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Massive Dharna by Slum Dwellers of Bhubaneswar on 15th December before Vidhan Sabha



Spectrum of Corruption: From Infra Red To Ultra Right

(DPF Calls For All India Campaign Against Scams and Scamsters)

[The Democratic People's Front has called for an all India campaign uniting with all like-minded forces against the rampant corruption in all walks of life as exposed by the numerous recent scams, especially the 2-G Spectrum scam. It has called for organising anti scam programmes based on the following statement on January 26th, the Republic Day.]

THE 2-G Spectrum Scam would make the BOFORS scam look like peanuts. The total loss to the nation amounts to Rupees 176000000000/- which is 1760 times the population of India; that makes each Indian cheated of atleast Rs. 1760/-. The question is who gained? Is it Raja, the Minister or the industrial houses that benefited from the scam? Obviously Raja would not make any money unless the Companies paid him for granting them the licenses from DoT that benefited them from the deal. The nexus is therefore clear. The Companies led by Anil Ambani and Tatas and some more companies engaged in the business of mobile communication looted the country with the help and connivance of Raja, their political agent.

And what was the clean Prime Minister doing all this time when the country was being looted at a scale of its entire defense budget?? Preparing to shake hands with Obama and be praised as the partner of America as a Global power? The Prime Minister delayed to take any action to stop the loot as noticed by the Supreme Court, since without looting the Indian people how would the Indian Capitalist grow big enough for Obama to embrace them as his partners?? In the era of Globalisation, the Indian Capitalist class can integrate with the Imperialist network only by looting its own people and resources.

A perfunctory post-mortem is perhaps necessary to expose the ingenuity of the cheating mechanism that was rightly detected by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). An extract from his report brings out the fraud:

“ On 10th January, 2008 afternoon, the DoT through the Press Information Bureau informed that all eligible applicants who applied for UAS (unified access service) licenses upto 25th September, 2007 would be issued

LoIs.... DoT has been implementing a policy of FCFS (first come first serve) for the grant of UAS licenses under which initially an application which is received first will be processed first and thereafter if found eligible will be granted LoI and then whosoever, complies with the conditions of LoIs first will be granted UAS license.. This stipulation introduced for the first time by DoT took away the relevance of the date of application and grossly violated the sanctity and transparency of FCFS policy being followed hitherto by DoT...”

The underlined portion of the CAG report was the ingenious twist introduced by Raja and supported by the Attorney General himself that permitted the DoT to give away the licenses by to their chosen Companies at throw away rates bypassing the earlier FCFS policy.

Be that as it may, the so called protests of the opposition parties are equally pathetic. The entire spectrum of the Indian political parties, from the infra red-CPI(M) to the ultra-violators- BJP, have limited their protest to disrupting the Parliament and getting political mileage against Congress without exposing the loot of the Indian people and the corrupt method of the enrichment of the Indian business houses. As the true left and left democratic forces, we must not only demand prosecution of Raja but prosecution of the Directors of all Companies who bribed Raja for being benefitted and demand repayment of the amounts equivalent to the loss caused to the country. We must also demand the confiscation of all black moneys stashed abroad by the Indian rich. When the entire republic is being looted, the people should observe the coming republic day as cleansing day- to clean the country of corrupt politicians and business-men who shake hands with the imperialist powers to share the labor and resources of the country. ■

ICOR Documents

[Founding Conference Documents and List of Participats of the International Co-ordination of Revolutionary Parties and Organisations (ICOR) in English and Hindi.]

Contribution : Rs 10

**Address: C-141, Sainik Nagar, Uttam Nagar,
New Delhi - 110059, ☎ 011-25332343**

Make the New Year a Year of Revolutionary Advances

THE RED STAR extends revolutionary greetings to all its readers, friends and sympathizers on the occasion of the New Year.

The year that we are bidding goodbye to was an eventful one. The crisis ridden character of the imperialist system was exposed more than ever. The economic crisis it is facing has not shown any sign of lessening. The US led NATO forces are not finding any escape route to get out of Afghanistan. The inter-imperialist contradictions are also sharpening in the form of trade wars and as the trade deficit of US is escalating. As a result of the efforts of the imperialists and their lackeys and compradors to shift the burden of the crisis they are facing to the working class and the oppressed peoples, leading to ever intensifying price rise, unemployment and under employment, in short to the unprecedented pauperization of the masses, the contradiction between capital and labour and between imperialist system and the oppressed peoples of the world have intensified, thereby sharpening the contradiction between the global imperialist system and the forces struggling for socialism. The devastating character of the so called development policy pursued by the imperialist system and the comprador rulers which is threatening the very existence of the human race has also led to the sharpening of this contradiction. As a result last year witnessed millions of working class in the imperialist countries coming out in the streets defending the welfare measures they were enjoying. The progressive regimes in the Venezuela, Bolivia and other Latin American countries continued to defy US dictates. Numerous struggles have broken out in the countries under neo colonial domination against the neo liberal policies imposed, against displacement from their habitats and against policies which continue to pauperise them.

Along with the objective conditions becoming favourable to the workers and the oppressed masses around the world, the positive aspect of last year's developments was that the subjective forces of revolution also made advances during the year. The most significant thing was the formation of International Coordination of Revolutionary Parties and Organisations (ICOR) and its declaration in Berlin on 16th October. Forty-one revolutionary parties and organizations from all continents have become part of this effort to initiate the reorganization of the Communist International according to the concrete conditions of today. The call of the ICOR to observe 4th December as the Internationalist Environment Day exposing the devastating imperialist development policy and calling for a pro people, pro nature development policy received positive response in a large number of countries. It is the responsibility of the revolutionary forces around the world to develop ICOR in to a struggling front of the workers and oppressed peoples of the world in the coming year.

