of abridgement of democracy that permit such inequalities? The range of such mechanisms is wide; some of them are well known; and all of them are clearly visible. A formal abridgement of democracy is the obvious first option. Indira Gandhi during the Emergency actually succeeded for a brief period in doing this, but eventually came a cropper. The BJP-led NDA, during its attempt to “revise” the Constitution, sought to institutionalise such an abridgement, but that attempt too failed. Even so, however, thanks to a plethora of measures, often initiated by the judiciary, like bans on bandhs, restrictions on the right to strike, and curbs on public meetings, there has been a whittling down of people’s democratic rights.

The second obvious mechanism is the nurturing of communal-fascism, which, as Michal Kalecki put it, is kept like a “dog on a leash”. It is occasionally unleashed, with devastating impact; and, even when it is leashed, the fear of its being unleashed serves to reconcile people to the neo-liberal measures of a non-communal-fascist bourgeois government. Since unemployment and distress provide fertile ground for fascist tendencies, this is a mechanism that neo-liberalism spontaneously generates for itself.

The third mechanism is to “incorporate” dissent, and to criminalise such dissent that cannot be incorporated. Here the very fact of the economy being open to the vortex of financial flows helps the neo-liberal cause: any attempt to pursue policies different from what international finance capital favours is fraught with the danger of capital flight, and this forces a degree of uniformity in policy-making among all political formations that do not have the courage to go beyond the existing arrangements altogether. Ideologically too, slogans like “keep development above politics” which is a euphemism for “let us unite to endorse neo-liberalism”, and “let us endorse primitive accumulation of capital”, play the role of incorporating dissent. Refusal to be so incorporated on the other hand brings the charge of sabotaging “the nation’s prospects of emerging as a superpower” and hence being “anti-national”. Through a myriad means in other words, involving in particular the use of corporate media, a propaganda barrage is unleashed that identifies the interests of the corporate and financial magnates as the “nation’s interest”.

The fourth is the spread of religiosity and the resurgence of pre-modern authoritarian institutions like khap panchayats, which the bourgeois political formations treat with benignity. No doubt, an individual has a right to pursue any religion in his or her private life; but religiosity which entails the intrusion of religious practices and rituals into public life, serves to depoliticise and disunite people.

INDEED the essence of the project of the big bourgeoisie is to depoliticise and disunite people, convert them into atomised empirical entities, rob them effectively of any subject role, and enfeeble them in the matter of defending their

democratic rights. The uniqueness of the Left consists in the fact that it is opposed to all this, that its agenda on the contrary is to unite and politicise the people, which alone can make them capable of defending their democratic rights. The Left, in short, is the only consistent force that works in the direction of carrying forward the long democratic revolution in our country.

The Left is different from all of them because it can visualise going beyond the boundaries of capitalism. It can be consistently democratic because it is not imprisoned within the antagonism between capitalism, dominated by globalised finance, on the one hand, and authentic democracy on the other. It is prepared to resolve this anta-gonism by going beyond capitalism, which is why it can be consistently democratic.

The Left in India, notwithstanding its many mistakes, has consistently stood for the carrying forward of the democratic revolution; for further abrogating, systematically, the millennia-old institutionalised inequality of our old order; for struggling against the hegemony of international finance capital and the deep hiatus that a regime characterised by such hegemony produces; for struggling against communal-fascism; for resisting all attempts to curb the democratic rights of the people in the name of “order”, “combating chaos and anarchy” and “develop-ment” (to the point of even issuing public rebukes to senior leaders whose remarks could be interpreted otherwise); and for overcoming religiosity and separateness through political praxis.

Any weakening of the Left weakens the democratic revolution in our country and hence our march to “modernity”. India’s march to “modernity” requires not 8, 9, 10, or 11 per cent growth rate; it requires a carrying forward of the democratic revolution. This is the touchstone by which all political formations have to be judged, and on this criterion the Left, notwithstanding all its weaknesses, emerges superior to all other political formations.

The opposition to the Left, alas, has now gathered momentum to a point where many, claiming to be “progressive”, use the very arguments mentioned above to attack the Left. I can hear, for instance, an immediate riposte to what I have said above: what about Singur, what about Nandigram?

Much has been written about Singur and Nandigram, and we need not go over all that here. Let us for argument’s sake accept the account of the events put forward by the opponents of the Left. Even so, nobody can possibly argue

that they reflected the Left’s subscription to an abridgement of the regime of rights of the people. However mistaken one may think the handling of those two cases by the Left Front Government was, one cannot say that they represented an attempt by the Left to dilute or abrogate the regime of democratic rights of the people. Of course, any police firing can be interpreted ipso facto, whether rightly or wrongly, as constituting an attack on the democratic rights of the people; but there is a difference between an episode of police firing and a change in stand on the regime of rights. The Left has never changed its basic class position on the regime of democratic rights of the people. It has stood consistently against all attempts to abridge the regime of rights (to a point where it even opposed the banning of the Maoists despite their rampant murderous attacks on CPM cadres). Nandigram and Singur in short were tragic episodes; they do not represent an iota of shift on the part of the Left to any alternative, abridged, regime of rights. All this has a vital importance in the current election season. The outcome of these polls will have a crucial bearing upon the future of the Left in India. And if the Left receives a setback then the democratic revolution in our country will be in jeopardy. ●

SCRAP THE SEDITION LAW

BINAYAK SEN was charge sheeted under the Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code of 1860 which is still in force in this country. It was under this clause Bal Gangadhar Tilak and later Gandhiji were imprisoned in the name of fighting against the colonial rulers. Anyone can be sentenced to life imprisonment under it just by accusing that he or she has worked against the state. It shows that qualitatively no change has taken place even after the transfer of power in imposing these black laws enacted during British rule.

As a result in the name of possessing alleged

subversive literature or speaking against the imperialist subservient policies of the state one can be charged for sedition as it is interpreted that love for the country means servitude to the ruling system which is enslaving the country to neo-colonial domination.

A major struggle is called for to fight this draconian law so that is scrapped from the statute books once for ever. All those who raised voice against the imprisonment of Binayak Sen should extend the struggle to get this barbarous law and this “highly objectionable and obnoxious clause” of this reactionary Penal Code scrapped. ●

IN A RECENT article, eminent economist and CPI-M ideologue Prabhat Patnaik has contended that Nandigram and Singur were just “tragic episodes” that “do not represent an iota of shift on the part of the Left to any alternative, abridged, regime of rights”. He also asserts that “the Left, in short, is the only consistent force that works in the direction of carrying forward the long democratic revolution in our country. The Left is different from all of them because it can visualise going beyond the boundaries of capitalism.”

He also claims that “however mistaken one may think the handling of those two cases (Singur and Nandigram—B.D.G.) by the Left Front Government was, one cannot say that they represented an attempt by the Left to dilute or abrogate the regime of democratic rights of the people”. Patnaik has also claimed that “The Left is different from all of them because it can visualise going beyond the boundaries of capitalism.”

These statements and claims cannot be allowed to go uncontradicted and unchallenged. Before going into the question of the democratic credentials of the CPI-M as seen in its methods of governance and dealing with its political opponents in West Bengal for nearly three-and-a-half decades, let us examine the claim that the Left—that is, the Left of the CPI-M genre—visualises going beyond the boundaries of capitalism.

In an interview to The Telegraph of Kolkata on February 28, 2007, Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee said:

“As Communists, we are changing all over the world. We are seriously thinking ... why did the Soviet Union fail? ... If it is only a state-owned economy, it will not work. We need all: state-owned companies, cooperatives, joint sector, private sector and foreign investors.” So, according to Buddhadeb

CPM ABROGATED THE REGIME OF PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

Barun Das Gupta

Bhattacharjee, inviting the private sector and foreign investors is “going beyond the boundaries of capitalism”.

But this is not all. The piece de resistance comes later: “We were Communists some fifty years back. We believe in some basic tenets of Marxism. We are realists. I don’t like the word pragmatism; it smacks of opportunism. I prefer (the word) realist.” Yes, Bhattacharjee is a realist. The realist in him urges him to make hay while the sun shines. He unrolls the red carpet for the Tatas and the Ambanis, for the Dhoots and the Salims of Indonesia.

He orders acquisition of thousands of acres of fertile, multi-crop land and hands over this land on a platter to the desi and foreign industrialists for a song. If the peasants try to organise resistance to eviction, he issues a court order to the police: “Blow them up.” The political parties organising the resistance of the peasantry are accused of conspiring to shut the door of industrialisation and industrial regeneration of Bengal for good. They are accused of being in cahoots with the hated and dreaded Maoists. An intense propaganda barrage is let loose through the print and electronic media. If the Tatas are made to abandon the Singur project, the people are told, then Bengal is doomed. The interest of the Tatas has become coterminous with that of Bengal. Neo-liberalism is the way to development, to creation of employment, to a surge of industrial activity. Forget old Marx. Capitalism does no longer retrench workers and reduce employment by automation. It generates employment. It has become people’s capitalism that the Yankees have been telling us for a long time.

Now juxtapose this view to what Patnaik says: “Through a myriad means in other words, involving in particular the use of corporate media, a propaganda barrage is unleashed that identifies the interests of the corporate and financial magnates as the ‘nation’s interest’.”

It will require all the sophistry and casuistry of a Prabhat Patnaik to reconcile the two views, to convince his readers that the Left (that is, the CPI-M) is the only political formation that “visualises going beyond the boundaries of capitalism” if we are to accept the statement of Bhattacharjee as the official position of the CPI-M. The party has not disowned or distanced itself from the Bengal Chief Minister’s views. On his own confession, Bhattacharjee and his comrades abandoned communism “some fifty years back”.

Bhattacharjee raises the question: “Why did the Soviet Union fail?” Implicit in the question lies the answer: the Soviet Union failed precisely because it remained a purely state-owned economy, because it liquidated indigenous capitalism and because it did not invite the foreign monopoly capitalists. The party that split the undivided CPI together with all its mass organisations at the instigation of the Communist Party of China (CPC) four-and-a-half decades ago and accused the Soviet Communist Party of being revisionist and the Soviet state of being social-imperialist, today finds fault with the Soviet leadership for not going the whole hog the capitalist way! The Soviet Union failed not because it did not become capitalist but for a whole host of other socio-political and socio-economic reasons which are outside the purview of this article.

LET us now turn to the main (and totally preposterous) claim of Patnaik that barring Singur and Nandigram (only Singur and Nandigram, mind you, not anything else like Suchpur, Sainbari, Marichjhapi, Bantala, Dhantala, the burning alive of Ananda-margis in Kolkata and scores and dozens of other incidents, the latest being Netai in Medinipur), the Left has never attempted “to dilute or abrogate the regime of the rights of the people”.

Anyone acquainted with the social and political life of Bengal since the mid-1980s knows how democratic the regime of the CPI-M has been. The democratic sentiment of the CPI-M has been expressed again and again through the statements of its top leaders. Here are some random samples: “We will make hell the life of the people of Nandigram” (Benoy Konar, Central Committee member). “Let no Bengali mother name her daughter after Mamata” (Shyamal Chakraborty, ex-Minister). “I can drag her by the hair from here (Arambagh) to Kalighat” (Anil Basu, ex-MP). “Elections will come and go, then you will have a lot to answer for” (Ganashakti, the CPI-M daily, in a warning to non-CPI-M Left intellectuals). Then there are indecent and vulgar threats that cannot be quoted. (This writer’s article “CPI-M’s Downhill Journey in Bengal”, published in the Mainstream of July 11, 2009, gives an account of the terror tactics applied by the CPI-M.)

The party does not even try to conceal its intention of “abrogating the regime of the rights of the people”. The latest weapon of terror added to the arsenal of the CPI-M is the so-called Harmad Vahini or armed goons. They can be likened to the Storm Troopers of the Nazi Party in the Germany of the 1930s. Their job is to “capture” areas under the influence of the Opposition parties, kill or drive away their workers and supporters and consolidate the rule of the party. The Harmad Vahini was formed after the people started shedding their fear and organising resistance to foil the CPI-M’s deter-mined bid to abrogate the regime of the rights of the people.

In their present state of mind, the CPI-M leaders have also failed to identify their main adversary. They are concentrating all their fire—figuratively and literally—on the Trinamul Congress and its leader. They have refused to come

face to face with the grim reality that their principal adversary is not a political party or its leader but the people of West Bengal. It is the people of West Bengal they are up against. It is the people of West Bengal from whom they have totally isolated themselves. It is the people of West Bengal who are determined this time to throw them out.

What happens when a Communist Party gets isolated from the people? Josef Stalin, the CPI-M’s ideological guru, was quoted in the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course thus: “A party perishes if it shuts itself up in its narrow party shell, if it severs itself from the masses, if it allows itself to be covered with bureaucratic rust. As long as the Bolsheviks maintain connexion with the broad masses of the people, they will be invincible. And, on the contrary, as soon as the Bolsheviks sever themselves from the masses and lose their connexion with them, as soon as they become covered with bureaucratic rust, they will lose all their strength and become a mere cipher.” Let the CPI-M see its own face in the mirror of this prognostication of Stalin. ●

CHERNOBYL DAY OBSERVED COUNTRY-WIDE

WITH the slogans: Abandon All Proposed Nuclear Plants including Jaitapur; Declare Moratorium on All Existing Nuclear Plants; Fight for Universal Nuclear Disarmament, the 25th anniversary of Chernobyl nuclear disaster was observed country-wide on 26th April under the banner of CPI(ML) and anti-nuclear committees. At Hyderabad in AP, under the banner of Anti-Nuclear Committee a well attended convention was organised in which nuclear scientists, economists and intellectuals including Prof. AR Chowdhry, Prof. Purushottam Reddy, Dr. Narshimha Reddy and others called for a broad based movement with these slogans.

In Kerala, at Kochi, Kottayam, Trissur and Kannur day long signature campaigns, exhibitions, public meetings and effigy burning were organised as part of this campaign by CPI(ML). Under various banners in

different areas like Jaitapur, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, etc. the campaigns were organised.

As a part of various campaigns continuing all over India following Fukushima meltdown, the government, which was trying to push forward hastily for starting a number of nuclear plants including the mega plant at Jaitapur under Indo-US Nuclear Treaty, is put on the defensive. While a section of the ruling parties are trying to confuse the issue by stating that are against only pressurised water reactors of Areva company like the one in Fukushima, as a result of the campaign it is emphasised that whether light water or heavy water reactors, all are susceptible to meltdown and non are required. The growing determination of the people to stop nuclear power plants at any cost was reflected in more than thousand mobilisation at Mumbai organising an effective road block at Curry road junction.

WE HAVE no hesitation to agree with Prabhat Patnaik that significant transition has taken place in India from those days when it was reduced to a colony of British imperialism, especially during the 20th century, under the long democratic revolution started from the time of the First War of Independence of 1857, and which is still continuing. We also agree with him when he says that the Indian democratic revolution today is faced with the prospects of being overwhelmed by the counter revolution which is gaining strength day by day. But we basically disagree when he says that the main reason for this lies in the shift in the position of the bourgeoisie during this period. In this manner he is trying to conceal the fact that the Indian bourgeoisie had and still have a consistent class character and it was in recognizing this the Communist leadership in India committed serious mistake from the very beginning, leading to the democratic revolution getting stalled.

The Communist International documents during its formative years have pointed out that the emerging bourgeoisie in the countries under colonial domination are collaborating with the imperialist bourgeoisie. They have no independent character, are comprador in character and are incapable of leading the democratic revolution to its completion. During the long period of democratic revolution the activities of this class repeatedly proved the correctness of this analysis of the class character of Indian bourgeoisie by the Comintern. Even to raise the slogan of 'purna swaraj' the CPI and other anti imperialist forces had to wage a relentless struggle, as the bourgeois leaderships of Congress and Muslim League were satisfied with the domain status. The Indian bourgeois class consistently collaborated with the imperialist classes and even after the transfer of power they had no hesitation to keep India within the British Commonwealth and to adopt almost all the provisions of the 1935

THE LEFT REALLY MATTERS

KN Ramachandran

Government of India Act in the Indian Constitution. The 'inherited' British Indian State is maintained without any basic changes even today.

The economic history of the country during the colonial period and after shows that in the economic and technical fields the Indian bourgeoisie had no hesitation to integrate itself with the global imperialist economic system in all fields. The history of the Indian industrial houses like Tatas, Birlas etc prove this. During the post- Second World War years, when the imperialist system under the leadership of US imperialism transformed its colonial system of hegemony and plunder with neo colonial forms of plunder, the Indian bourgeoisie had no hesitation to adjust with this change. Even while they were trying to use the possibilities of manoeuvre between the imperialist camp and the socialist camp for their favor, the Indian state became member of the IMF, World Bank, UN and signed the GATT Treaty integrating itself to the neo colonial world system.

Maintaining their consistent character, as soon as the US led imperialist forces embraced the neo liberal policies abandoning their hitherto Keynesian policies, the Indian bourgeoisie and their Indian state had no hesitation to impose them in this country as ruthlessly as possible. As a result all the hitherto welfare policies are thrown away and the public sector is reduced to a mere skeleton of what it was. The 'formal abridgement of democracy' initiated by the Indira Gandhi government is now taken to unprecedented fascicisation of the state in spite of the fact that as a result of people's struggles no formal 'revision' of the Constitution has so far taken place. We have full agreement with the explanations given by Prabhat Patnaik regarding the anti people, anti democratic changes that are taking place in myriad forms. The imperialist bourgeoisie at international level and the comprador bourgeoisie in the countries under neo-colonisation like India are proving how consistent they are in pursuing the imperialist globalisation and neo liberal policies to perpetuate the rule of the imperialists and their lackeys. It is surprising how such a renowned economic pundit and Marxist ideologue like Prabhat Patnaik fails to recognise this fact and assert that all these changes are taking place because the bourgeoisie betrayed! Is Prabhat Patnaik having the illusion that even after what Lenin taught in 'Colonial Thesis', the bourgeoisie in the neo colonial countries will carry the democratic revolution forward!

As Prabhat Patnaik asserts, Indeed the essence of the project of the big bourgeoisie is to depoliticise and disunite people, convert them in to atomised empirical entities, rob them effectively of any subject role, and enfeeble them in the matter of defending their democratic rights But what Prabhat Patnaik refuse to admit is that it was the character of the big bourgeoisie always. And Prabhat Patnaik is mystifying and confusing his readers for the purpose of justifying that *the left*, that is the leadership of the CPI(M) which he faithfully follows, *has never changed its basic class position on the regime of the democratic rights of the people*, as he states. According to him, the left in India, notwithstanding its many mistakes, has consistently stood for the carrying forward of the democratic revolution. Again, in spite of the 'tragic' episodes of Nandigram and Singur, "*they do not represent an iota of shift on the part of the left to any alternative, abridged regime of rights*

*How can Prabhat Patnaik dare to repeat such falsehoods when the history of the last 5-6 decades of the communist movement in the country, which according to him is that of the CPI and CPI(M) leaderships, is a history of class betrayal and class collaboration which is one of the basic reasons for the severe setbacks suffered by the people's movement leading to the *abridgement of the regime of rights of the people!* While the bourgeoisie did not make an iota of change in their class character (rather they became more ruthless in pursuing them) during these decades and consistently follow their comprador tasks, it was the 'left', the CPI and CPI(M), which basically shifted from Marxist-Leninist positions and helped the Indian state to pursue its counter revolutionary policies. (Here it needs mention that the Naxalbari movement which came up challenging the revisionist CPI and neo-revisionist CPI(M) leaderships during the 1960s also failed to lead the people's movements with revolutionary orientation due to its sectarian line which is still pursued by the CPI(Maoist)).* If Prabhat Patnaik

CPI(M) is perishing as it has shut itself in its narrow party shell, has severed relations with the concrete reality and the masses and is covered with bureaucratic rust under the social democratic political line it is pursuing. However hard they try, Prabhat Patnaik like opportunist ideologues cannot save it through this type of theorization based on falsification of history.

bothers to examine a few instances of past history, it will not be difficult for him to find out this fact.

During the independence struggle, the failure to correctly analyse the comprador character of Indian bourgeoisie repeatedly defeated the CPI leadership to establish the leadership of the working class in the

national movement in spite of the numerous anti-feudal and working class struggles with great sacrifices by the Party at various levels. Again, after the transfer of power in 1947, in the name of correcting the left deviation of the 1948 Calcutta thesis, in spite of the correct orientation provided by the 1951 Party Program and tactical line, refusing to recognise the comprador character of the bourgeoisie, the CPI leadership went on pursuing a right opportunist and class collaborationist line leading to many setbacks and the 1964 split in the movement. After the split, though CPI(M) was born with assurances to pursue the line of People's Democratic Revolution, it soon embraced a centrist line leading to degeneration to parliamentarism and formation of opportunist united fronts to come to power in Bengal and Kerala in 1967 elections.

After coming to power in these states, it refused to implement agrarian reforms based on land to the tiller policy and instead pursued the 'land reforms from above' policy including land ceilings promoted by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations like imperialist agencies to facilitate intervention of capital, market forces and technology provided by the MNCs in the agrarian sector. When the CPSU leadership degenerated to revisionist positions and took Soviet Union to capitalist path, like CPI, the CPI(M) also refused to recognise it and went on upholding it as a socialist country till it disintegrated in 1991. When the major contradictions in the country intensified and the bourgeois parliamentary system was in crisis leading to a vertical split in the Congress in 1969 on the one hand and intensification of the people's struggles on the other, instead of trying to build a left alternative to the ruling system, like CPI, the CPI(M) also supported the Indira Gandhi led government, helping it to survive the crisis. When the Indira Gandhi government went on intensifying its authoritarian policies finally

declaring the *internal emergency* in 1975, if the CPI became its apologist and slavishly supported her, the CPI(M) refused to organise resistance movement against it in the name of 'protecting the party', as criticised by P. Sundarayya, then general secretary, in his resignation letter. This erroneous line provided opportunity for the rightist forces led by the Jan Sangh and then BJP to utilise the anti-Congress sentiments increasing in the country.

And, once the BJP emerged as the main opposition with its communal fascist policies, both CPI and CPI(M), in spite of the Congress government in 1991 imposing the imperialist promoted neo-liberal policies, intensifying the neo-colonisation of the country, in the main reduced its policy to supporting the Congress in the name of opposing communal fascism. The role of the CPI(M) led Left Front of supporting the UPA government following the 2004 elections in effect further marginalised their political and organisational influence, helping the forces of counter revolution to increase their influence and power. As Prabhat Patnaik states, while the uniqueness of the Left consists in the fact that it is opposed to all this (anti people policy of the Indian state), and its agenda on the contrary is to unite and politicise the people, which alone can make them capable of defending their democratic rights, the Left Front led by CPI(M) in effect became apologists of the neo colonial policies pursued by the Indian state and its executioners in the states where it was in power. Singur, Nandigram and Lalgah happened as it tried to suppress the people's resistance to the neo-liberal policies imposed by the LF government. They cannot be brushed aside as just some 'tragic episodes'. Many such things happened in Kerala also where Prabhat Patnaik is the vice chairman of the planning board. If the LF feels insecure and is afraid of suffering setbacks in the elections in these states, it is because it has abandoned

the left policies and embraced the imperialist promoted neo liberal policies faithfully speeded up by the ruling class parties and their fronts at center and in the states.

As Prabhat Patnaik and petty bourgeois intellectuals like him are camp followers of the LF led by the CPI(M), they refuse to recognise the role played by CPI(M) like forces, abandoning revolutionary theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism, in facilitating the counter revolutionary policies pursued by the ruling classes and their political representatives through the Indian state. And to justify the class collaborationist line of their leaderships they create new theories that the democratic space is shrinking due to the 'bourgeoisie changing their positions'. In this manner, they are glorifying the rotten history of the bourgeoisie in India and denying the role of the proletariat in creating a new history, thereby further distancing themselves from the Marxist-Leninist positions. They refuse to recognise the class content of communal fascism which is one of the tools employed by the imperialists and their lackeys to perpetuate their hegemony and that even while Congress claim to oppose the communal fascism of Sangh Parivar, it was/is pursuing its own brand of 'soft Hindutua' right from the time of independence struggle and following transfer of power, appeasing all brands of communal forces to perpetuate the ruling system.

As Stalin is correctly quoted by Barun Das Gupta, CPI(M) is perishing as it has shut itself in its narrow party shell, has severed relations with the concrete reality and the masses and is covered with bureaucratic rust under the social democratic political line it is pursuing. However hard they try, Prabhat Patnaik like opportunist ideologues cannot save it through this type of theorization based on falsification of history. Instead of saving it from its degeneration, they themselves are helping the speeding up of this degeneration. ●

RECENT FUND-BANK SUMMIT

PJ James

THE FUND-BANK meeting that held in Washington during the second week of April, 2011 was significant in the context of the continuing world economic crisis in the form of surging unemployment, galloping prices of most essential items including food and fuel, declining purchasing powers of the broad masses and growing instability in international financial markets. As a prelude to the meeting of the Bretton Woods twins, and of course for deciding on the agenda and giving directions to them the G20, the group of leading 20 countries also met.

Although the declared objective of the Meeting was to strengthen IMF's supervisory role (and, of course, that of World Bank too, based on the principle of 'cross conditionality') in examining the budget positions, debt levels and balance of payments situations of countries, and putting pressure on the indebted countries to follow the 'rules of the game' so as to avoid extra pressure from such countries on an ailing global economy, the most striking aspect of it has been the deepening inter-imperialist divisions as manifested in the United States' attempts to mobilize international pressure on China to revalue its currency, the yuan. As usual, the Obama administration vehemently attacked the alleged Chinese approach of artificially keeping the value of its currency low to make exports cheap and competitive in the global market and amassing huge foreign reserves by underselling goods in American and other markets. Because of the burgeoning American imports from China, the former is also experiencing an unprecedented balance of payments deficit. On the other hand, as Beijing has recently announced, China now holds foreign exchange reserves amounting to \$ 3 trillion, much of it in American dollars. In fact what the US intended at the summit was to exert pressure on China to accept IMF surveillance over its exchange rate mechanism. The US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner in his statement to the IMF meeting while welcomed IMF surveillance of United States own "fiscal and monetary policies", referring to China, also added: "However, others, especially those whose fundamentals call for greater flexibility, must also contribute." Pointing at China's under-valued or artificially depreciated currency which is allegedly used for dumping goods abroad, Geithner warned that the "current exchange rate is an obstacle to international cooperation on imbalances" and stressed the need of IMF taking a "stronger role in fulfilling its surveillance responsibilities, with regard to system of effective exchange rates, reserve accumulation, and capital flows."

On the other hand, Yi Gang, the Chinese representative who attended the meeting insisted that the main source of global imbalances is not the value of the Yuan, but US fiscal deficits and the US Federal Reserve's printing and pumping of hundreds of billions of dollars into the global financial system, creating inflation in food and other commodities, as well as financial bubbles in real estate and other assets. Accusing mainly the American manipulation of its privileged position of having dollar still as the world currency, he added: "It is worth noting that since the outbreak of the financial crisis, large fluctuations in international capital flow, the exchange rate of major reserve currencies, and the commodity prices have hindered the domestic process of stabilizing and recovering growth in many countries and added to the difficulties in structural reform and fiscal consolidation." He even tried to mention the indirect help rendered by China to imperialist world economy by offering low cost investment markets to MNCs from US and EU, an aspect not denied by the other imperialist powers.

But, there were only few supporters for the US this time. Interestingly, while the Fund-Bank Meeting was proceeding at Washington, on the other side of the world, in Sanya, in China's southern island province of Hainan, there was another gathering—a meeting of the BRICS group of countries, comprising Brazil, Russia, India and China, along with South Africa, which has been admitted as a new member. China used its political and economic clout at the BRICS summit to put on record its growing antagonism against US economic domination and the global role of the dollar, and even succeeded, in spite of reservations from India, Washington's subservient partner, at the BRICS to push the demand for changes in the governing structures of international financial institutions, especially IMF and World Bank, in order to reflect changes in the world economy, which also implies China's ascendancy as the Second largest economy. Among other things, the BRICS summit took a critical stand towards the "massive" speculative capital flows especially from the crisis-ridden Western capitalist powers to Afro-Asian-Latin American countries resulting in destabilization of their economies and also called for changes in the international monetary system rooted in "a broad-based international reserve currency system providing stability and certainty."

Both the Fund-Bank meeting and BRICS summit were very much concerned with what they characterize the "fragile" and "vulnerable" global situation arising from the developments in North Africa and West Asia and the nuclear emergency in Japan following the earthquake. In this context, the leaders expressed their nervousness and stressed the continuing need for "extreme watchfulness" as the world economy is still reeling under the pressures generated by 2008-09 world financial crisis. For instance, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Singapore Finance Minister who was officiating as IMF spokesman, concluded at the final news conference thus: "Although we are in a better position than a year ago, there are significant vulnerabilities. We are still in a fragile situation. We have to be extremely watchful." More or less similar views were heard from other dignitaries.

Compared with the past meetings, recent global political and economic summits are marked by the emergence of two well-marked trends: one is the sharpening inter-imperialist tensions and the other, the strengthening contradiction between imperialism and world's struggling people. The alteration in the balance of power among the imperialist powers with the transformation of China as a capitalist power having its own specificities has become one of the major reasons for the acrimonious scenes in the global meetings nowadays. It will have its repercussions in other international fields too. The second aspect, that is the growing contradiction between imperialism and world people has also started manifesting in the deliberations and discussions of the international bodies. In the inaugural press conference itself, the World Bank president, Zoellick pointed out the sky-rocketing global food prices as a serious cause of the prevailing tension. He said: "We should remember that the revolution in Tunisia started with the self-immolation of a fruit seller who was harassed by authorities." According to Zoellick global food prices have over the last one year shot up by 36 percent and during the past half an year another 44 million people had fallen in to poverty. To quote him: "With food prices we are at a real tipping point." In a similar vein, the IMF managing director Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who until recently had full of praise for the structural adjustment program in North Africa from Tunisia to Egypt, in view of the turmoil in North Africa and elsewhere changed the tone of his comments in a post-summit news conference thus: "Growth is not enough, because the old pattern, following which if you had growth, the rest would follow, doesn't work anymore." He further elaborated: "We meet every year, and since the crisis, and in the aftermath of the crisis, things have improved at the global level, on average ... it's improving as far as the macro-economic figures are concerned ... On the other hand, most people in

the street don't feel that their own life has improved." But these confessions of neocolonial chieftains who their policies are encouraging finance capital to further raise its profit rate and driving down the wages of toiling masses to subsistence level everywhere are mere eyewash and intended for hoodwinking the people.