At home, during the just over one year period after the November 2009 All India Conference at Bhopal, the Party and class and mass organizations could make significant gains in organization building and in the field of struggles. By putting forward its understanding about imperialist plunder and aggression taking neo colonial forms in the post Second World War period, the Party could come out of the ideological stagnation faced by the revolutionary movement for long. As a result, it could wage successful struggle against the right deviation of the CPI[M] led reformist forces on the one hand and against the anarchist

Contents

❖ Editorials	3
❖ This Republic is Stinking	4
❖ WikiLeaks Exposures	5
❖ Corruption As An Integral Factor In Neo-liberal Accumulation	16
❖ Illegal Financial Flows: The Great Drain Robbery	11
❖ Whither Liberation?	12
❖ Lessons from Bihar Election Results	13
❖ Cancun Round Collapses	14
❖ Politics of United Front	15
❖ International Environment Day Programme Report	16
❖ With Rising Seas, Looming Catastrophe	19
❖ Trends in Employment Relations in India : Towards Hire and Fire	22
❖ Religion and Secularism in the Neo-colonial Context	26
❖ Reports From States	29
❖ Chathisgarh: A Govt. of ams and its Anti-Maoist Campaign	35

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**Editor, Printer,
Publisher and Owner**

**KN Ramachandran
C-141
Sainik Nagar
New Delhi - 110059**

Phone : (011) 25332343
redstarenglish@yahoo.co.in

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CPI[Maoist] forces on the other hand. The strengthening of the Party and the class and mass organizations and the initiative taken to launch the Democratic People's Front[DPF] trying to unite the revolutionary left and democratic forces have created favourable conditions to develop countrywide struggles focusing on price rise, unemployment, corruption, displacement, ecological destruction like grueling problems affecting the masses of people. As a result conditions are created for much more significant advances in the coming year.

The Party has taken up two important challenging tasks in the new year: one, to take up and complete a

study of imperialism in its neo colonial phase; two, to initiate a study of the ideological, political shortcomings of the International Communist Movement leading to the severe setbacks suffered by it and the theoretical problems of developing the socialist model as a qualitatively different alternative to the imperialist system. The Central Committee has resolved to complete these studies, develop the Programme of the People's (New) Democratic Revolution based on them and convene the Party Congress based on it within next year. These decisions call for preparing the whole Party to take up the ideological and political preparations for it. Simultaneously they demand the expanding of the Party to all major states, recruitment of more members all over the country, developing of cadres to take up the revolutionary tasks and development of class and mass organizations including their expansion to take up all India struggles. In short, it is a challenging task of establishing CPI(ML) as the vanguard of Indian proletariat capable of leading the People's Democratic Revolution to victory and advancing the socialist transformation of the society.

The Central Committee of CPI(ML) extends revolutionary greetings to all well wishers of the revolutionary movement on the occasion of heralding the New Year, 2011, and appeals to them to extend all possible assistance to the Party to carry forward these difficult tasks. ■

This Republic is Stinking

THE Rs.1.76 lakh crores 2-G Spectrum scam has exposed the extent to which the Indian Republic propagated by the vested interests as the 'biggest democracy in the world' has degenerated as a crony capitalist country under pseudo democratic practice. The public money is laundered away by the corporate houses, MNCs and a multitude of mafias with the active participation of ministers, bureaucrats and political leaderships. The latest Adarsh Society and Common Wealth Games scams along with the numerous mining scams and illegal land deals, now capped by the 2-G Spectrum scam shows the extent of this *scamster raj* with all its vulgarities. All existing rules are flouted and ruthless manipulation is resorted to. In this latest case the rules were bent blatantly to favour a number of companies, changing the system of allocation mid-course. As a result even companies which have nothing to do with telecom bought 2-G Spectrum and within a few days sold them to MNCs at prices 9-10 times higher.

When this huge scam was going on the details of it had come out and the prime minister and even the chief

justice of India and many others in high positions were in the knowhow of it. Still no action was taken to prevent it as all had a share in the billions of rupees that changed hands. All were involved in covering it up. At last when the dirty minister was asked to resign under public pressure and the govt was compelled to take some action, the maximum it has done is to order a CBI enquiry. As the fate of all hitherto CBI enquiries are well known, nothing substantial is going to come out of it also. Especially when even the prime minister is involved in its cover up

Though the parliamentary opposition is waging a protracted struggle by paralyzing the parliament, they are also not ready to call on the people to come out on the streets or to demand the arrests of all suspects, confiscation of the assets of all scamsters and confiscation of the fabulous sums deposited by them in foreign banks. As many of them are also involved in the numerous scams and in the 2-G Spectrum scam itself, they are not prepared to ask the government to step down and call another general election. The maximum they are interested in is making electoral benefits out of it. The main opposition, BJP's state govts in Karnataka, Chhatisgarh and Jharkhand are themselves involved in a number of multi-billion scams. Its hands are also dirty with the cover up efforts. Thus the opposition is also part of this scamster raj. So is the case of other state govts run by other parties.

In this situation it is the task of the revolutionary left and democratic forces to mobilize the masses on the streets and to intensify the struggle against this despotic rule of the scamsters who are selling the country's interests simultaneously, intensifying the neo colonial slavery. The *Republic* they are talking about is stinking. The ruling system they are running is crony capitalism of neo colonial vintage. It is nothing but a politician-bureaucrat-corporate-mafia led comprador rule. The earlier it is thrown out, the better.

The CPI(ML) calls on all patriotic and democratic forces to come out on the streets with the demands: prosecute all scamsters, confiscate their properties and confiscate all their deposits in the foreign banks. As the corruption is

spreading to all levels, even up to the lower most levels including the panchayats, as all so called elected bodies have become corrupt, as the elections are fought using scam money and after elections the 'representatives' are purchased, this system has become outrageously stinking. It is proved more and more anti people and it has no right to continue its rule of scams, plunder and imperialist servitude.

As corruption and scams are the products of the existing ruling system, the struggle against them should be linked to the struggle to overthrow this stinking ruling system itself. ■

WikiLeaks Exposures

THE MORE THAN 2.5 lakh US state department documents published by the WikiLeaks have angered the US state secretary Hillary Clinton as well as all the top guns from both Democratic and Republican parties extremely. They are crying for the blood of Assange who lead the agency. Sarah Palin, the Republican vice president candidate in 2008 US poll has even called for hunting him down like Osama bin Laden. It is not difficult to understand this fury of the US establishment as a whole. These documents, the authenticity of which is not challenged by the US authorities, have exposed how continuous US administrations are engaged in subterfuges, spying and all sorts of dirty underhand tactics and spreading of blatant lies and vilifications utilizing even the diplomatic privilege enjoyed by their embassies to impose its global hegemony at any cost.