In the meanwhile, the Global Monitoring Report 2011(GMR) to check the global progress achieved under the so called Millennium Development Goals, jointly prepared by the World Bank and IMF unequivocally proclaims that "the key targets" will remain elusive when the 2015 deadline declared by UN is reached. In the specific areas of child and maternal mortality, access to sanitation, basic education, etc. though the quantity of services has increased, they have become inaccessible to vast majority of the targeted population. Though the GMR, on account of its class position, is reluctant to enter into an analysis of the factors behind this dismal picture, willy-nilly recognizes that high economic growth rates do not at all mean "inclusive growth." The implication is clear. Under neoliberal globalization led by speculative finance, the world is witnessing an unprecedented polarization of income and assets and the have-nots are becoming still more marginalized and pauperized. An interesting aspect is the GMR's praise of India for achieving high growth rate along with China. But the hollowness of this growth is exposed by the figures provided by other reports concerning in India. For instance, according to the recently released Chronic Poverty Report (CPR), while poverty in India declined by 12.4 percent between 1977-78 and 1987-88 (which was pre-globalisation period), the same during the period between 1993-94 and 2004-05 was only 8.5 percent. Taking the growth rate of population into consideration, this means an absolute increase in the number of people below poverty line under imperialist globalization. ●

SUICIDE OF FARMERS IN ODISHA

Sambhau Mishra

AS PER NSO report ,out of total 89.35 lakh farming families in India 42.3 lakh are under the traps of loans up to 2005.Due to burgeoning input cost in farming they have to borrow. In government banks the process is lengthy and they demand collateral, hence they remain unapproachable. In microfinance and SHG, processing is simple but interest rate is high up to 80%,so they are compelled to approach to entangle themselves in loans .Even the public sector banks imposed compound interest and strong instalments.

Odisha is an agrarian state, more than 65% of the population dependent upon farming .More than one fourth of the state GDP and more than half of the industrial product comes from agriculture products. But now crisis in farm sectors and frequent farmers suicide have worsened the scenario. When internal conflicts in ruling state Government and opportunist opposition tend to take a hand in the issue ,a through analysis is inevitable in this regard. Before going to the crisis directly, firsts we should give a bird's eye view of the various agriculture policies since the colonial era.

Odisha came under British rule since 1803.To create a puppet class for themselves ,the Britishers abolished the contemporary land regulation and imposed permanent settlement in 1793.Hence land came under zamindars and landlords. At that time there were 24 provinces in Odisha .Private landed property was not fully developed due to lack of land settlement. Farmland were created by clearing forest .The Odia people were not interested to be abided by the regulation ,which created mass movements like Paik rebellion in 1817 , Ulgulan by Veer Surendra Sai in 1827,Gond rebellion in 1888 and many other local unrest. After independence land reform was the major objective. In this programme the major steps were (i) abolition of Zamindari (ii) reform in Royatdari (iii) fixation of maximum

private land holding (iv)redistribution of surplus land and (v)circular settlement .In 1951 Orissa provincial land abolition act was passed to deprive the feudal concentration of landed property. Notwithstanding of that as per NSO 48th report ,in 1991-92,6.9 lakh share croppers cultivating 4.5 lakh hectares land which just stand for 9.5% of the total farmland in Odisha. In Odisha sharecropping is at subsistence level instead of being at capitalist level. Here who are sharecroppers ,they are either very small farmers on land holding or total landless labourers.In 1960,Odisha land reform act was presented and in 1965 it is passed .But 12 years were lapsed for implementation due to complexity and ambiguity in interpretation of laws , red tapism and endemic corruption in beaucracy, vested interest pressure groups the land reform remained unfunctional. On the other hand in 1960 in the name of developed agro-technology, government induced high yielding varieties ,chemical fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation and developed instruments. Having failed in abolition of feudalism, state tended to sponsor capitalism alias crony capitalism.

In 1997,Government of Odisha enacted agriculture policy ,which was not other than the suggestions given by World Bank in 1991.For the first time agriculture was bestowed the industry status. To implement that the state government has been taking various steps .In state assembly Agriculture products exchange (amendment)bill ,2005 has been presented .It's main aim is to encourage contract farming .New seed bill,2004 was introduced to discourage the use of indigenous seed. According to it, the determination of qualitative value of seed goes under the power of state government.

In Odisha paddy is the main crop, hence considered as a cash crop .In 1965 government has made law for the sell and purchase of paddy .This can be done through licensed institutions, FCI and department of supply .But for last several years the farmers cannot sell their product at minimum price .So economic security of the farmers is at jeopardy and he is pulled into the trap of poverty .A number of socio-economic factors pressurize the farmers to commit suicide. First of all we shall assess the conditions of some farmers who have committed suicide. A common typical similarities that can be seen between them are that :

- (i) All the farmers are small land holders or sharecroppers.
- (ii) Most of them belong to un-irrigated area.
- (iii) Most of them borrowed from non - government sources.
- (iv) Most of them belong to farming class or lower class.
- (v) Most of them have no other source of income.
- (vi) Major of them are BPL card holders.

According to national crime records bureau in between 1997 to 2005 , in India total 1lakh 50 thousands had committed suicide. In the last ten years 3000 farmers have killed themselves. Outside Odisha ,in other states farmer suicides are related to cash crops like especially cotton and soyabin. But in Odisha failure of paddy crop is the main reason .We can take the examples of Radheshyam

Bhoi who committed suicide under the pressure of loan of Rs 15000 borrowed from an NGO. He belongs to Sason thana, Sambalpur. Under the pressure of loans from micro-finances and SHG ,a farmer named Samrat Jagdala did self immolation in front of office of District Collector .In Odisha Dilip Das is the only fisherman who committed suicide under the pressure of loans .In this series the first woman farmer was Soudamini Naik (45) of Jamankira Block.

Due to acute poverty, even a small borrowing and the high interest rate is a big burden for them . If look to the scenario of agricultural disaster ;then as per the rough estimation of Revenue department in 2006 , in 8 panchayats 70% and in aggregate 61% of the farming is lost .Only on Rengali block 1100 hectares land was under sever draught where as 600 hectares layed uncultivated .1560 hectares was pest infested (LEDA POKA).In Sambalpur 4987 hectares remained uncultivated ,15542 hectares suffered crop failure and 19811 hectares were pest infested(LEDA POKA).Only in Jaminkira 1378 hectare is used as pasture. Since it was government estimation, reality is more horrible .But the condition was easily preconceived .In these areas also farmer movements are gaining support. As per NSO report ,out of total 89.35 lakh farming families in India 42.3 lakh are under the traps of loans up to 2005.Due to burgeoning input cost in farming they have to borrow .In government banks the process is lengthy and they demand collateral ,hence they remain unapproachable .In microfinance and SHG ,processing is simple but interest rate is high up to 80%,so they are compelled to approach to entangle themselves in loans .Even the public sector banks imposed compound interest and strong instalments.

In a family if the land is in the name of father then sons ,daughters and wife are not considered as farmers .Hence their suicide cannot be claimed as farmer suicide. They cannot be benefitted from agricultural credits ,in this way it becomes beneficial for only few .Government is telling that agrocredit is increasing ,for 55 lakh hectares 3600 crore rupees has been sanctioned .It lies per acre less than Rs 250.After the death of Balaram Bhoi ,her wife had to take a credit of Rs 5000 for the execution of funeral rites .It means he was born in credit ,live in credit, died in credit and after that funeral rites are done by credit.

The defective agricultural policy has always considered farming as unskilled labour .It has created difficulties in fixing the wages. According to Radhakrishnan committee report ,if alternative is not available ,43% of farmers are ready to leave farming .Today for a farmer family daily earning ranges between Rs30 to Rs 35 whereas ,on the implementation of 6 the pay commission ,the government of lower strata gets daily Rs 400 .The district Collector gets Rs 2000-3000 a day. Due to this step motherly attitude of the government towards agriculture, the growing inequality and the self humiliation experienced by the farmer encourage him to leave farming.

One of the major reasons of farmer suicide is lack of insurance in farming sector to protect the farmer from disaster. Even the existing insurance policy is defective. Since a block is considered as one unit, until the whole block is not declared draught prone, insurance amount cannot be available. Again the input per hectare cost lies between Rs. 14, 000 to Rs. 20, 000 but the insurance amount is decided as Rs. 8, 940 only. On the other direction, production per acre has increased from 20 to 35 packets but the farmer is eligible to get compensation only if his production is below 9 packets. Like that in the field of "rain insurance" without considering the rainwater requirement crop wise and month wise, only rain proportion in between June to September is considered. Due to this falsity, the companies are getting crores of rupees from insurance where as a farmer cannot get relaxation even after insured.

Here we should raise some fundamental questions for small landholders

and share croppers, who will be actually benefitted from this draught prone area declaration, debt swap, insurance compensation etc. They are never in a condition to pay the premium of insurance. They are even not benefitted by debt swap because their source of credit is non-governmental. Besides this there is no share cropping law in Odisha, because all the benefits go only to the landlords. So, how the privileges reach to them, is a question of prime concern. Without dimensional change in the law and system, without determination of wages properly, without tenancy reform, without implementation of share cropping law and without bringing the inequality with the unorganized sector, the problems cannot be truly solved. The share cropper ownership law which was made by the first chief minister of Odisha late Naba krushna choudhury has not been implemented yet.

The weak delivery system of Government, non serious attitude of administration, lack of political control over administrative machinery foiling all the programmes and co-operations. When crop was pest infected last year, pesticides and sprayers of right quality did not reach to the farmers, so situation was aggravated. They have been deposited in heaps in the block offices till now.

Apart from all these reasons there are other reasons of farmer suicides. First among them is, the social establishment and dignity of the past years do not hold water now for farming profession. Because it remained lucrative no more. Again due to the advent of modern competitions, electronics media, advertisement, the farmer falls into the trap of glamour world. He has to purchase television, two wheelers, refrigerator, cosmetics mobile etc. to maintain his social status which cannot be met with the income of agriculture. How the income from agriculture can be sufficient to chase sky rocketing prices and social curse like dowry? Now privatization

of health and education again multiply the burden. For health one cannot compromise for cost. The farmer is interested to give his child good education. Looking to the poor condition of Government schools, he is bound to send his child to costly private school. These reasons are explicit from the suicides of competition in the society due to market fundamentalism, stimulate him to earn more. It compelled him to borrow.

The absence of administrative support is again a reason to frustrate him. Another important thing is that the farmer does not have any alternative other than agriculture. For the landless labourers and share croppers, round the year employment is not possible, so they have to go to other state as contract or bonded labourers (DADAN).

There should be a long term programme for such problem :

- I. Land reform and share cropper laws to be implemented
- II. Farming should be given the status of skilled labour; hence the gap between the salary of a Government servant and wage of a farmer should be eliminated. Even there should be limitation decided for the salary of topmost level
- III. When wage of farm labourer is fixed, his average family members to be considered as 6 instead of 3.
- IV. Farming should be made free from compound interest by changing banking laws.
- V. By minimizing the gaps between business and farming, interest rate should be lowered to 4% and term should be increased to 5 years.
- VI. Strong regulations on village lenders, SHG and microfinance institutions.
- VII. For insurance cover, village should be considered as single unit.
- VIII. In farm insurance, compensation to be increased from Rs 8, 940 to Rs. 18, 000 per hectare.
- IX. Direct credit to be augmented in place of indirect credit, there should be more capital investment on agriculture credit.
- X. NABARD should be tax free and its role in the field of agriculture should be wide.
- XI. Major part of employment guarantee scheme should be invested in agriculture.

May be emergency or long-term, the programmes will be successful only when the Government will realize the situation and confess the truth. ●

CORPORATISATION OF AGRICULTURE IN RAJASTHAN

THE foreign and native monopolies in the form of MNCs and Corporate houses are entering and dominating the agricultural sector and intensifying the neo-colonisation in more sinister and heinous forms. Though this corporatisation is taking place at international and national level with frantic speed amassing huge profits for these imperialist sharks and their lackeys, Rajasthan, which is the biggest state in the country area-wise, has become one of the worst models of this neo-colonial takeover of the agrarian sector. The memorandum of agreements signed for public-private ownerships by various MNCs and agricultural companies shows that they will increase greatly the control and influence of these companies tremendously in the agrarian sector in

the state. According to these MoUs, the government of Rajasthan will help to create an appropriate package of policies, rules and incentives to attract the necessary investments from private sector players. According to these MoUs the fields of seed production, seed processing, research and development and 'farmer development' will come under the Monsanto like MNCs. Monsanto will undertake assessment of feasibility of engagement in each and every area and guide decision making

"The government of Rajasthan will make available land and facilities wherever feasible to Monsanto to undertake proposed activities on terms and conditions to be specifically agreed upon for each location/site. Monsanto will be helped to develop the infrastructure towards the fulfilment of the collaboration objectives, through access to relevant capital subsidy and other schemes of the government of Rajasthan aimed at encouraging the activities outlined above and/or specifically discussed and agreed upon. Monsanto will take up detailed feasibility assessment of activities proposed to be engaged in based on its own established and standard processes prior to decision making on suitability of land/infrastructure, as the case may be. This will be included but not restricted to site visits by Monsanto and/or third party personnel employed by Monsanto. Research, training and extension activities in mutually agreed areas could also be funded jointly by the nominated agency of the government of Rajasthan and Monsanto as discussed and agreed upon

According to the agreement, the contents of this MoU shall be kept confidential and the parties shall not make, use, disclose or disseminate, or in any way share any Confidential Information to any person without the prior written consent of the other party. It means that in order to give any information to the people it should first get the prior permission of Monsanto! These agreements which deal collectively with almost all main crops of the state emphasise time and again the use of hybrid seeds while from the point of low cost farming best suited to the rain-fed and arid or semi-arid conditions in the state the traditional seeds are most suitable. The full implication of these agreements is that it is only serving the interests of the big seed companies, including MNCs with special emphasis on the companies which are promoting GM crops and technology. These agreements involve the biggest GM giant Monsanto and other bio technology leaders involved in spreading the GM technologies all over the world.

All the studies in recent decades on world food and agricultural sector reveal how the mega MNCs have increased their dominance in this sector. First Patents were incorporated in to WTO agenda. Then all countries were forced to change their patent laws in the interests of imperialist countries and the MNCs controlled by them. In a planned way the right of the peasant on the seeds was destroyed. Seed production is grabbed by mega MNCs with big stakes in the agri-chemical industry. Within a decade the MNCs involved in chemical industries spent over \$10 billion to buy the seed companies. In gaining dominance in the seed sector the development of genetic engineering and consequent production of GM seeds were utilised as this complex and expensive technology is presently concentrated in the hands of a few giant MNCs and their subsidiaries. What was started with the snatching of the seed varieties of tropical countries proceeded to new patent/IPR laws and is reaching its climax with the utilisation of GM seeds.

According to the studies of Independent Science Panel consisting of prominent scientists of various countries. GM crops have failed to deliver the promised benefits and are posing escalating problems on the farms. Transgenic contamination is now widely acknowledged to be unavoidable and hence and *there can be no co-existence of GM and non-GM agriculture*. Most important of all, GM seeds have not been proved safe. On the contrary sufficient evidence has emerged to raise serious safety concerns, that if ignored could result in irreversible damage to health and the environment. *GM seeds should be firmly rejected now*. The MNCs are eager to promote these hazardous and risky crops as they are only interested to tighten their grip over the world's food and farming system to squeeze huge profits out of it. They are not at all bothered about the adverse impacts on farmers, consumers and environment. As the global imperialist system and the comprador governments all over the world support these giant MNCs they push forward with these hazardous venture recklessly. These MNCs use large scale corrupt practices to purchase the bureaucrats, political leaders and scientists to speed up their projects. The corporate media is also bought for this purpose.

In this process the so-called Panchayat Raj advocated by the central and state governments is turned in to a mockery. Transfer of important subjects like agriculture to the Panchayats is thrown overboard. Agreements are signed by central governments on state and local bodies' subjects with imperialist governments, MNCs and corporate houses without even bothering to consult with them. Similarly agreements like the one signed by the Rajasthan state government are signed without bothering to consult the local bodies. The whole process of decision making under the neoliberal raj is in the opposite direction, promoting over-centralisation in all spheres. In this context all the agreements

signed by the Rajasthan government should be taken in their totality and a determined struggle should be waged against them.

But this matter should not be restricted to a question of Rajasthan alone. From the time of signing the GATT Treaty in 1994 by the Congress government, numerous agreements are signed by the central and state governments for facilitating the entry of imperialist and corporate capital, market forces and technology provided by the MNCs to the agrarian sector. Starting with Bt cotton seed, numerous agreements are signed already by the central and state governments to allow the expansion of the operations of Monsanto like MNCs in the country. Thousands of MoUs are signed already for the Corporatisation of the Agricultural sector. So the problem is not limited to the MoUs signed by the Rajasthan government alone, it is a problem of mega scale attack on the agricultural sector by the MNCs and Corporates, which will lead to displacement of millions of families of the landless and poor peasants and agricultural workers, and to unprecedented unemployment and under employment in the rural areas. It will aggravate the pauperisation of the masses further and force larger scale migration to urban areas intensifying the misery there also. An all out struggle is needed to resist and defeat this neoliberal aggression by the central and state governments against the masses of the people. ●

UTTARAN
[Bengali Political Monthly]
COMMUNIST CANVAS
[Theoretical Tri- Monthly]
Sankar Das
257, Nandan Kanan South
Rahara
Kolkata
West Bengal - 700 118

MMP is being ruled by the BJP Government from last several years. This is one state where BJP and its erstwhile avatar, Bhartiya Jansangh had a good deal of following in the past also. During last few years one has seen with the BJP Government in the saddle, the state is imposing the norms which are intimidating to minorities, the BJP associates have become more assertive, state is promoting the outright Hindu culture, and it is also the place where the terror component of RSS affiliates has been having its dens at various places in the state.

Recently (March 2011) the police stations got a circular from the head office which required them to collect the information about Christian minorities. This information pertained to various facet of social life of the community. The order candidly sought information about Christians of all denominations such as number of priests, bishops, schools, institutions, political patronage, Christians with criminal antecedents, economic sources, among many other things. When one priest refused to divulge the information, meant to profile the community, he was taken to police station. When the community leaders took the matter with the top police officers, they expressed their ignorance, and it seemed like the case of 'No One Killed Jessica Lall', as if no one has issued the circular, or the one who issued this illegal circular is being shielded. With this the subtle ways of operation by the RSS controlled state mechanism became clear.

With BJP government in the seat of power the RSS associates have become much more dominant and there are activities, which begin as 'religious' one and end up being hateful to minorities the way the events are tilted and given shape by those controlling these organizations. This is one state where the RSS has been very active in the Adivasi areas. Like in case of Gujarat, on the pretext

MADHYA PRADESH: SHADOW OF HINDU RASHTRA

Ram Puniyani

that 'Christian missionaries are converting' many acts of violence have been taking place in these areas. One recalls the rape of nuns in Jhabua, followed by the comment by 'B.L. Sharma Prem' from RSS stable, who proudly boasted that the rape of nuns is the act of nationalism. In the same areas the followers of Asaram Babu have been very active, spreading venom against the minorities.

Pursuing this line of action, they had earlier also organized meetings in Adivasi areas, now this agenda got culminated in the organization of Narmada Samajik Kumbh (Feb 2011), on the lines of Shabri Kumbh in the Dangs of Gujarat. These Kumbhs have been creating an atmosphere of fear and insecurity amongst Christians in particular and in these events they undertake the "Ghar Vapasi" (Returning Home), which in real sense means the conversion of Adivasis, to Hinduism under direct or indirect pressure. Now these efforts are totally being backed up by the facilities from the state Government. There is a plethora of anti Minority literature which is distributed en masse. Such intervention in Adivasi areas is dampening the educational and health welfare work of Missionaries in the Adivasi areas.

With this Government in power, the Muslim minorities were clearly told that MP is not going to implement Sachar Committee report. Rather than seeing it as a necessary affirmative action for the poor Muslims, it is being projected in the divisive communal language.

Going against the spirit of Indian Constitution, the MP Chief Minister has given a call to the Government servants to join RSS, while being on the active service. One recalls in Gujarat similar call was given by Narendra Modi. At that the Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the Prime minister, he felt so embarrassed by this move that he insisted upon the state Government to withdraw the circular permitting state employees to join the RSS. As such it is RSS trained and coordinated Swayamsevaks, who not only work in BJP, in the important positions of power but they also manipulate politics in more ways than one. To argue that RSS is not a political organization is factually wrong as RSS is has a political agenda of Hindu Rashtra, which it operates through multiple progeny. So while the Government servants are barred to join politics, MP government is openly flaunting this norm.

In Gujarat one witnessed the advent of Hindu Rashtra through massive anti Muslim violence backed up by cultural manipulation. In MP the cultural instance is more dominant and visible. Hindu terminologies are being picked up for every instance and implemented. For School teachers the term coined was Rishi, as in ancient India, it was Rishis committed to giving knowledge. Interestingly, Rishi is a masculine gender, so the large number of women teachers is out of this ambit. And more interestingly these Rishis were lathi charged when they came together to demand for implementation of better pay scales!

M.P. has also been the place where the Hindutva terror groups got a good shelter, safe heaven for them. People like Sunil Joshi, Pragya Singh Thakur, Kalsangra, Devendra Sharma, Sandeep Dange and others could operate

comfortably due their saffron association in a BJP ruled state. State has been totally insensitive to the feelings of minorities and all its schemes have been named in the Hindu terminology, Girls welfare scheme: Ladli Laxmi, Child Nutrition program: Anna Prashan, Water Harvesting: Jalabhishek are just few of the names of state government schemes currently in operation in the state. Similarly the schools have been made to start Surya Namaskar, (Sun Worship), a sort of exercise-worship routine from the Hindu mythology. The state officials openly participate in Arms Worship (Shashtra Puja) a ritual on Dusshra festival. In this worship the Guns and weapons from police department are freely used. This taking out arms from armed police must be regarded as a serious violation of law. Yoga was initially introduced as a compulsory discipline. Now it is optional, but than with majority Hindus opting for it, the minority children do feel left out.

State has showered the gift of land to various trusts formed by RSS associates. Recently one donation of large plot of land to Kushabhau Thackeray

(the founder of RSS-BJP activities in the state) trust has been quashed by the Court, but such instances abound.

Madhya Pradesh Government is combining subtle and overt intimidation along with cultural manipulation to Hindutvaize the state. The minorities are feeling marginalized and insecure due to the atmosphere created by the state machinery and RSS affiliates. After Gujarat, many a states are vying for emulating its model; Madhya Pradesh already seems to be way ahead! ●

BAN ON ENDOSULFAN

PROGRESSIVE democratic forces across the country and environmental health groups appealed to *Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs* to put public health above Endosulfan manufacturers' blind lust for profit at any human and environmental cost. They and public health scholars across the globe will watch the stance of Indian government at the upcoming fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN's Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (COP-5) to be held during 25-29 April 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland, which will deal with Endosulfan pesticides. Currently, there are twenty-one chemicals listed as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in the convention including DDT, lindane, PCBs and dioxins and furans and some brominated flame retardants. The objective of the convention is to restrict and eliminate these chemicals from production and use in order to protect human health and the environment. Unmindful of its adverse health impacts, India remains the world's largest producer and user with more than 60 Endosulfan manufacturers and formulators.

India has already missed the deadline for transmission of National Implementation Plan for the treaty which it was supposed to submit to the secretariat of UN's Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) by 4th December, 2008. The Draft of the NIP is ready and was available for comments till April 1, 2011. The 235 page draft has emerged too late. Endosulfan is one of the most commonly used pesticides in India in recent years, particularly on rice and cotton against thrips, stem borer, whorl maggot, case worm, boll worm and bud worm. It has also been used on cashew plantations.

India signed the treaty on 14th May, 2002 and ratified it on 13th January, 2006. On 28th March, 2006 submitted a Declaration saying, "Any amendment to Annex A, B or C shall enter into force only upon the deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with respect thereto." The Convention was adopted on 22nd May 2001. It entered into force on 17th May 2004. A chemical can be listed in the Stockholm Convention as persistent organic pollutants (POPs) when it shows that it persists in the environment, bioaccumulates in organisms (increases in concentration up the food chain), travels through the environment over long distances from the region of its release to other regions of the globe, and is toxic to the environment and human health. On 26th August, 2010 nine new chemicals were added to the treaty when

the amendments to the treaty entered into force. The nine new chemicals listed in Annexes A, B and C to the Stockholm Convention. The 12 initial POPs covered by the Convention include nine pesticides (aldrin, chlordane, DDT, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, hexachlorobenzene, mirex and toxaphene); two industrial chemicals (PCBs as well as hexachlorobenzene, also used as a pesticide); and the unintentional by-products, most importantly dioxins and furans.

Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee (POPRC), a subsidiary to UN's Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants has reached its conclusions regarding environmental health impact of Endosulfan. Its conclusion reads: "The Committee reviewed and adopted a revised draft risk profile on endosulfan by which it agrees that the POP characteristics of the chemical warrant global action. The Committee will develop for endosulfan a risk management evaluation document that includes an analysis of possible control measures for consideration at its next meeting and final recommendation to the COP for its listing in the Annexes of the Convention. Endosulfan is a pesticide that is still widely used on many crops

such soy, cotton, rice, and tea. It is highly toxic to humans and many other animals and has been found in the environment, including the Arctic.” The POPRC comprises of 31 members of the POPRC. These are all highly placed scientists representing their regions around the globe.

In India, its production of Endosulfan began in 1996 and by 2004, India had become the leading producer of endosulfan, with three companies—Coromandel Fertilisers Ltd, Excel Crop Care, and Hindustan Insecticides Ltd. Excel is the largest of the three, with a reported capacity of 6,000 tonnes per annum. Hindustan Insecticides produces 1,600 tonnes per annum at its facility in Kerala (HIL 2008). The production figure of the third one is not available. The Conference of the Parties (COP) for the first time decided unanimously to establish collaboration between the Stockholm Convention and its sister treaties on hazardous chemicals and wastes, the Rotterdam and Basel Conventions at its fourth meeting (COP-4) in Geneva. It was decided for the first time that the expanded Working Group will comprise of the three chemicals and wastes treaties in sequential COPs. This will be visible at COP-5.

The stance of India’s Chemicals, Agriculture and Health Ministry headed by cabinet ministers have been quite regressive because they are working manifestly under the influence of Indian Chemical Council, an industry body. These ministries have consistently prevailed on our structurally weak environment ministry whose head is a junior minister because he is merely a minister of state with independent charge. Most recently, on 6th April Russian Prime Minister signed a governmental decree on the ratification of the Stockholm Convention on POPs which it had signed on 22th May, 2002. So far there are 151 signatories and 173 parties to this treaty. The text of the POPs treaty, Indian Chemical Council Position on Endosulfan and Reply of the UNEP is attached.

The POPs emitting waste incineration plants for energy generation which are facing bitter opposition in Delhi’s Okhla, Narela-Bawana, Timarpur and Gazipur reveals the non-seriousness of government towards public health concerns. Although India is a party to the UN’s POPs treaty it allows POPs laden dead ships at Alang beach, Bhavnagar, Gujarat. This also illustrates government’s apathy towards country’s environmental health. In such a backdrop, environmental health groups wonder whether their government will endorse the inclusion of Endosulfan into the POPs list. It may also be noted that the first assembly of the Global Alliance for alternatives to DDT to be held on the 26th of April 2011 in Geneva during COP-5 for developing and deploying alternatives to DDT for disease vector control through a harmonized registration system for new vector-control chemicals and products and explore non-chemical, non-commercial, community-based and environmental interventions. DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) is one of the most well-known synthetic pesticides. It was the first synthetic pesticide of the modern age. This was endorsed by COP-4 of the POPs treaty.

Underlining the gravity of the situation, the World Health Organisation (WHO) says, “POPs are chemicals that remain intact in the environment for long periods, become widely distributed geographically, accumulate in fatty tissue of living organisms and are toxic to humans and wildlife. POPs circulate globally and can cause damage wherever they travel. In implementing the Stockholm Convention, Governments need to take measures to eliminate or reduce the release of POPs into the environment.”

At Aluva, in Kerala, where the HIL factory produce this poisonous insecticide which has created numerous terrific human tragedies in the Kasargode district, demanding that its production should be stopped the RYFI and AIRWO launched a sit in agitation in front of the factory for 45 days arousing public opposition to this inhuman act by a public sector plant. If the govt. still refuses to stop production of it, like the agitation which led to closing down of the Coco Cola plant at Plachimada, the agitation has to be developed on militant lines. ●

CONDEMN POLICE FIRING AT JAITAPUR

THE Konkani Bachao Samiti and the Jan Hit Sewa Samiti strongly condemn the police firing at Sakhri-Nate this afternoon, which resulted in the death of Tabrez Pehekar, and serious bullet injuries to several others. The police opened fire on the protestors without any forewarning. From the injuries sustained by the deceased and the others it is clear that the police did not fire in the air as a warning, but instead directly opened fire into the crowd with the objective of ruthlessly crushing the democratic protest of the local people.

The JHSS and KBS also condemn the lathi charge by the police at the Madban Plateau this morning in which several persons were injured.

The Jan Hit Sewa Samiti and Konkani Bachao Samiti appeal to the people of Ratnagiri and Rajapur Taluka to observe a complete Bandh on 19th April 2011 in protest against the police brutality and the adamant attitude of the Maharashtra Government to push ahead with the project despite the events at Fukushima Japan.

The Jan Hit Sewa Samiti and Konkani Bachao Samiti also call for the immediate release of all those arrested today by the police, and the immediate cessation to all project activities by the NPCIL at the project site. ●

JHARKHAND: MoUs WITH INDUSTRIALISTS ARE ILLEGAL AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL

A LEGITIMATELY elected Government is always supposed to try to safeguard the Constitution and the laws of the country. But here in Jharkhand we have a situation where the state govt itself is the biggest violator of both the Constitution and the laws of the country. Let us see how it is so:

I. "The Fifth Schedule" [Article 244(1)] of the Constitution states "There shall be established in each State having Scheduled Areas therein and, if the President so directs, also in any State having Scheduled Tribes but not Scheduled Areas therein, a 'Tribes Advisory Council' consisting of not more than twenty members of whom, as nearly as may be, three fourths shall be the representatives of the Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assembly of the State." [4.(1)]. It shall be the duty of the Tribes Advisory Council to advise on such matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes in the State as may be referred to them by the Governor. [4.(2)].