As the arrested and now released on bail founder of WikiLeaks stated "Don't shoot the messenger for revealing uncomfortable truths". "There is need to defend the right of all media to reveal the truth" as he says. Following this "unauthorized release of 250,000 documents from the US diplomatic communications network", Noam Chomsky said: We should understand....that one of the major reasons for government secrecy is to protect the government from its own population. What that reveals is the profound hatred for democracy on the part of our political leadership and the Israeli political leadership.

These exposures have made many governments across the world uncomfortable. They have exposed how the neo colonial governments around the world are dictated by US imperialists and how they are blatantly interfering

in the internal functioning of these governments so much so that a US embassy man can get reports directly from a Delhi police officer. The Congress and BJP leaders do not find it wrong to discuss internal political questions and their feuds with the US masters. These leaders are tutored by the US ambassadors as seen in the case of BJP leader Advani who got enlightened on nuclear bill after discussions with the former US ambassador. Similar is the case of the Pak leaders and leaders of almost all the comprador governments of the countries under neo-colonisation.

WikiLeaks have exposed how US lords over the world using all forms of heinous methods and how the comprador governments and political leaders in the neo-colonial countries kowtow to its dictates submitting to all kinds of interferences in the internal affairs of their countries. ■♦

Organise Vigorous Campaign Against Scams and Scamsters

AS the 2-G Spectrum Scam is becoming murkier with parliament's winter session almost totally lost in its turmoil and the corporate chiefs openly batting for their clients, the ruling system, which is creating numerous scams which are becoming bigger and bigger, is stinking more and more. As the NDA government also was corrupt and all these scams have their roots in the neo-liberal policies which are obediently pursued by all parties whether they are part of the government at the center or in the states

None of them, especially the Congress and the BJP are not interested to bring out the truth punish all scamsters and confiscate the people's money stored in foreign banks by them. All these scams expose that so

long as the ruling system and its policies are continued there is no escape from these or bigger ones expected to come out in coming days. It is this comprador bureaucratic capitalist state which produces the scams. So the campaign and struggles against these scams should be towards exposing the very ruling system itself and towards mobilizing the masses to overthrow it.

The CEC calls on all SCs and SOC's to organize a vigorous campaign against all scams and scamsters with the slogan "The Republic is Stinking". Unite all like-minded forces and organize country wide campaign mobilizing the masses. ■

K.N.Ramachandran,
General Secretary, CPI[ML]

Corruption As An Integral Factor In Neo-liberal Accumulation

PJ James

THE “world’s largest democracy” that is India is perceived as one among the most corrupt and inefficient countries of the world today. Two leading funded NGOs viz., Transparency International (TI) and Global Financial Integrity (GFI), the latter being floated by the Ford Foundation itself, have come out exposing Manmohan Singh government in India as one of the most corrupt regimes in the Asian continent. At the global level too corruption is flourishing and according to *2010 Global Corruption Barometer*, a worldwide public opinion survey on corruption released by Transparency International, over the last three years, corruption has increased leaps and bounds. According to the report, illicit transactions lead to massive illegalities used by drug kingpins, racketeers, terrorist masterminds, and multinational corporations under neo-liberalism. Drawing on the experiences throughout Africa, Asia, America and Europe, it shows how transnational banks and corporate businesses use secret transactions and ignore both national and international laws while handling some \$1 trillion in illicit proceeds each year.

The nexus among corporates, politicians, bureaucrats and intermediaries are shifting huge funds to safe tax havens through commissions, kickbacks, transfer pricing, false documentation, fake corporations, secrecy jurisdictions, and other tricks of the trade. India occupies 78th rank among 178 countries in the Corruption Perception Index of TI. In another report, entitled “*The Drivers and Dynamics of Illicit Financial Flows from India: 1948-2008*,” the GFI, estimates that tax evasion, crime, and corruption have

removed gross illicit assets from India worth US \$462 billion. These illicit flows are more than twice the country’s current external debt of \$230 billion. In this way, India had lost an equivalent of about 36 percent of its GDP. Quite revealingly, reports the GFI: “68 percent of India’s aggregate illicit capital loss occurred after India’s economic reforms in 1991, indicating that deregulation and trade liberalization actually contributed to/accelerated the transfer of illicit money abroad.” According to the Report, India’s underground economy, which has been estimated to account for 50 percent of GDP (approximately \$640 billion at the end of 2008) “is closely tied to illicit financial outflows.” Dev Kar, the GFI lead economist puts it thus: “The total present value of India’s illicit assets held abroad accounts for approximately 72 percent of India’s underground economy. This means that almost three-quarters of the illicit assets comprising India’s underground economy—ends up outside of the country. We also find that there is a statistical correlation between larger volumes of illicit flows and deteriorating income distribution.” (The report is available at <http://india.gfip.org>).

However, the reports by TI and GFI are only tip of the iceberg. Concerned sections have already pointed out that nearly a trillion dollars of India’s wealth has been stashed in shady overseas bank accounts and this forms only a portion of the black money generated in the country through corruption and scams. While the money generated through mega scams at the central level is often siphoned out, that appropriated at the state and local levels is often recycled into the circulation channel to blow up further speculation and inflation. Political leadership, bureaucracy, military (there are so many international reports on India as a money-spinning dumping ground for obsolete weapons import) and above all corporate houses and their pimps are all involved in this.

The above reports concerning India are widely discussed in the context of recent mega scams pertaining to IPL, Commonwealth Games, sale of 2G spectrum involving a loss of Rs. 1.76 lakh crore to the exchequer as estimated by CAG, diversion of thousands of crores from LIC and public sector banks to real estate and speculative giants in the guise of housing loans, Adarsh Housing Scam, thousands of crores worth underhand deals in mining of natural resources, leasing of oil and natural gas basins and real estate transactions, insider trading in stock exchanges, diversion of funds with public sector banks to stock markets for ballooning the market and then siphoning fabulous sums out of the country by imperialist financial speculators, mega appropriation of the country’s wealth through the under pricing of public sector shares in the process of disinvestment, writing off of hundreds of thousands of crores in the name of ‘non-performing assets’ with public sector banks, huge kickbacks involved in privatizing civil aviation, lakhs of crores worth tax evasion every year and so on.

In fact, much before the debate on these scandals, as manifestation of the growing corruption among the higher administrative levels, during the three years ending 2009, the CBI has registered 2439 cases of corruption involving politicians, bureaucrats and corporate pimps out of which 688 were in 2007, 744 in 2008 and 795 in 2009. But, the CBI being a political tool in the hands of Manmohan government which itself is the embodiment of corruption, such enquiries are only for blackmailing political rivals and for diverting people’s attention. Of course, corruption and fraud have another dimension too. For, in

addition to the outright plunder of nation's wealth through illegal means, another mega plunder in the form of 'legal' tax exemptions is also taking place every year. For instance, budget analysis of the last few years reveals increasing transfer of wealth to corporates through various tax exemptions. In the 2008-09 budget, such tax exemptions amounted to Rs.4.14 lakh crores while in the 2009-10 budget it rose to Rs. 5.02 lakh crores. This is nothing but a kind of legalizing the plunder of country's scarce revenue. This diversion of resources that appears to be legal and which is more than sufficient for providing food, health, education and agricultural subsidies to the people at the existing rate is the neoliberal way of corporate plunder of national wealth with the connivance of comprador rulers. Along with the change in the quantitative dimension of corporate appropriation, unlike in the past, in the neoliberal period, a qualitative change has also occurred with regard to it.

In fact, one argument often put forward both by the comprador sections and liberal intelligentsia in the country in favour of economic liberalization and globalization was that it will relieve the country from corruption prone "licence-permit raj" of the erstwhile Nehruvian era. But what happened on the contrary was that in addition to the old form of all-pervasive corruption where the political-bureaucratic leadership gets a price for the promotion of corporate interests, now the former also began to have a direct share of the national loot involved in the deregulation and decontrol of economic activities and in that sense we are witnessing a further strengthening of the comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie in the country. And a new unholy nexus among ruling class political leadership, bureaucracy, corporate mafia and their lobbyists including media pimps has emerged for sharing the booty. All adherents of neoliberalism in varying proportions irrespective of their name and colour of flags are beneficiaries or parties to this plunder at different levels of administration. For, among the disclosures that are coming in, reports also point towards the role of Niira Radia, the corporate pimp having her busy schedules in the corporate-bureaucratic corridors, as a lobbyist and consultant for the CPI(M) led West Bengal government's efforts to attract corporate capital to the state.

Corruption as the Concomitant of Corporatisation and Market Expansion

Today, under neo-liberalism, international experience clearly shows a rapid increase of corruption, especially that involving corporate-bureaucratic alliance. Corruption has become an essential and inherent tendency of the imperialist capital accumulation process and market expansion in accordance with their specificities in the neoliberal period. As revealed by the Enron and World Com scandals in USA, corruption is the outcome of neoliberal policy pursued by ruling classes that encourages greed, financial swindles, extortion and criminality as part of a ruthless drive to attack the living conditions and democratic rights of workers and toiling masses for ensuring fabulous profits for corporate capital. It was since the stagflation of the seventies that the ruling elite and CEOs of MNCs and financial corporations in their pursuit of increasing profit rate unleashed a process of deindustrialization and financialisation on the one hand, and began their concerted action to eliminate the democratic rights gained by workers in an earlier period on the other. Deregulation, decontrol, disinvestment, elimination of social programs and all round downsizing of the state expenditures became the hallmark of both imperialist and neocolonial governments since the eighties. Public funds were driven to speculation in equity, currency and real estate markets where every avenue of fraud and swindles including artificial fixing of asset prices, market distortions and account manipulations were justified for amassing wealth within the shortest possible time. And the consequences of these financial dealings by a wealthy few for ordinary people have been quite devastating. The current global economic meltdown that began in mid-2008 in USA in the form of the so called 'sub-prime crisis' had been the outcome of a

series of underhand deals and legal violations among the CEOs of transnational banks, financial corporations, speculative intermediaries and the political bosses there. Even after the onset of the crisis, the so-called bail-out-packages enacted in USA and elsewhere transferring trillions of dollars to the financial corporations were another fraud committed on the backs of the toiling people. That is, the very same financial corporations whose reckless and illegitimate financial dealings that led to the crisis were rewarded with handsome transfers from the public exchequer.

This is not an isolated event. Neocolonial financial and development institutions and funding agencies such as the World Bank and Asian Development with the connivance of MNCs have no hesitation even to bribe government officials to enforce programs and projects in neocolonial countries as desired by imperialist fiancé capital. However, until the eighties when the government was supposed to be the 'initiator' of economic and infrastructure projects, the regulatory mechanism associated with the 'developmental state' had been a hurdle to the unhindered manipulation of vested corporate interests. However, under neoliberalism, rather than being an 'initiator' of economic activities, the state everywhere began to put on the mantle of a 'facilitator' for corporate capital's rapacious grabbing of public wealth in the name of development. On the one hand, in the guise of downsizing and roll back, the state became fascistic by abolishing all the hard earned democratic and social rights of the common people, and on the other, in the name of decontrol and deregulation the entire reins of the economy were entrusted to corporate and speculative giants. Under neoliberalism, policy making in the interest of corporate capital has become the major source of mega appropriation for political and bureaucratic elite. Though the

governments, both imperialist and comprador, for hoodwinking the people are eloquent on the establishment of competition commission and so many regulatory boards in every sphere of activity, all of them are hand in glove with the corporate giants and are mere spectators in the unprecedented monopolization and more often have become conspirators in corruption too.

Decay and Degeneration of Parliamentary Democracy

In the process, the so-called parliamentary democracy itself has become superfluous. To evade the constitution of a Joint Parliamentary Committee for an enquiry into the biggest-ever scam India has seen, in collusion with the leading sections of the comprador bourgeoisie such as the Ambanis, Tatas, Mittals, etc., the 'crony' Manmohan government found it safe to abandon the entire winter session of the parliament of 'world's largest democracy.' Though no party which shared power at the centre during the last two decades can evade its responsibility in the spectrum scam (during the BJP led NDA regime, through telecom licensing, public exchequer had lost about Rs. 50000 crores) as it is the fall out of National Telecom Policy of 1994, the number one culprit in this mega scam is none other than Manmohan govt itself.