The Governor of the State "may make regulations for peace and good governance and prohibit or restrict the transfer of land by or among members of the Scheduled Tribes" [5.(2).(a)]. And, "No regulation shall be made unless the Governor making the regulation has, in the case where there is a Tribes Advisory Council for the state, consulted such Council." [5.(5)]

The above are the constitutional provisions with regard to peace and good governance in general and land transfers in particular. The sad fact is over the past ten years about 100 MoUs have been signed with industrialists. Most of them are to be situated in Scheduled Areas. More than one lakh acres of mostly Scheduled Tribes land is meant to be acquired. During the span of ten years very few Tribes Advisory Council meetings have been held. In no meeting the MoUs that were being entered into with industrialists were placed before the TAC members and their advise sought. Consequently the Governor has not made any regulation to allow the MoUs in the Scheduled Areas of the State. But the land acquisition process has been set afoot with tremendous speed and vigour. With land alienation comes displacement of Scheduled Tribes people. Strange but true, the State govt has not kept an account of how many acres of land have been acquired and how many people have been displaced. This, in short, is a crime perpetrated by the State against the Scheduled Tribes people of the State.

Lo and behold, there have been four Governors in Jharkhand during the last ten years. No Governor sought the advise of the Tribes Advisory Council with regard to the various MoUs and its consequence in terms of alienation of Scheduled Tribes land and the displacement of Scheduled Tribes people.

II. We now come to the field of legislation. One of the most significant legislations passed by the Parliament in recent times in favour of the Adivasi People is 'The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 [PESA].' It emerged as a result of the over due realization that the Adivasi People have been neglected during all the years of independence.

Some of the salient points of this Act are:

(a) a State legislation on the Panchayats that may be made shall be in consonance with the customary law, social and religious practices and traditional

management practices of community resources;

(b) a village shall ordinarily consist of a habitation or a group of habitations or a hamlet or a group of hamlets comprising a community and managing its affairs in accordance with traditions and customs;

(c) every village shall have a 'Gram Sabha' consisting of persons whose names are included in the electoral rolls for the Panchayat at the village level;

(d) every Gram Sabha shall be competent to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution;

(e) every Gram Sabha shall approve of the plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes and projects are taken up for implementation by the Panchayat at the village level;

(f) the recommendations of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory prior to grant of prospecting licence or mining lease for minor minerals in the Scheduled Areas;

(l) the prior recommendation of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory for grant of concession for the exploitation of minor minerals by auction;

(k) the recommendations of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory prior to grant of prospecting licence or mining lease for minor minerals in the Scheduled Areas;

(m) (ii) the Gram Sabha shall have the ownership of minor forest produce;

(iii) the power to prevent alienation of land in the Scheduled Areas and to take appropriate action to restore any unlawfully alienated land of a Scheduled Tribe;

(vi) the power to exercise control over institutions and functionaries in all social sectors;

The Jharkhand govt hurriedly passed a Panchayati Raj Adhiniyam, 2001, without any consultation with the Adivasi People and their mass fronts, which took away some important powers of the Gram Sabha given in PESA Act. Some such powers denied by the State Act are :

Gram Sabha shall be consulted before making the acquisition of land for development projects and before re-settling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects; (4: i)

State Act makes no mention

✦ It's recommendations shall be sought before granting prospective license or mining lease for minor minerals and before granting of concession for the exploitation of minor minerals by auction; (4: k – 1)

State Act makes no mention

✦ Gram Sabha & Panchayat to be endowed with the ownership of minor forest produce (4: m.ii)

State Act Concurs 2.10.1.ka.xi

State Act gives only the responsibility for the care & protection of forests to the Gram Sabha but not the ownership of forest-produce. State Act gives this power only Zila Parishad. State Act 2.10.1.xxxvi

✦ Gram Sabha & Panchayat are given the power to prevent alienation of land in Scheduled Areas and to restore unlawfully alienated land of the adivasi to the Gram Sabha (4 m.iii)

State Act makes no mention

✦ Gram Sabha & Panchayat to be endowed with the ownership of minor forest produce (4: m.ii)

State Act Concurs 2.10.1.ka.xi

State Act gives only the responsibility for the care & protection of forests to the Gram Sabha but not the ownership of forest-produce. State Act gives this power only Zila Parishad. State Act 2.10.1.xxxvi

✦ Gram Sabha & Panchayat given the Power to exercise control over institutions & functionaries in all social Sectors (education, health etc.) (4 m.vi)

State Act gives it only Zila Parishad. 7.77.ga.2

Very unfortunately, although the Supreme Court has cleared the PESA Act in its totality, the Jharkhand Govt has yet to formally announce its implementation. The lame excuse was that the Panchayat Election has not been held for over two decades and hence Panchayats are not in existence in the State. Now that excuse also does not hold because election has been held and panchayats have started functioning. However, MoUs with industrialists continue to be signed. Attempts are made to divide village communities and dupe people with the promise of giving them jobs in the company if they agree to give their land. The local administration, the police are very much with the companies. The people resisting land-alienation and displacement are easily labeled as extremists / Maoists / Naxalites. They are harassed, implicated in false cases, arrested, tortured and even killed. This is the implementation of PESA Act in Jharkhand! ●

Stan Samy

THE GOD WHO DIED

SAI BABA of Puttabarti has died at last. The miracle that his devotees were expecting and propagating did not happen. For days together he could be kept alive only with the aid of the modern medical facilities, not by any miracles propagated by his devotees. Sai Baba was different from earlier saints and sanyasins like Sirdi Sai Baba. None of them had claimed that they were gods or incarnations. It was their devotees and those who made a lucrative business in their name later made them gods or incarnations.

But Sai Baba claimed that he was god and tried to establish this falsehood through some 'miracles' like creating vibhuti from nowhere. Though even amateur magicians proved that what he did was nothing but simple magical acts, the powerful coterie around him with the help of a section of the media, bureaucrats, judges and top politicians including presidents and prime ministers managed to establish whatever falsehood was propagated in his name. Based on his god status the trust built in his name has accumulated a fabulous sum, running numerous business institutions under it. And when a quarrel took place few years back on the control of it and few were killed, no case was charged or any one was arrested or punished. Already there are reports of quarrels among the trust members on the control of it. The wealth of the trust was accumulated from various sources from inside and outside the country. It is a crime if it is allowed to remain in the hands of those who were spreading falsehoods about him till the last moment. It should be taken over and brought under government control and it is the responsibility of the government to disclose how such a fabulous sum was accumulated or the source of this wealth.

Sai Baba created a new dirty culture under which many more gods and goddesses came up who are worshipped and in whose name huge trusts have come up. It is the task of the central and state governments if they uphold the secular values of it to act against the spreading of such falsehoods and bureaucrats, judges in service and central and state ministers at government expense propogating such falsehoods. Sai Baba did not make any miraculous return from the coma he was in for days or live up to 96 years as his followers were taught to repeat. Like any ordinary mortal he died a natural death when the medicines could not act any longer. It should be a lesson. It is the task of the secular forces to expose such falsehoods and prevent any repetition of it by the powerful trustees foisting another 'incarnation' in his name. ●

POLITICS OF CORRUPTION

STARTING with the Struggle for India's Independence (up to 1947) which was led by Mahatma Gandhi and before the recent rise of Anna Hazare India had 4 major mass movements :

- 1- Naxal upsurge in 1967
- 2- Change in State (mostly Congress) Governments in 1966-67,
- 3- Bihar Students Movement in 1975 taken over 20 days later by JP to take an all India character in 1975-77 and
- 4- Bofors scandal in 1988-89 led by VP Singh

Except the Naxals rise in 1967 every other movement was meant to cause cosmetic changes in the superstructure. They were all expected to fulfil the requirement of replacing the steward (satta me parivarttan)- no matter whether the alternative new incumbent was better or worse. The non-Naxal movements were not designed with an eye to change the System (Vyawastha me parivarttan). So the end result in all the four starting from Gandhi's was same- the movements diffused in a few months, increase in corruption, inefficiency, damage to democratic processes and values, nepotism, favoritism and separation of the population in two parallel strips ruling elites and ruled commoner without an overlapping interface.

Such changes with so much fanfare in the name of victory for democracy were very much short lived. Remember how within 2-3 years Congress Party came back to power in all the States and the Union after each one of the above 3 movements. It does not need a detailed study by an expert to know who were born out of those mass movements and what became of them and how they served this country. No vow at the feet of Gandhi at Rajghat and elsewhere could change any of them. They remained shamelessly on the same track of corruption, money making and nepotism. Agree or not, Naxals/ Maoists alone steadily continued all along with a single long term objective of changes in the 'Base' for changing the System.

A very interesting coincidence that the Lokpal Bill was first introduced in

Varga Porattam (Tamil Political Monthly)

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Marxwadi-Leninwadi (kannada Monthly)

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Shrirampuram, Banglore, Karnataka - 560021

Red Star (Punjabi Bi- Monthly)

C/o - Com. Ramesh Gautam
House No. - 5452; Street No. - 13; Basant Nagar
New Shimala Puri; Ludhiana (Punjab)

Sakhav Organ of Kerala State Committee of CPI(ML)

Sakhav", Hashmi Lane, Pachalam PO, Kochi - 12, Kerala

1968 immediately after the movements in 1966-67. But it could not be passed in successive Parliaments in last 43 years. So much for the well intentioned ruling elites. This long period saw every political party and group seating on the treasury benches in Parliament. It becomes clear that all the Parliamentary parties lacked interest in a clean governance. Not much can be expected from such political outfits who could not think of eradicating corruption in over 40 years.

One does not have to go too far to predict the end result and timing of the end of this phenomenon. Just look at the constitution of people supporting Anna Hazare on the TV screens and seating with him in Jantar Mantar and operating from both inside, in behind the scene parleys, and outside. It was interesting to see how the fountain heads of corruption were supporting Anna and making themselves visible on the TV screens. Even Yedurappa of Karnataka Corruption fame openly supported Anna's 'Against Corruption' movement.

Even though many naïve and gullible took part in the streets of different towns and cities in support of Anna at the end of it all it remains an exercise within the 5% of the top bracketed population known as ruling elites. It is not for the masses. Why the same people and the same Media has not stood up for Irom Sharmila who is on Fast for over 10 years now. It is also significant to note that the days of extra constitutional authority overpowering the constitutional authorities are in. The Mother -son duo, Sonia - Rahul on the one side and Anna's five on the other. Incidentally, finally it is an all men affair and no representative of dalit or downtrodden in the drafting committee.

In conclusion , therefore, only a people's movement involving the masses can bring the cure to the ills of this country. Nothing less. ●

Dr. VN Sharma

AN OPEN LETTER TO NOAM CHOMSKY

Nirmalangshu Mukherji

I SAW your support to the *statement issued by Sanhati* in the form of a letter to the prime minister—endorsed by some intellectuals from India and abroad. Three points are transparent: (a) the Indian government is planning a massive armed operation in the tribal-hilly areas in the eastern part of the country, (b) the poorest of the poor and the historically marginalised will suffer the most in terms of loss of lives, livelihood and habitat, and (c) for whatever it is worth, an all-out campaign by democratic forces is needed to resist the armed invasion of people's habitat by any party. To that extent, the statement does bring out the urgency of the matter.

What is not so transparent from the statement is the condition that has brought about this state of affairs. It is said that large-scale neo-liberal policies—including formation of SEZs and encroachment of tribal habitats for mining and other forms of exploitation—has led to mass impoverishment. So, in desperation, the poor have allegedly taken up arms to defend themselves. This picture is wrong in (i) ascribing the so-called armed struggle to the people, and (ii) being silent about the 'specific' source of the current aggression by the state, namely, the armed operations of CPI (Maoist). The statement is otherwise right about the 'general' situation: sinister neo-liberal policies, growing impoverishment and marginalisation of the poor, and their resulting anger.

Hundreds of organisations working at the grass roots level across the country are engaged in a variety of struggles against state repression and the insidious economic policies of the government. This includes many Gandhian, liberal and leftist organisations and individuals. Importantly, some of these also subscribe to Mao Tsetung Thought and are known initiators of the original Naxalbari movement. Thus, the labels 'Maoist' and 'Naxalite' apply to a much wider category of organisations

By posing the current military preparations of the state only as a State vs. People conflict, the statement endorsed by Noam Chomsky effectively exonerates the CPI (Maoist) which is involving in anarchic activities, states the author. This response is republished so that along with the ideological struggle against the right opportunist line of CPI(Marxist) led forces, the struggle against the sectarian and anarchist forces like CPI(Maoist) also can be carried forward – Red Star

and individuals than the CPI (Maoist). Needless to say, even the wider category of Maoists, not to mention just the CPI (Maoist), forms a tiny fraction of the broad democratic resistance to the policies of the state. The current armed operations of the state are directed ostensibly against the CPI (Maoist) in the areas under its control.

The state of course makes no such distinction in public; by identifying the wider category with the narrower one, it is constructing the opportunity to target the entire left-democratic fraternity in due course. To put the point differently, although the undeclared target of the state covers the entirety of left-democratic forces—as evidenced, for example, in the growing attacks on industrial workers especially in the private sector—the declared target currently consists of CPI (Maoist) and its area of control. The significance of this specificity is wholly missing from the statement you endorsed.

The identification of CPI (Maoist) with the entire resistance movement suits CPI (Maoist) as well. Its Supreme Commander recently declared from his hideout from a guerrilla-controlled area: 'People, who are the makers of history, will rise up like a tornado under *our party's leadership* to wipe out the reactionary blood-sucking vampires ruling our country ... our party's influence has grown stronger and *it* has now come to be recognised as the only genuine alternative before the people.' (*Open* magazine, emphasis mine)

We will evaluate the factual content of this declaration below. For now, it is interesting to note the character of the propaganda: somehow the propagandist interests of CPI (Maoist), the state, and the corporate media suitably converge. The Supreme Commander's claim is grimly endorsed by the prime and the home ministers of India; according to them, the 'Naxalite menace' is the greatest threat to internal security. It is also endorsed by the corporate media: the 'menace' is said to have spread in 15 of about 25 states, and to 180 of about 500 districts of the country—the numbers accelerating each month to encourage the prospect of a 'civil war' soon across the country.

The Central government frequently convene high-profile meetings of chief

ministers, secretaries, and police chiefs of the country to meet the challenges posed by the menace. Cutting-edge Special Forces, carved out of the paramilitary forces, are being constructed and deployed in 'Naxal-infested' areas. In recent months, even the army and the air force are beginning to enter into the picture. 'Naxalite', ie, Maoist, actions—widespread arson, mass killings, and the ability to take on the security forces—are prominently reported in the corporate media with ill-concealed awe. This strand of the 'Naxalite' movement never had it so big in its close to 40 years of existence in hideouts in remote jungles.

AS for the factual content of this dramatic story, I will briefly record some facts that do not find a place in the three-pronged propaganda:

✦ CPI (Maoist) is a comparatively new organization formed in 2004 when two Naxalite factions Maoist Coordination Committee (MCC) and People's War Group (PWG)—located primarily in some tribal-inhabited jungle areas in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh respectively—decided to join hands after fighting a bloody war for area-control among themselves for close to two decades. By 2006, CPI (Maoist) was almost completely wiped out from Andhra after their presence there for close to 40 years. They also lost major areas in Bihar. The organisation has basically shifted to two of the most backward, tiny, and newly-formed states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. As noted, even there, their presence is basically cantered in the areas of dense forest and adjacent tribal-dominated villages, especially in the Bastar district. Ostensibly, as the jungles extend from their headquarters, they have also developed some hideouts and some armed squads to create enough violence to mark their 'presence' in West Bengal, Orissa, and elsewhere. To sum up, they have essentially failed to emerge out of portions of jungles of eastern India after over four decades of campaign for this particular strand of 'Marxism-Leninism-Maoism'.