Not only that, the corporate involvement in the formation of this government of scams, swindles and bribes has also become evident with the release of Radia tape which unequivocally explains the key role of Tata, Ambani, Mittal and so on, the leading Indian comprador chieftains, in the choice of Murali Deora, Praful Patel, Ananda Sharma and Kamal Nath as ministers and in determining their ministerial portfolios. It also unravels the criminal role played by none other than Tata, the so-called doyen of Indian big bourgeoisie in installing pliable Raja himself as the Telecom minister. As his true colours are exposed through the Radia tape, the so called 'gentleman' Ratan Tata whose

forefathers were nurtured and brought up as the leading Indian compradors under the fostering care of British imperialism, is now seeking the intervention of Supreme Court for a ban on the public debate over his criminal conspiracy in manipulating the comprador Manmohan govt in conformity with his corporate interests, with the plea that the release of the tape is an encroachment into his privacy. Following this, the Manmohan govt, which is afraid of a JPC on spectrum scam lest even the prime minister himself who is presiding over all these scams will be called for examination, has also ordered a high level enquiry into the Radia tape leaks. Manmohan Singh, who was avoiding media attention these days, himself has come forward assuring his patrons, the comprador chieftains that their corporate interests would be protected in all cases of phone tapping.

In the 'largest democracy' that India is, while cabinet ministers like Rajas are in the pay-rolls of corporate chieftains, the number of billionaires having more than Rs. 200 crores in Lok Sabha alone is put at 315. In the last Lok Sabha, the number was 156. Almost 40 percent of the parliament members are having criminal cases charged against them for serious crimes such as extortion, money laundering, rape and murder. With the domination of finance capital, parliament, as Lenin said almost a century back, has become a pigsty. Even several members of the judiciary, including judges in the apex courts are also reportedly involved in corruption and scandals. In short, all the three wings of the neocolonial state, viz., the executive, judiciary and legislature are mired in the deep pit of corruption and degeneration.

Actually, as noted earlier, scams and corruption are integral to unhindered speculative financial flows and it was the corporatisation and financialisation which began during the finance ministership of Manmohan Singh in the early nineties that fully replaced the small-scale scams of the erstwhile 'licence-permit raj' with mega scams quite suited to the ubiquitous domination of speculation in every sphere of economic activity. Of course, its symptoms were visible during the prime ministership of Rajiv Gandhi whose regime was notorious for such scandals as Bofors, HDW submarine deals, St. Kitts scam, etc., as a corollary of the liberalization and privatization policies initiated during that period. With the onset of neoliberal globalization, rejecting the credit needs of crores of poor Indians, Manmohan Singh opened the doors of public sector banks to stock market speculators resulting in Harshad Mehta and Ketan Parekh scams, which were only a prelude to what was in store for the future.

With their access to the lakhs of crores of public money in public sector banks and financial institutions, Ambani like speculative financiers used them for ballooning speculative spheres such as stock and real estate markets and diverting super profits earned there for grabbing precious and strategic national and public sector assets at throw away prices. For instance, the handing over of Krishna-Godavari natural gas basin to Ambani alone has resulted in a loss to the exchequer to the tune of Rs.81000 crores at constant prices. While, Ambani was reaping super profits from Indian stock markets at the rate of Rs. 20000 crores per day in the course of SENSEX's skyrocketing beyond 20000, the Manmohan government was reluctant to impose even a rupee as tax on this unprecedented speculation. Within a period of two decades and through a process of financialisation, scams and corruption facilitated by the neocolonial Indian state, Ambani/Reliance became the largest Indian business house commanding over almost 20 percent of the country's GDP. The financial empire of Ambani is built up not because of, what Manmohan Singh and his cohorts say, "the entrepreneurial energy released by liberalization" but solely due to speculation and grabbing of public assets with political and bureaucratic connivance. The much publicised growth trajectory of the last two decades is essentially founded on speculation, scams, corruption, scandals and under neoliberalism, therefore, scams and corruption are not merely an ethical or philosophical question but are integral to the very pattern of financialisation itself. This speculative empire is

flourishing on a stagnant productive economy whose manifestations are deindustrialization, agricultural retardation and frightening unemployment and deprivation of the broad masses of people.

Telecom as the Milch-cow

Of course, there is ample reason why the telecom sector has become the biggest source of plunder and corruption under the neoliberal regime. Ever since the privatization of telecom sector began in the early nineties when Manmohan Singh himself was the finance minister, both MNCs and Indian corporates came to know this as the biggest milch-cow in view of the ever-growing market in this area and consequently corruption scandals also became an inalienable component of it. The then Telecom minister Sukh Ram himself was caught red-handed in the first telecom scam involving hundreds of crores of rupees. Today Indian market with 730 million mobile phone connections has become several times larger than that of US or EU. At the behest of MNCs and Indian compradors, Manmohanomics initiated a policy of systematic demolition of employment generating and profit making public sector telecom enterprises and allowed corporate financiers to make use of the vast public sector infrastructure facilities including BSNL towers to monopolize the expanding telecom market in the country. In the process commissions, bribes, and kickbacks and scandals became routine affairs. The Telecom Regulatory Authority (TRAI) that was installed to hoodwink people remained either as a spectator or connived with these anti-national corporate machinations. Obviously, the TRAI Chairman during the period of the telecom scam who had been a consultant to the Tata Group is now occupying a top position in the firm floated by Niira Radia. Of course, senior bureaucrats of PSUs occupying executive posts of private corporate companies in their post-retirement period is a ubiquitous phenomenon under neoliberalism. The recent 2G spectrum scam is the logical continuation of the telecom privatization process initiated in the nineties. Put it differently, in conformity with the market expansion and corporatisation in this field, scams which were hundreds of crores under Sukh Ram, rose to thousands of crores during the BJP led NDA regime and further to lakhs of crores under Manmohan, who himself is the architect of neoliberalism in India and whose government has become the embodiment of corruption and scams.

Manmohanomics as Synonym for Corruption

The bourgeois media often try to interpret these scams as simply a question of "misuse of public office for private gain." It is not simple as that. Corporate loot of public funds and national wealth with the connivance of political-bureaucratic nexus is one form of accumulation by speculative capital today. Once freed from the erstwhile Keynesian era controls, today under neoliberalism finance capital in the process of speculative profit accumulation is leading the whole world into unprecedented decay and degeneration. India under the neoliberal-neocolonial policy of Manmohanomics is also becoming fast integrated with the political, economic and cultural trends unleashed by moribund finance capital. In developed capitalist countries, on account of the erstwhile democratization process, and due to the level of cultural consciousness of the people, such scandals arising from neoliberalism are still more or less confined to the upper echelons of power.

On the other hand, in neocolonial countries like India where such a democratization process is generally lacking, corruption and kickbacks emanating from corporatisation are permeating to all levels of society at a maddening speed making life of the masses horrible. In spreading this decay to the grassroots, along with the ruling classes the new breed of imperialist funded NGOs also play a crucial role. Under neoliberalism, if corporate financiers are the embodiment of corruption and scams at the macro level, NGOs are specialising in corruption at the micro level. Recent micro-finance scandals reported from Andhra Pradesh

and other parts of the country, where devoid of formal credit sources, common people are forced to depend on usurious informal sources of credit and then becoming victims of huge financial frauds should be eye-openers in this regard.

In brief, the unraveling of the floodgates of scandals and corruption in India should be understood in the broader context of its growing integration with imperialist finance capital under Manmohanomics. Though Congress, the leading political party of Indian ruling classes, always seek to portray Manmohan as the symbol of decency and integrity, being the chief architect of free market and corporate friendly policies of the last two decades, he is the number one culprit of the unfolding scams in the country as they are inseparable from Manmohan's policies of transforming India as an attractive destination for corporate financiers, speculators and swindlers. In the specific case of the 2G scam, even the minutest details of this biggest ever corruption the country has ever seen were clearly known to this CEO of the neocolonial Indian state from the very beginning.

While his policies have enriched a narrow upper layer of speculators and swindlers like Ambanis who ranked among world's billionaires, the vast millions of working class, especially in the unorganized sector and the rural peasantry are thrown into unprecedented deprivation, social insecurity and economic inequality. The spectrum scam and the host of scandals that are emerging are illustrative of the way in which Indian elite led by Manmohan Singh has tailored neoliberal policies to suit the narrow interest of corporate business. In this context, corruption can be dealt with only by defeating the neoliberal policies that reinforce the hegemony of finance capital. Therefore, along with the political program of overthrowing the domination of capital, a cultural revolution aimed at the basic democratization of society capable of eradicating the conditions of corruption is also an urgent task. ■

Illegal Financial Flows: The Great Drain Robbery

P. Sainath

INDIA has lost nearly a half-trillion dollars in illegal financial flows out of the country, says a new study by Global Financial Integrity. India is losing nearly Rs.240 crore every 24 hours, on average, in illegal financial flows out of the country.

The nation lost \$213 billion (roughly Rs.9.7 lakh crore) in illegal capital flight between 1948 and 2008. However, over \$125 billion (Rs.5.7 lakh crore) of that was lost in just this decade between 2000-2008, according to a study by Global Financial Integrity (GFI). These “illicit financial flows,” says GFI, “were generally the product of corruption, bribery and kickbacks, criminal activities and efforts to shelter wealth from a country's tax authorities.” GFI is a programme of the Center for International Policy, Washington D.C. It is a non-profit research and advocacy body that “promotes national and multilateral policies, safeguards, and agreements aimed at curtailing the cross-border flow of illegal money.”

In just five years from 2004-08 alone, the country lost roughly Rs.4.3 lakh crore to such outflows. That is — nearly two and a half times the value of the 2G telecom scam now exercising Parliament and the media. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) pegs the 2G scam at almost Rs.1.8 lakh crore.

Accounting for the rate of return on those illegal outflows, the present value of that \$ 213 billion reaches \$ 462 billion (Rs.21 lakh crore) says GFI. Astonishingly, over \$96 billion of that amount left the country between 2004 and 2008. As the report's author, Dev Kar, told TheHindu: “India is losing capital at an average rate of \$19.3

billion per annum India can ill afford to ignore such a loss of capital.”

As the report puts it: “Had India managed to avoid this staggering loss of capital, the country could have paid off its outstanding external debt of \$230.6 billion (as of end-2008) and have another half left over for poverty alleviation and economic development.”

At the 2004-08 pace (if it has not gone up), the economy is haemorrhaging at a rate of nearly Rs.240 crore every day on average. And even the total \$462 billion, says GFI Director Raymond W. Baker in a letter prefacing the report, is “a conservative estimate. It does not include smuggling, certain forms of trade mispricing and gaps in available statistics.” Factor these in, and “it is entirely reasonable to estimate that more than a half-trillion dollars have drained from India since independence.”

The GFI study is titled “The Drivers and Dynamics of Illicit Financial Flows from India: 1948-2008.” Authored by Dr. Kar, formerly a senior economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and now Lead Economist at the GFI, it defines ‘illicit flows’ as “comprised of funds that are illegally earned, transferred, or utilised — if laws were broken in the origin, movement, or use of the funds then they are illicit.” Such fund transfers are not recorded in the country of origin for they typically violate that nation's laws and banking regulations.

So massive are these illegal outflows, says the study, that the “total capital flight represents approximately 16.6 per cent of India's GDP as of year-end 2008.” Its estimate falls far short of the \$1.4 trillion figure cited in the India media prior to the 2009 general elections. But, says the report, “the figure still represents a staggering loss of capital.” Illegal flight of capital, it says, “worsens income distribution, reduces the effectiveness of external aid, and hampers economic development.”

That does seem an obvious outcome in a country where according to the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS), 836 million human beings live spending Rs.20 a day or less.