✦ This organization has no presence whatsoever in the vast agrarian and industrial terrains of the rest of the country. It has no trade union, no peasant organization worth its name, no penetration among the Dalits, youth, and women's movements. But it seems to have captured the imagination of sections of elite, urban, and 'radical' intelligentsia in Kolkata and Delhi who have impressive connections with some Indian intellectuals settled in universities abroad, as the statement you endorsed highlights (earlier, this intellectual support used to come from Mumbai and Hyderabad). The phenomenon is historically familiar.

✦ 'The only genuine alternative before the people' is viewed as a terrorist organization by none other than com. Kanu Sanyal and many other active Naxalites, not to speak of the broad spectrum of left parties and organizations most of whom do not find a representation in the statement.

The basic reason why com. Sanyal called CPI (Maoist) 'terrorist' is as follows:

Ever since its inception in 1969, this brand of Maoism rejected all classical forms of mass struggle and adopted the sinister doctrine of individual annihilation of 'class enemies'. 'Class enemies' typically consisted of hapless, poorly armed police constables, petty landlords and traders, and an assorted category of 'informers and traitors'. Most notably, the category of 'class enemies' also included grass-root cadres—not their leaders—of the parliamentary left, in the states of West Bengal and Andhra, where this campaign originated, as the parliamentary Left was typically the only organization present at the grass roots. The annihilation of these 'class enemies'—typically, middle peasants, school teachers, party whole timers, etc—effectively meant capturing of areas, by means of guns and knives, already under the Left. To that end, the squads first targeted their own Naxalite fraternity who refused to subscribe to their

murderous politics. After the 'renegades' were silenced, the next target was cadres of CPI (M), CPI, etc.

This 'red terror' basically led to the dismantling of democratic movements in the erstwhile red bastions. In West Bengal, a neo-fascist regime of the Congress Party won the elections handsomely and watched mutual killings of the Left with glee. Once the task was accomplished, the government turned on the Maoists and the remaining Left, and white terror ruled West Bengal for five years. During the nightmare, all forms of democratic movements virtually disappeared from the state as lumpen youth accompanied by paramilitary forces roamed the streets.

In time, almost all of the initiators of this campaign realized their grave mistakes and those who survived encounters, long imprisonment, and psychological collapse, returned to classical mass lines in a variety of forms, including participation in the elections. However, a fragment continued the murderous politics in the jungles of Andhra and Bihar in the form of two organizations, MCC and PWG, later unifying into CPI (Maoist), as noted.

TWO recent — and contrasting — events in the neighbourhood throw significant light on the consequences of this brand of politics. In Sri Lanka, a vast freedom movement of Tamil nationalism arose about three decades ago. As the movement became progressively militant, it gave rise to a formidable militarist organization: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE). LTTE declared armed struggle, systematically eliminated all other groups advocating Tamil liberation, took to the jungles, and launched a civil war.

There were several rounds of 'negotiations' between the government and the LTTE, often with international effort. LTTE refused to give up arms and join the democratic process; thus, it used each pause in the hostilities to consolidate its forces.

After over 20 years of bloody war with Sri Lankan security forces, resulting in incalculable suffering of Tamil people, the LTTE was recently wiped out from Sri Lanka. The calamity facilitated the emergence of a neo-fascist regime in Colombo; it also left behind nearly a million hapless Tamil refugees at the mercy of this government. With all revolutionary and moderate forces from both sides, ie from among the Tamils and Sinhalas, eliminated from the scene, the Tamil freedom movement is now faced with a historical setback after over 1,00,000 deaths.

The Supreme Commander (cited above), whose organization was trained in guerrilla warfare by former commandos of LTTE, agrees with the consequences: 'There is no doubt that the movement for a separate sovereign Tamil Eelam has suffered a severe setback with the defeat and considerable decimation of the LTTE. The Tamil people and the national liberation forces are now leaderless.'

But he puts the blame elsewhere: 'The jingoistic rallies and celebrations organized by the government and Sinhala chauvinist parties all over Sri Lanka in the wake of Prabhakaran's death and the defeat of the LTTE show the national hatred for Tamils nurtured by Sinhala organizations and the extent to which the minds of ordinary Sinhalese are poisoned with such chauvinist frenzy.'

Nonetheless, he hopes that 'the ground remains fertile for the resurgence of the Tamil liberation struggle. Even if it takes time, the war for a separate Tamil Eelam is certain to

revive, taking lessons from the defeat of the LTTE.' Although he is prepared to learn — perhaps, tactical — 'lessons', he does not seem to have any problems with the militarist, sectarian, and exclusivist politics of the LTTE.

In sharp contrast, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN(M)) also launched a civil war against a ruthless feudal monarchy protected by the Royal Nepalese Army after all democratic methods failed. The war lasted nearly a decade with the CPN (M)-directed People's Liberation Army dominating vast terrains of the country with massive popular support. The basic point to note is that what CPN(M) strove for during the armed struggle—Republic, Constituent Assembly, supremacy of the Parliament created by universal franchise, etc. — India already has. Once that was achieved in Nepal, a genuine armed struggle — far far superior than anything Indian 'Maoists' have ever envisaged — was immediately brought to a halt. CPN (M) proved its point by winning over 40% of the seats in the interim Parliament after the Republic was established. With this mandate in hand, innovative, peaceful but militant processes were then adopted to broaden the democratic base even in a context in which the possibility of a counter-revolution orchestrated by the ousted monarch, the army and the ruling elites of India loomed large.

The current impasse in Nepal is about the supremacy of the parliament over the army. As the leader of CPN(M) Prachanda points out, the democratic movement is at a crossroads due to this seminal conflict. Indian republicanism addressed and solved that problem 60 years ago.

During the war, PWG—followed by CPI (Maoist)—maintained close contact with CPN(M). But after the CPN (M) joined—in fact, established—the democratic process in Nepal, the CPI (Maoist) does not find any lessons to be learned. This time the blame is on CPN(M). As the Supreme Commander puts it: 'It is indeed a great tragedy that the CPN(M) has chosen to abandon the path of protracted people's war and pursue a parliamentary path in spite of having de facto power in most of the countryside.' In a letter to CPN(M), CPI (Maoist) 'advised' the former not to give up armed struggle until the 'old order' is smashed and the CPN (M) is able to seize power all by itself to usher in 'new democratic revolution'. However, the Supreme Commander remains optimistic since 'given the great revolutionary traditions of the CPN(M), we hope that the inner-party struggle will repudiate the right opportunist line pursued by its leadership, give up revisionist stands and practices, and apply minds creatively to the concrete conditions of Nepal.' So, the statesman-like leadership of Prachanda is 'revisionist'.

Beyond the bluster, it is not difficult to discern that, no matter what, the CPI (Maoist) is not prepared to give up its fatal policies. They are not open to any debates, no one can enter their 'liberated zones' without unconditional support to their line. Like Prabhakaran and his LTTE, having meticulously secured hideouts for themselves in 'impregnable' dense forests protected by squads armed with sophisticated weapons, they are prepared to carry on 'protracted war' for many years before their inevitable decimation. In the process, not only will the tribals under their control suffer immensely, it will give the growingly authoritarian state a golden opportunity to smash whatever avenues of hard-won democratic resistance still remain in place.

As noted, the CPI (Maoist) has exactly two channels of 'popular' support: the tribals they control and a section of 'radical', urban intelligentsia. It is the support of the latter that gives the CPI (Maoist) significant propaganda mileage and a false impression of invincibility and popular support. By posing the current military preparations of the state only as a State vs. People conflict, the statement you endorsed effectively exonerates CPI(Maoist) and plays into their hands. ●

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US SAVAGE IMPERIALISM : *THE US EMPIRE, THE MIDEAST, AND THE WORLD*

Prof. Noam Chomsky

IT IS TEMPTING to go back to the beginning. The beginning goes pretty far back, but it is useful to think about some aspects of American history that bear directly on current U.S. policy in the Middle East. The U.S. is a pretty unusual country in many ways. It's maybe the only country in the world that was founded as an empire. It was an infant empire—as George Washington called it—and the founding fathers had broad aspirations. The most libertarian of them, Thomas Jefferson, thought that this infant empire should spread and become what he called the “nest” from which the entire continent would be colonized. That would get rid of the “Red,” the Indians as they'd be driven away or exterminated. The Blacks would be sent back to Africa when we don't need them anymore and the Latins will be eliminated by a superior race.

Conquest of the National Territory

IT WAS a very racist country all the way through its history, not just anti-black. That was Jefferson's image and the others more or less agreed with it. So it's a settler colonialist society. Settler colonialism is far and away the worst kind of imperialism, the most savage kind because it requires eliminating the indigenous population. That's not unrelated, I think, to the kind of reflexive U.S. support for Israel—which is also a settler colonial society. Its policies resonate with a sense of American history. It's kind of reliving it. It goes beyond that because the early settlers in the U.S. were religious fundamentalists who regarded themselves as the children of Israel, following the divine commandment to settle the Promised Land and slaughter the Amalekites and so on and so forth. That's right around here, the early settlers in Massachusetts.

All this was done with the utmost benevolence. So, for example, Massachusetts (the Mayflower and all that business) was given its Charter by the King of England in 1629. The Charter commissioned the settlers to save the native population from the misery of paganism. And, in fact, if you look at the great seal of the Bay Colony of Massachusetts, it depicts an Indian holding an arrow pointed down in a sign of peace. And out of his mouth is a scroll on which is written: “Come over and help us.” That's one of the first examples of what's called humanitarian intervention today. And it's typical of other cases up to the present. The Indians were pleading with the colonists to come over and help them and the colonists were benevolently following the divine command to come over and help them. It turned out we were helping by exterminating them.

That was considered rather puzzling. Around the 1820s, one Supreme Court justice wrote about it. He says it's kind of strange that, despite all our benevolence and love for the Indians, they are withering and dispersing like the “leaves of autumn.” And how could this be? He said, the divine will of providence is “beyond human comprehension.” It's just God's will. We can't hope to understand it. This conception—it's called Providentialism—that we are always following God's will goes right up to the present moment. Whatever we're doing, we're following God's will. It's an extremely religious country, off the spectrum in religious belief. A very large percentage of the population—I don't remember

the numbers, but it's quite high—believes in the literal word of the Bible and part of that means supporting everything that Israel does because God promised the promised land to Israel. So we have to support them.

These same people — a substantial core of solid support for anything Israel does — also happen to be the most extreme anti-Semites in the world. They make Hitler look pretty mild. They are looking forward to the near total annihilation of the Jews after Armageddon. There's a whole long story about this, which is believed, literally, in high places—probably people like Reagan, George W. Bush, and others. It ties in with the kind of settler colonial history of Christian Zionism—which long preceded Jewish Zionism and is much stronger. It provides a solid base of reflexive support for whatever Israel happens to be doing.

The conquest of the national territory was a pretty ugly affair. It was recognized by some of the more honest figures like John Quincy Adams who was the great grand strategist of expansionism—the theorist of Manifest Destiny and so on. In his later years, long after his own horrifying crimes were in the past, he did lament what he called the fate of that “hapless race of native Americans, which we are exterminating with such merciless and perfidious cruelty.” He said that's one of the sins that the Lord is going to punish us for. Still waiting for that.

His doctrines are highly praised right to the present. There's a major scholarly book by John Lewis Gaddis, a leading American historian, on the

roots of the Bush doctrine. Gaddis correctly, plausibly, describes the Bush doctrine as a direct descendent of John Quincy Adams's grand strategy. He says, it's a concept that runs right through American history. He praises it; thinks it's the right conception—that we have to protect our security, that expansion is the path to security and that you can't really have security until you control everything. So we have to expand, not just over the hemisphere, but over the world. That's the Bush doctrine.

By WWII, without going into the details, though the U.S. had long been by far the richest country in the world, it was playing a kind of secondary role in world affairs. The main actor in world affairs was the British—even the French had a more global reach. WWII changed all that. American planners during WWII, Roosevelt's planners, understood very well from the beginning of the war that it was going to end with the U.S. in a position of overwhelming power.

As the war went on and the Russians ground down the Germans and pretty much won the European war, it was understood that the U.S. would be even more dominant. And they laid careful plans for what the post-war world would look like. The United States would have total control over a region that would include the Western Hemisphere, the Far East, the former British Empire, and as much of Eurasia as possible, including, crucially, its commercial and industrial core—Western Europe. That's the minimum. The maximum was the whole world and, of course, we need that for security. Within this region, the U.S. would have unquestioned control and would limit any effort at sovereignty by others.

The U.S. ended the war in a position of dominance and security that had no remote counterpart in history. It had half the world's wealth, it controlled the whole hemisphere, the opposite sides of both oceans. It wasn't total. The Russians were there

and some things were still not under control, but it was remarkably expansive. Right at the centre of it was the Middle East.

One of President Roosevelt's long-time, high-level advisers, Adolf A. Berle, a leading liberal, pointed out that control of Middle East oil would yield substantial control of the world—and that doctrine remains. It's a doctrine that's operative right at this moment and that remains a leading theme of policy.

After World War II

FOR A LONG TIME during the Cold War years, policies were invariably justified by the threat of the Russians. It was mostly an invented threat. The Russians ran their own smaller empire with a similar pretext, threat of the Americans. These clouds were lifted after the collapse of the Soviet Union. For those who want to understand American foreign policy, an obvious place to look is what happened after the Soviet Union disappeared. That's the natural place to look and it follows almost automatically that nobody looks at it. It's scarcely discussed in the scholarly literature though it's obviously where you'd look to find out what the Cold War was about. In fact, if you actually do look, you get very clear answers. The president at the time was George Bush I. Immediately after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, there was a new National Security Strategy, a defense budget, and so on. They make very interesting reading. The basic message is: nothing is going to change except pretexts. So we still need, they said, a huge military force, not to defend ourselves against the Russian hordes because they're gone, but because of what they called the "technological sophistication" of third world powers. Now, if you're a well trained, educated person who came from Harvard and so on, you're not supposed to laugh when you hear that. And nobody laughed. In fact, I don't think anybody ever reported it. So, they said, we have to protect ourselves from the technological sophistication of third world powers and we have to maintain what they called the "defense industrial base"—a euphemism for high tech industry, which mostly came out of the state sector (computers, the Internet, and so on), under the pretext of defense.

With regard to the Middle East, they said, we must maintain our intervention forces, most of them aimed at the Middle East. Then comes an interesting phrase. We have to maintain the intervention forces aimed at the Middle East where the major threats to our interests "could not be laid at the Kremlin's door." In other words, sorry folks, we've been lying to you for 50 years, but now that pretext is gone, we'll tell you the truth. The problem in the Middle East is and has been what's called radical nationalism. Radical just means independent. It's a term that means "doesn't follow orders." The radical nationalism can be of any kind. Iran's a good case.

The Threat of Radical Nationalism

SO IN 1953, the Iranian threat was secular nationalism. After 1978, it's religious nationalism. In 1953, it was taken care of by overthrowing the parliamentary regime and installing a dictator who was highly praised. It wasn't a secret. The New York Times, for example, had an editorial praising the overthrow of the government as an "object lesson" to small countries that "go berserk" with radical nationalism and seek to control their own resources. This will be an object lesson to them: don't try any of that nonsense, certainly not in an area we need for control of the world. That was 1953.