The illegal outflows also account for most of India's parallel economy. “The total value of (such) illicit assets held abroad represents about 72 per cent of the size of India's underground economy which has been estimated at 50 per cent of India's GDP (or about \$640 billion at end-2008) by several researchers. This implies that only about 28 per cent of illicit assets of India's underground economy are held domestically.” It also strengthens arguments that “the desire to amass wealth without attracting government attention is one of the primary motivations behind the cross-border transfer of illicit capital.”

The GFI study makes two vital points amongst others that will surely stoke ongoing debates in the country. One: the drain bloated massively in the era of economic liberalisation and reforms starting with 1991. Two: “High net-worth individuals and private companies were found to be the primary drivers of illicit flows out of India's private sector.” Conversely, “India's underground economy is also a significant driver of illicit financial flows.”  *See on page 11*

Whither Liberation?

Sharmistha Choudhury

P**OLITICS**, they say, makes for strange bed fellows. One would have thought this maxim to apply strictly to bourgeois politics. So it comes as somewhat of a shock to see a professedly communist revolutionary organization like the CPI-ML (Liberation) teaming up with the most suspect of allies in a bid to form an all-India left coordination.

On August 11, 2010, ‘four fighting organizations of the Left’ (in the words of Liberation general secretary Comrade Dipankar Bhattacharjee) came together to form an All-India Left Coordination (AILC) through a joint convention held in New Delhi. Apart from the CPI-ML (Liberation), the three other constituents of this Coordination are CPM (Punjab), Lal Nishan Party (Leninist) of Maharashtra and Left Coordination Committee (Kerala). Writing in their ideological-political journal *Liberation*, this is how Comrade Dipankar Bhattacharjee put it: “In its Declaration, the AILC rejected both class collaboration/parliamentary cretinism and Left adventurism/anarcho-militarism and resolved to strengthen the Left movement by all means while exploring opportunities for broader Left unity and cooperation with democratic forces... As noted in the Delhi Declaration, the AILC marks only a modest beginning. As of now, it is just a platform of coordination with a shared approach and understanding on most urgent issues of the day. But as representatives of all the four organizations remarked in the convention, it is a modest first step, which nurtured properly, may well grow into an important long march; a small beginning hinting at great possibilities of realignment and radicalization of the Indian Left.”

The objective, undoubtedly, is lofty and urgent. Today, more than ever before, India needs a resurgence of the Left movement. Reeling under the onslaught of neo-colonial oppression, the masses are desperately looking for a political force outside the paradigm of the UPA-NDA-Left Front-etc. that can lead them in their struggle for liberty. It is of the utmost importance today to organize this alternative political force, bringing together all revolutionary, struggling and left democratic forces. It is equally important to emphasize that this unity will in no way accommodate forces like the CPI and the CPI-M, which being in and out of governments, have only implemented the neo-colonial policies and unleashed repression on people’s protests. So it is the task of communist revolutionary forces, especially, to strive towards building such an alternative.

What, however, one expects of a communist revolutionary organization is that it will primarily attempt to draw together all like-minded forces – other CR organizations, to be precise – and then extend the ambit of the unity to include

As Mr. Baker says: “What is clear is that, during the post-reform period of 1991-2008, deregulation and trade liberalisation have accelerated the outflow of illicit money from the Indian economy. The opportunities for trade mispricing have grown, and expansion of the global shadow financial system accommodates hot money, particularly in island tax havens. Disguised corporations situated in secrecy jurisdictions enable billions of dollars shifting out of India to “round trip,” coming back into short and long-term investments, often with the intention of generating unrecorded transfers again in a self-reinforcing cycle.” ■

[The Hindu, 18 November 2010]

other struggling left and democratic forces. Strangely enough, CPI-ML (Liberation) did no such thing. It pointedly ignored all CR forces and initiated a co-ordination with relatively obscure and local forces. Two out of those three forces are breakaways from the CPI(M). And one of them (Left Coordination Committee of Kerala), in a display of rank opportunism went on to form the board (at Shornur Municipality) with the support of the Congress in the recently concluded local body elections in the state. It does make one wonder about Liberation’s choice of allies! Such dubious choice, combined with a blanket exclusion of all communist revolutionary forces from this alliance suggests an ulterior motive. There is indeed a strong hint of suggestion that Liberation does not wish to move much further left from the CPI-CPM; it is content with CPI-CPM dissidents and CPI-CPM breakaways and has no intention of engaging communist revolutionaries in this exercise.

One should not assume that Liberation is acting on a whim. Rather, there is a well thought out plan behind its approach. This plan is further revealed by its electoral alliance with the CPI and the CPM in the recently concluded assembly polls in Bihar. Referring to the said alliance, Liberation’s Bihar election manifesto says, “It is a welcome sign that Left forces in Bihar are now showing an increasing inclination for united struggles. Rejecting the ruinous course of alliances with the rulers, Left ranks are getting united to reclaim the fighting legacy of the Left. To strengthen the politics of change and justice, Bihar needs a powerful unity of Left and democratic forces.” So it is patently obvious that despite all its rhetoric about the rank opportunism of the CPI and CPM, Liberation still counts these two parties not just as a part of the Left forces but also as comrades-in-arms in the struggle against the ruling class. When the CPI-CPM have been exposed as anti-people parties with the blood of the

masses on their hands, absolute stooges of the ruling class, it is indeed appalling to note that Liberation still regards them as part of the Left and considers them worthy of allying with in Bihar. The very same CPI-CPM, who are ever eager to hobnob with the Congress, who in Kerala have brought scandal and notoriety to governance, and in Bengal have engineered massacres in the scale of Nandigram and Lalgarh, appear to Liberation as messiahs of 'change and justice' in Bihar. It would have been funny if it had not been so criminally unprincipled.

One assumes that Liberation will furnish further theorization down the line as to why an alliance – electoral or otherwise – with the CPI-CPM is not just acceptable, but also the revolutionary task of the day. We'll surely get to hear more on how, in the national perspective, a 'broad left alliance' is required in order to effectively fight against imperialism and indeed foil many of its designs. The point is too inane to be worth debating. Suffice it to iterate that the CPI-CPM are not just another section of the Left – they are parties which have been wielding power in a bourgeois state for decades. They are parties which, when in government, have systematically represented the ruling class in implementing its policies and ruthlessly crushing people's movements.