Since the overthrow of the U.S.-imposed tyrant in 1979, Iran has been constantly under U.S. attack—without a stop. First, Carter tried to reverse the overthrow of the Shah immediately by trying to instigate a military coup. That

didn't work. The Israelis—in effect the ambassador, as there'd been close relations between Israel and Iran under the Shah, although theoretically no formal relations—advised that if we could find military officers who were willing to shoot down 10,000 people in the streets, we could restore the Shah. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter's National Security advisor, had pretty much the same advice. That didn't quite work. Right away, the U.S. turned for support to Saddam Hussein in his invasion of Iran—which was no small affair. Hundreds of thousands of Iranians were slaughtered. The people who are now running the country are veterans of that war and deep in their consciousness is the understanding that the whole world is against them—the Russians, the Americans were all supporting Saddam Hussein and the effort to overthrow the new Islamic state.

It was no small thing. The U.S. support for Saddam Hussein was extreme. Saddam's crimes—like the Anfal genocide, the massacre of the Kurds—were just denied. The Reagan administration denied them or blamed them on Iran. Iraq was even given a very rare privilege. It's the only country other than Israel which has been granted the privilege of attacking a U.S. naval vessel and getting away with complete impunity. In the Israeli case, it was the Liberty in 1967. In Iraq's case it was the USS Stark in 1987—a naval vessel which was part of the U.S. fleet protecting Iraqi shipments from Iran during the war. They attacked the ship using French missiles, killed a few dozen sailors, and got a slight tap on the wrist, but nothing beyond that.

U.S. support was so strong that they basically won the war for Iraq. After the war was over, U.S. support for Iraq continued. In 1989, George Bush I invited Iraqi nuclear engineers to the U.S. for advanced training in nuclear weapons development. It's one of those little things that gets hushed up because a couple of months later Saddam became a bad boy. He disobeyed orders. Right after that came harsh sanctions and so on, right up till today.

The Iranian Threat

COMING UPTO today, in the foreign policy literature and general commentary what you commonly read is that the major policy problem for the U.S. has been and remains the threat of Iran. What exactly is the threat of Iran? Actually, we have an authoritative answer to that. It came out a couple of months ago in submissions to Congress by the DOD and US intelligence. They report to Congress every year on the global security situation. The latest reports, in April, of course have a section on Iran—the major threat. It's important reading. What they say is, whatever the Iranian threat is, it's not a military threat. They say that Iranian military spending is quite low, even by regional standards, and as compared with the U.S., of course, it's invisible—probably less than 2 percent of our military spending. Furthermore, they say that Iranian military doctrine is geared toward defense of the national territory, designed to slow down an invasion sufficiently so it will be possible for diplomacy to begin to operate. That's their military doctrine. They say it's possible that Iran is thinking about nuclear weapons. They don't go beyond that, but they say, if they were to develop nuclear weapons, it would be as part of Iran's deterrence strategy in an effort to prevent an attack, which is not a remote contingency. The most massive military power in history—namely us—which has been extremely hostile to them, is occupying two countries on their borders and is openly threatening them with attack, as is its Israeli client.

That's the military side of the Iranian threat as reported in Military Balance. Nevertheless, they say, Iran's a major threat because it's attempting to expand its influence in neighbouring countries. It's called destabilization. They're carrying out destabilization in neighbouring countries by trying to expand their

influence and that's a problem for the U.S. because the U.S. is trying to bring about stability. When the U.S. invades another country, it's to bring about stability—a technical term in the international relations literature that means obedience to U.S. orders. So when we invade Iraq and Afghanistan, that's to create stability. If the Iranians try to extend their influence, at least to neighbouring countries, that's destabilizing. This is built in to scholarly and other doctrine. It's even possible to say without ridicule, as was done by the liberal commentator and former editor of Foreign Affairs, James Chase, that the U.S. had to destabilize Chile under Allende to bring about stability, namely obedience to U.S. orders.

What's Terrorism?

THE SECOND THREAT of Iran is its support for terrorism. What's terrorism? Two examples of Iran's support for terrorism are offered. One is its support for Hezbollah in Lebanon, the other its support for Hamas in Palestine. Whatever you think of Hezbollah and Hamas—maybe you think they're the worst thing in the world—what exactly is considered their terrorism? Well, the "terrorism" of Hezbollah is actually celebrated in Lebanon every year on May 25, Lebanon's national holiday commemorating the expulsion of Israeli invaders from Lebanese territory in 2000. Hezbollah resistance and guerrilla warfare finally forced Israel to withdraw from Southern Lebanon, which Israel had been occupying for 22 years in violation of Security Council orders, with plenty of terror and violence and torture.

So Israel finally left and that's Lebanese Liberation Day. That's what's considered the main core of Hezbollah terrorism. It's the way it's described. Actually, in Israel it's even described as aggression. You can read the Israeli press these days where high level figures now argue that it was a mistake to withdraw from South

Lebanon because that permits Iran to pursue its “aggression” against Israel, which it had been carrying out until 2000 by supporting the resistance to Israeli occupation. That’s considered aggression against Israel. They follow U.S. principles, as we say the same thing. That’s Hezbollah. There are other acts you could criticize, but that’s the core of Hezbollah terrorism.

Another Hezbollah crime is that the Hezbollah-based coalition handily won the latest parliamentary vote, though because of the sectarian system of assigning seats, they did not receive the majority. That led Thomas Friedman to shed tears of joy, as he explained, over the marvels of free elections, in which U.S. President Obama defeated Iranian President Ahmadinejad in Lebanon. Others joined in this celebration. The actual voting record was never reported, to my knowledge.

What about Hamas? Hamas became a serious threat—a serious ‘terrorist’ organization—in January 2006 when Palestinians committed a really serious crime. That was the date of the first free election in any country in the Arab world and the Palestinians voted the wrong way. That’s unacceptable to the U.S. Immediately, without a blink of an eye, the U.S. and Israel turned very publically towards punishing the Palestinians for that crime. You can read in the New York Times, in parallel columns, right afterwards—one of them talking about our love for democracy and so on and right alongside it, our plans to punish the Palestinians for the way they voted in the January election. No sense of conflict.

There’d been plenty of punishment of the Palestinians before the election, but it escalated afterwards—Israel went so far as to cut off the flow of water to the arid Gaza Strip. By June, Israel had fired about 7,700 rockets at Gaza and all sorts of other things. All of that’s called defense against terrorism. Then, the U.S. and Israel, with cooperation

from the Palestinian Authority, tried to carry out a military coup to overthrow the elected government. They were beaten back and Hamas took control. After that, Hamas became one of the world’s leading terrorist forces. There’s plenty of criticisms you can make of them—the way they treat their own population, for example—but Hamas terrorism is a little hard to establish. The current claim is that their terrorism consists of rockets from Gaza that hit Israel’s border cities. That was the justification given for Operation Cast Lead (the U.S./Israeli invasion of December 2008) and also for the Israeli attack on the flotilla last June in international waters where nine people were murdered.

It’s only in a deeply indoctrinated country that you can hear that and not laugh in ridicule. Putting aside the comparison between Qassam rockets and the terrorism that the U.S. and Israel are constantly carrying out, the argument has absolutely no credibility for a simple reason: Israel and the U.S. know exactly how to stop the rockets—by peaceful means. In June 2008, Israel agreed to a ceasefire with Hamas. Israel didn’t really live up to it—they were supposed to open the borders and they didn’t—but Hamas did live up to it. You can look it up on the official Israeli website or listen to their official spokesperson, Mark Regev, and they agree that during the ceasefire there wasn’t a single Hamas rocket fired.

Israel broke the ceasefire in November 2008 when it invaded Gaza and killed half a dozen Hamas activists. Then there was some rocket fire and far greater attacks from Israel. A number of people were killed—all Palestinians. Hamas offered to renew the ceasefire. The Israeli cabinet considered it and rejected it, preferring to use violence. A couple of days later came the U.S./Israel attack on Gaza.

In the U.S. and the West generally, it is taken for granted, even by human rights groups and the Goldstone report, that Israel had the right to force and self-defense. There were criticisms that the attack was disproportionate, but they’re a secondary matter as Israel had absolutely no right to use force in the first place. You have no justification for the use of force unless you’ve exhausted peaceful means. In this case, the U.S. and Israel had not just not exhausted them, they had refused even to try peaceful means, which they had every reason to believe would succeed. The concession that Israel had a right to attack is just an amazing gift.

In any case, according to the DOD and U.S. intelligence, Iran’s efforts to extend its influence, as well as its support for Hezbollah and Hamas, are what constitute, for the U.S. and its allies, the Iranian threat. ●

The Marxist Leninist [Theoretical Organ of CPIML]

Issue 8

April 2011

1. On the Development of the Productive Forces and the Class Relations in the Soviet Union
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OPPOSE FOREIGN INTERFERENCE IN SRI LANKA

[The Central Committee of the New-Democratic Marxist-Leninist Party, (NDMLP) having discussed the statements issued by the Senate of the U.S. and by the U.N. Panel of Experts on the Government of Sri Lanka has issued the following statement.]

THE Government of Sri Lanka is obliged to respond to charges of denial of democracy to the entire people of Sri Lanka, alleged acts of violation of human rights, and alleged war crimes committed against the Tamil people and that to dismiss the report of the U.N. Panel of Experts as a violation of the sovereignty of Sri Lanka, rather than address the issues is frivolous as well as dangerous. The sovereignty of Sri Lanka means the sum total of the sovereignty of the sovereignties of the Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and Hill Country Tamil nationalities as well as of other minority communities of the country. It is necessary to arrest the encroachment upon such sovereignty through the U.N., against a background of ulterior motives of the U.S. and other Western imperialist powers. The only way to achieve it is for the Government to take the responsibility of responding meaningfully to the matters put forward by the Panel of Experts appointed by the Secretary General of the U.N. It is thus that the efforts driven by ulterior motives of the U.S. and other Western imperialist powers.

It should be noted that, since the Government of Sri Lanka is a client of imperialist neo-colonialist organizations including the U.N. that accepts their rules and regulations, it is committed to be answerable to them. Infringement of the sovereignty of countries is nothing new to U.S. imperialism and the U.N. It is not therefore necessary to accept such infringements. However, to avert and to resist such infringements, governments should be under obligation to provide honest answers to their own people. People know that leaders of countries who are in the embrace of imperialism praise imperialist powers when they are supportive of their oppressive regime and display great anti-imperialist and patriotic passion when the imperialist powers act in ways hostile to or in disagreement with their oppressive regime. Reports have been released in quick succession by the Senate of the US and by the Panel of Experts appointed by the Secretary General of the U.N. claiming that human rights have been violated and democracy has been denied by the Government of Sri Lanka and the defence forces of the Sri Lankan state and that, in the final stages of the war between the Sri Lankan defence forces and the LTTE, there have been violations of international humanitarian law by the defence forces of the Sri Lankan state, and that the Government of Sri Lanka is obliged to answer these charges.

The New-Democratic Marxist-Leninist Party has never endorsed the acts of personal terror by the LTTE and its call for a separate state. But it had the duty to point out that the fundamental reason for that organisation to indulge in armed struggle was the chauvinistic oppression against the Tamil people and that the oppression still continues.

The Party has been advocating a state structure in which all the nationalities of Sri Lanka can live in unity as a multi-ethnic society, based on the right to self determination, equality and autonomy. The Party has consistently pointed out that it is only when such arrangements do not exist that the oppressed nationalities

are driven to call for secession and a separate state.

National oppression by the chauvinistic capitalist governments that have continuously ruled Sri Lanka and the narrow nationalistic stand of the reactionary, conservative forces among the Tamils provided the basis to justify the call for secession.

Imperialist and regional hegemonic powers have pretended to be supportive of the secession of Tamil Eelam to deflect the struggle of the Tamil people and finally drowned that struggle in Nanthikkadal. They also directly and indirectly supported the chauvinistic Sri Lankan government. The U.S. and other Western imperialists, who despite all of it, have been unable to bring the Mahinda Rajapaksa government entirely to their side, are now posing an expression of support for the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam formed by the elite of the Tamil diaspora.

Besides, the continuing threat of subjecting the Government of Sri Lanka to a war crimes inquiry is not motivated by a desire to provide justice to the affected Tamils but by the imperialist aim to intimidate the Government headed by Rajapaksa and thereby take control of the whole of Sri Lanka. Although Rajapaksa's government presents an anti-imperialist façade to the Sinhalese, it has situated the state of Sri Lanka as a client to neocolonialism. One finds now, under these conditions, that the rejection of the right of nationalities to self determination, comprising an aspect of his feudal attitude, is in conflict with imperialist concerns. But there is no anti-imperialism in Rajapaksa and there is no imperialist interest in self determination for the Tamils.

The failure of the Rajapaksa government to find a just solution for the national question as well as its refusal to accept answerability to the affected people on matters of war crimes and violation of human rights

has created a situation in which imperialist and hegemonic forces are able to exert pressure on Sri Lanka.

The report of the senate of the U.S. has imperialist intentions. The report of Panel of Experts appointed by Ban Ki Moon, Secretary General of the U.N., which is a neo-colonial instrument, has neo-colonial motives. Blunt denial by the Government of Sri Lanka is no answer to the questions raised in the reports. The Government of Sri Lanka has the responsibility to conduct extensive inquiries and report on whether civilians had not been

killed, international humanitarian laws were not breached, and human and democratic rights had not been violated, during the military action of the government against the LTTE. If it fails to do so, it risks surrendering to its imperialist masters.

Thus, beyond the humbug of the U.S., the U.N. and others and beyond the Sri Lankan government's denial, the Government headed by Rajapaksa should come forward to conduct a just inquiry into war crimes, violations of human and fundamental rights, and other such matters. Meantime, initiatives should be taken to find a political solution that will ensure power sharing between nationalities. That will unite the entire people to resist pressure and intervention from the U.S. and the West. ●

S. K. Senthivel
General Secretary

New-Democratic Marxist-Leninist Party, Sri Lanka
20th April 2011

OPPOSE US IMPERIALIST ATTACKS IN LIBYA, IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN AND THE USA!

THE Revolutionary Organisation of Labour, USA joins together with anti-war demonstrators in New York City April 9 and San Francisco April 10 in response to and in support of the United National Antiwar Committee's (UNAC) call to March and Rally against the U.S. imperialist war on working and oppressed peoples at home and abroad. We officially endorsed the UNAC call.

We also support the March 1st "UNAC Statement on U.S. Non-Intervention in Libya and Other Countries," including the following: "We recognize that the U.S. has been directly involved in supplying weapons and other forms of support to regimes that have committed atrocious human rights abuses against civilians. ... We have seen the horrific consequences of U.S./U.N. operation of 'no-fly zones' over northern and southern Iraq, prior to the U.S. Shock and Awe attacks and invasion. We therefore oppose any form of U.S. military or economic intervention in Libya, Egypt, Bahrain and other countries where movements are rising in opposition to dictatorships and military rule."

The following are excerpts from the March-April *Ray O' Light Newsletter* (written prior to the actual U.S./NATO military attack on Libya) regarding the developing U.S. imperialist-led attack on Libya and the situation in Arabia:

"For revolutionaries, freedom fighters and justice loving people all over the world, the popular struggles being waged by the Arab masses against their autocratic rulers ... beginning in Tunisia and rapidly breaking out and spreading throughout the entire Middle East, have been a tremendous source of inspiration. Quite dramatic has been the popular uprising and workers' strike wave, spreading across to the European side of the Mediterranean – to Italy, Greece, Albania, shaking these reactionary regimes, and even spreading across the Atlantic Ocean all the way to the USA, where U.S. workers have consciously taken a more militant stance against the reactionary state governments of Wisconsin, Indiana and other states in the Midwest."

"The U.S. imperialist government is responsible for virtually all of the secular military dictatorships and Muslim monarchies in the Middle East that have kept their people repressed with the most barbaric police state methods and are currently in danger of being overthrown by the aroused Arab masses. The U.S. imperialist led invasion and occupation of Iraq has resulted in over one million civilian deaths. Yet this same shameless U.S. imperialist state apparatus now claims to be 'concerned' about the killings of people in Libya by the Gadhafi government *only*. And the Libyan military situation is marked by the fact that a number of military units have joined the Libyan rebels and that the rebels are using powerful modern weapons of war against the Gadhafi regime in what has become a civil war based on tribal loyalties *and* U.S. imperialist machinations.

"And now, a Democratic U.S. president, elected in no small measure on the basis of his opposition to the U.S. military attack on Iraq (as an Illinois state senator in 2003) is threatening to invade Libya, after ordering the head of the Libyan government to leave the country and confiscating (stealing) Libyan national assets.

"In almost a carbon copy of the actions of the brutal and arrogant George W. Bush toward Saddam Hussein and Iraq in 2002 and 2003, U.S. President

Obama is busy trying to dictate the conditions under which the Arab people will live.

“U.S. imperialism has taken these drastic actions on the basis of the flimsiest of pretexts. It is using media ‘reports’ from Libya, Egypt and elsewhere packaged by the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), established in 1981 and trained and financed by the U.S. CIA ever since. The NFSL and other such organizations are being used to ‘document’ that the Gadhafi government is killing Libyan protesters, allegedly in greater numbers than the U.S. client governments all over the rest of the Middle East are doing.

“Why is the Obama Regime mobilizing and organizing for an unprovoked attack on Libya, for an expansion of its imperialist war in the Middle East?! In brief, the once unchallenged hegemonic imperialist power is now the biggest debtor country in the world. Its economic clout has been diminished at a rapid rate under the impetus of the U.S. economy-initiated world capitalist economic crisis of the past several years. So it has to keep China and its other creditors at bay. For now it still has the most powerful military machine on earth, with more annual military spending than the rest of the world combined, as well as its long standing global diplomatic, political and intelligence operations.

“And it continues to control the vast majority of the world oil supply and reserves, still the very lifeblood of the global capitalist economy. But the Arab masses are threatening to liberate their countries and seize control of the oil in their own national territory. This in turn would render U.S. imperialism a second or third rate power. Thus the need for U.S. imperialism to establish a military

beachhead in Libya and a smokescreen behind which to increase its military protection for U.S. possession of the Middle East’s vast oil wealth....

“As Comrade Fidel Castro asserts: ‘the fundamental concern of the United States and NATO is not Libya, but the revolutionary wave unleashed in the Arab world, which they wish to prevent at all costs.’”

Let’s work together to:

**Stop the Wall Street Republicrat
Attack on Unions! – Money for Jobs
and Education, Not War!**

**Support the Resistance in Iraq and
Afghanistan!**

**US Imperialism Hands Off Libya!
No More Blood for Oil!**

Victory to the Arab Revolution! ●

10 April 2011

All India Cultural Activists Meet Held

IN a two day long meeting of the cultural activists, writers, artists and intellectuals held at Kolkata on 26-27 March, the Coordination of Cultural Movements was formed. The *Approach Paper on Cultural Movements* presented to the meeting by com. KN Ramachandran, the growing challenge confronted by the people’s movements from the cultural onslaught by the imperialist system and the neo colonial ruling system in countries like India where imperialist domination is continued through newer methods was explained in detail. Culture is increasingly used as a weapon to disarm the working class and oppressed peoples by the imperialists and lackeys in multifarious ways. On the other hand the people’s cultural movements which had contributed much during the national liberation movements and revolutionary advances have suffered serious setbacks along with the setbacks suffered by the international communist movement. It is the case in India also. Though there was a spurt in the revolutionary cultural movement during and after the Naxalbari movement, as a result of the sectarian tendencies which caused setbacks, it could not be developed according to the needs of the new situation and carried forward. So based on a concrete analysis of the new situation and taking past experiences in to consideration, cultural movement should be developed. This calls for a critical analysis of the approach to the cultural movement in the former socialist countries also. The

approach should be broadened to encompass all aspects of the superstructure and should be very broad based.

Eighteen comrades from Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Bengal participated in the camp and actively participated in the discussion. In the course of discussion the participants presented the history of the renaissance movement, the cultural movement during the national liberation struggles and of the revolutionary cultural efforts in different regions. All of the participants pointed out the impact of the imperialist onslaught in the field of culture and philosophy after the Second World War through postmodernism, identity politics and other degenerated ideologies to serve the neo-colonial offensive of capital, market forces and technology to maximise the hegemony and plunder. So cultural movement should not be reduced to certain visual and audio forms like street dramas, folk songs, or agitational slogans and poems. It should fight the feudal and imperialist value system and aim to create socialist values, transcending present limitations.

It was decided to discuss the Approach Paper and other connected contributions from the progressive forces to evolve a comprehensive approach to the movement in the course of discussions at state level and then at all India level. Com. Tuhin Dev shall function as the convenor to coordinate the activities. ●

COORDINATION OF ALL INDIA SLUM MOVEMENTS FORMED

A MEETING OF representatives of the slum movements from Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Raipur, Bhopal, Mumbai, Bangalore, Raichur, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kochi on 25th April discussed the Charter of demands of the slum dwellers and formed a eleven member All India Coordination Committee of the Slum Movements at Bhubaneswar with com. Sivaram as the convenor. The meeting discussed the serious problems faced by the increasing number of people forced to live in urban slums in the context of ever larger number of people forced to migrate due to pauperisation and unemployment in rural areas as a result of the neoliberal policies. In the number of beautification of the cities slum dwellers are thrown out in ever larger numbers almost daily and they are denied all human rights. The ruling system with the help of the political parties in power at centre and in the states and urban mafia gangs are engaged in demolition of slums using state machinery wantonly. In this context, the basic rights of the tens of millions of people forced to live in the slums across the country can be protected only if they get organized in every city and coordinate their activities at state level and all India level based on the charter of demands adopted by the meeting. The meeting decided to expand contacts with all existing slum movements and to bring them together so that a powerful movement of the people forced to rely on the slums can be organised. Com. R. Manasayya, general secretary of All India Krantikari Kisan Sabha (AIKKS) attended the meeting.

Earlier on 23rd April evening a big rally of the slum dwellers of of Bhubaneswar was held in connection with the annual conference of the Basti Suraksha Manch of Bhubaneswar culminating with a public meeting addressed by com. Sanjay Singhvi, TUCI general secretary, com. R. Manasayya, general secretary, AIKKS, comrades Sivaram, Jaidev Naik and Prameela of BSM fraternal delegates from other city slums. On 24th April the annual conference of the Bhubaneswar Basti Suraksha Manch was held in which 135 delegates elected from the conference of the people living in the 42 slums in the city at Lohia Vichar Manch Hall. The conference discussed the lessons of the resistance struggle waged by the slum dwellers of Bhubaneswar during the last decade and decided to strengthen the organisation and intensify the struggles to resist demolition of slums and to win basic democratic rights. The conference elected the new central committee of the BSM, Bhubaneswar and its office bearers. ●

STOP PUNISHING PEOPLE IN THE NAME OF MAOIST ACTION

IT WAS one year before the Jnaneswari Express was derailed between Kharagpur in W. Bengal and Jamshedpur in Jharkhand. From that time onwards the railway department has stopped all the trains from running between these two stations (about 100 kms apart) between 10pm and 5am affecting large number of trains. Tens of thousands of passengers are facing serious difficulties every day. In the name of combating 'Maoist' atrocities, people's right to travel is attacked and illegal confinement for hours is imposed on them.

On behalf of the State Committees of West Bengal, Jharkhand and Odissa of CPI(ML) a memorandum was given to the railway minister through railway authorities of Howrah, Bhubaneswar and Ranchi. Protest actions before the Howrah, Bhubaneswar and Jamshedpur railway stations were organized on 20th April severely condemning the criminal attack on people's rights by the railways and concerned government authorities. There was massive response to this campaign from the people for the campaign and to the protest march on 20th April. ●

BAGALORE: PROTEST ON CHERNOBYL DAY

25 YEARS have passed after Chernobyl nuclear accident. During this period, most of the western countries have stopped building new nuclear plants. India however, is pursuing this dangerous technology in an aggressive manner. As far as India is concerned, disaster is a continuing phenomenon. Most of the nuclear set ups here are producing cancer and genetic disorders regularly. It has come to a stage that if we need a safe life, we need to come out on streets and demand it. It is time to demand for a nuclear free world. In order to remember 25 years of Chernobyl, many groups in Bangalore have come together under the banner of Peoples' Solidarity Concerns, to strongly demand an end to this nuclear madness.

We Demand: An immediate halt to all existing and future nuclear power projects; An independent enquiry into the already existing health effects created by the nuclear power projects; A complete review of the Indian official secrets act under which the Nuclear insanity is perpetuated.

No More Chernobyl, No More Three Mile Island, No more Fukushima! ●

FOUNDING STATEMENT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF SWAZILAND

A MAJOR STEP forward in the history of Swaziland has been made with the establishment of the Communist Party of Swaziland (CPS). This is a historic move that the CPS and its allies feel will contribute greatly to the struggle for freedom by the Swazi people against the monarchic autocracy of Mswati III and the rapacious capitalist system in the country.

The Communist Party of Swaziland has been formed by Swazi women and men who have witnessed the systematic persecution of the Swazi population, who are burdened by political and social oppression, as well as enforced mass poverty, the worst HIV-AIDS pandemic in the world and a horrifically low level of life-expectancy. We aim to end this murderous degradation of our people, whose labour and capacity are being exploited by the monarchic autocracy and the capitalist system in order to enrich the ruling class.

Time is running out for the Mswati regime. It can no longer sustain its predatory exploitation of Swaziland's economy and its people. Only a new order based on a fully democratic dispensation that involves all of the Swazi people as equal partners will be able to halt and reverse the ruin imposed on our country. We join Swaziland's mass democratic movement for change, and pledge our full support to building that movement, led by PUDEMO and SWYOCO, to bring about a National Democratic Revolution in Swaziland.

We believe, however, that Swaziland needs a Communist Party in these days of intensified protest against the regime in order to present a socialist alternative and perspective to the Swazi people. The CPS is a Marxist-Leninist party that struggles for socialism.

We do not want to see the monarchic autocracy reformed or dressed in democratic trappings to appease the liberal sensibilities of any interest group or the imperialist international community. We seek a complete end to the autocracy and the establishment of a free, democratic multi-party system. We seek a revolutionary transformation to society that ends poverty, disease, the oppression of women, and the stifling of the youth. We believe that such a revolution will enable the Swazi people to begin to build a socialist society, in which there is full equality and pervasive democracy.

The Swazi people face a deep crisis of survival. The CPS will campaign for

- The unbanning of all parties and organisations, and institution of an interim government drawn from all parties, organisations, churches and trade unions that will set about creating the conditions for free and fair democratic elections in Swaziland.
- The ending of the monarchic autocracy and the transfer of much of its wealth to the immediate tasks of fighting disease and the worst aspects of poverty (such as access to water and sanitation); the confiscation of all crown property
- The dismantling of the hated tinkhundla system
- The isolation of the Mswati regime by all countries of the international community and the suspension of foreign business activity until the autocracy is dismantled
- The rights of all workers to organise into trade unions, that are in turn

empowered to join the political process individually and through their federations

- Access to land by all who wish to work it under a controlled system of collective rights – in the short term to tackle the severe food scarcity that afflicts 40% of the population
- An emergency food security strategy, linked to the above demand
- The creation of radical processes to empower women in society, and to make women's health a top priority in health care
- The creation of local workers and peasants organisations to articulate the needs of the urban and rural poor
- The creation of an emergency economic, industrial and employment strategy to begin to find a way out of the crisis brought about by the Mswati autocracy and the ruling class.

These are our immediate demands to address the current situation. They are spelled out in more detail in the CPS's programme and strategy. The CPS is a democratic, non-racist, non-sexist organisation that fights for the interests of the workers and the poor to bring about a just society – a socialist society – in Swaziland. The CPS is open to all Swazi's who agree with its principles and who adhere to its programme, constitution and are willing to take part in its work. The presence of the CPS Swazi society will provide a decisive impetus for realising the National Democratic Revolution, for ending the oppressive Mswati regime and for placing Swaziland on course to a better future. ●

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AGITATION AGAINST RAMPANT CORRUPTION OF MNREGA IN KARNATAKA

THE corporate culture in the country has dictated that even a discussion on the rampant corruption and mega scams becomes media worthy only when it attracts the attention of the elite classes like the 2G Spectrum or Common wealth Games or Adarsh Housing Society case. Even these cases could come out not because of any conscious effort by the numerous investigation agencies, but because they became so conspicuous that the government could not conceal them anymore. But even after gruesome stories about how the amounts allotted for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme are pocketed by the bureaucrats, contractors and political leaders were coming out for years, from the time this scheme was promoted, neither it received significant media attention, nor any serious action was taken against the culprits by the central or state agencies. In a number of states CPI(ML), TUCI and AIKKS had brought out details of corruption in MGNREGS along with other progressive forces and some enlightened journalists, especially in Karnataka where they are leading many mass movements. But no action was taken by earlier Congress or Janatha Dal (S) or present BJP governments.

It was in this situation the campaign against rampant corruption in the MPREGA was started in Raichur and Koppal districts at Panchayat level under the leaderships of AIKKS and TUCI committees from September last year with the slogans: provide full employment, stop migration. Then the struggle was developed in to village level dharna. In every panchayat there was huge amount of this scheme unutilised. The agitators demanded that these amounts also should be utilised for providing more employment. The third stage of the struggle was from 21st March before the Taluka panchayats as these demands were not implemented. In this the Rajya Ryota Sangha also participated.

The district administration came out arrogantly against this agitation claiming that there is no corruption in the implementation of the MGNREGA, there are no dues to be paid, there is no balance from the last years fund etc using the services of the corporate media. The leaders of AIKKS and TUCI refuted these statements with facts and figures exposing the corrupt bureaucracy. BY the last week of March anti corruption committees were formed in hundreds of panchayats in which local activists of ruling class parties also became members.

By 25th March in a number of panchayats, the agitating poor and landless peasants and agricultural workers under the leadership of these committees locked the panchayat offices and took the agitation to more militant forms. Police lathi-charged in a number of places and arrested hundreds of the agitators. Protesting against it and condemning the police attacks, Koppal Bandh and state level protests were organized from April 1st onwards. There was mass participation everywhere. Still there was no positive action from the state government to solve the problem.

In this situation on 9th April NH13 was blocked by thousands. Police arrested more than 500 agitators including the leaders. Meanwhile the chief minister came out with an arrogant statement condemning the agitation. This infuriated the people further and in spite of all provocations from the state machinery it was decided to carry forward the struggle with increasing participation of the masses. To involve more people the next stage of agitation was planned for putting the corrupt officers and leaders of the panchayat samithis at various levels on people's trials. The people's committees formed at local levels are actively campaigning to mobilize the masses in this state wide agitation against corruption. ●