Knowing full well that people will look askance at its alliance with the CPI-CPM in Bihar, Liberation has been crying itself hoarse that it is merely an electoral alliance and no further significance should be attached to it. How do communist revolutionaries form 'mere electoral alliances'? For them, isn't the electoral struggle also a part of class struggle? In that case, how can they form an electoral alliance with forces that unblushingly represent the ruling class? Or is it that they do not regard the CPI-CPM as a section of the representatives of the ruling class?

The second alternative is more likely, especially keeping in view the Delhi Declaration of the All India Left Coordination. The Declaration notes: "Within the Left movement, AILC will fight against the trend of class collaboration and rightward drift and degeneration while rejecting the line of Left adventurism/anarcho-militarism." Evidently, Liberation views the CPI-CPM as part of the 'Left movement' and finds them guilty not of actually serving the ruling class but only of displaying 'the trend of class collaboration and rightward drift and degeneration'. Equally evidently, the 'broader Left unity' the Delhi Declaration refers to may well embrace a marginally 'reformed' CPI-CPM – somewhat chastened and made humble by electoral defeat – within its fold. It is this 'left' force that Liberation is looking to 'radicalize'.

If any further proof of Liberation's motive and intention is required, it can be found in Comrade Dipankar Bhattacharjee's concluding speech at the Delhi Convention of the AILC held on August 11. According to him, the AILC represented a ray of hope for unity of the Indian Left movement. "Just as communists part ways at some turning points," he said, "they can also unite at other junctures." He further said, "Naxalbari was very much a product of the revolutionary tradition of the Indian communist movement – it was an attempt to resurrect Telangana when the ruling classes faced their gravest crisis after 1947 and Charu Mazumdar always described the CPI(ML) as the same Communist Party that produced the heroic martyrs of Kayuur and Telangana, Tebhaga and Punnapra-Vayalar. Today as circumstances around us are changing radically, we need to take a bold and forward-looking step towards realignment of all sincere, struggle-oriented and mass-based Left forces and rejuvenation of the Left movement to meet the challenges of the day."

To what levels can Liberation stoop? Have things come to such a pass that the formation of the CPI(ML) after rejecting the revisionist line of the CPI(M) must be described as *communists parting ways*? Haven't we always maintained that the CPI(ML) came to be formed when the CPI(M) was no more either communist or revolutionary? But of course, if the formation of the CPI(ML) was a case of 'communists parting ways', Liberation has every reason to look forward to – and indeed work for – uniting with the CPI-CPM 'at other junctures'.

Shockingly enough, cozying up to the CPI-CPM is not the greatest depth to which Liberation has sunk. At the Kolkata Convention of the AILC, Liberation actually invited the PDS (Party for Democratic Socialism), which was represented by Samir Putatunda. PDS, as everyone knows, is not just a breakaway faction of the CPM, ideologically and politically it is also very much to the right of the CPM. This self-same PDS is currently in talks with the West Bengal State Congress to forge an electoral alliance for the 2011 Assembly elections! First the Left Coordination Committee of Kerala, and then the PDS – has the CPM influenced Liberation to such an extent that it has quite overcome its natural abhorrence for that father of all bourgeois-landlord parties, the Indian National Congress?

For the last couple of years, some communist revolutionary organizations in West Bengal have been trying to organize a Struggling Left Coordination that will fight against and resist both the ruling Left Front as well as the rightwing opposition consisting of the Trinamool Congress and the Congress. Repeated pleas to Liberation to join this initiative have met with negative response. Indeed, at one point of time it seemed as if Liberation preferred to remain on its own. Recent events, however, have given the lie to this assumption. It appears now that Liberation is all for unity – with every kind of force but communist revolutionaries. A tragic fate for a party that still swears by the name of that unwavering revolutionary, Comrade Charu Mazumdar! ■

Lessons from Bihar Election Results

IN THE concrete realities of Bihar today, except for the extent of the JD(U)-BJP victory, the results of the present assembly elections will not surprise anyone closely following the political developments in the state. As far as the ruling class parties are concerned, the 15 year rule of RJD of Lalu Prasad, the way it further criminalized the state, the way it promoted corruption and the way it boasted of continuing its nepotism based rule entirely relying on caste equations had made it and its alliance unacceptable for the people this time also like in last elections.

The Congress had ruined the state for two decades before it started losing its support base. Its support to the RJD rule and its alliance with it in last elections have further eroded its credibility. Its efforts to recapture it by fighting the election alone and by utilizing a non existing halo of Rahul and Sonia Gandhis in the state proved nonproductive. The record of the Congress led UPA rule at center which has made prices of essential commodities unaffordable to the masses also did not help it. Its already weakened position got further eroded drastically.

In this situation, under the present comprador bourgeois democratic system, the JD(U)-BJP alliance which had come to power in 2005 elections utilizing the aversion to the RJD rule and had managed to run the state in a better way compared to Lalu- Rabri rule during the last five years naturally got another opportunity to come back to power. Its margin became so striking as it succeeded in attracting more people, especially women, to election booths and in taming the Saffron Parivar to behave by keeping Narendra Modi out of the election campaign. Besides, unlike RJD, it could bring the issue of 'development' and *Bihari pride*, at a time when the ever increasing number of migrant workers from the state are attacked and ridiculed, in to election debate. So, it became naturally more attractive to the people compared to the other two ruling class alternatives, the RJD- LJP alliance and Congress.

The only forces, who could challenge these ruling class alternatives, even considering all the constraints of the existing ruling system, were the left forces. Still, if the tally of CPI- CPI(M)-CPI(ML)Liberation alliance which had 12 seats in the last assembly got it cut down to just one, it should not surprise anyone. The record of the 33 year rule of CPI(M) led 'Left Front' in neighbouring W.Bengal is so negative that the people had no fascination towards CPI(M) and CPI. By

going for an alliance with these social democratic parties, Liberation had taken a suicidal path. Besides by diluting its own ideological- political positions and abandoning its earlier path of militant mass movements it had started losing its former mass base. Thus this alliance which discredited the left platform was rejected by the masses.

Apart from this alliance, the mini left alliance forged by the miniscule CPI(ML) Kanu Sanyal group with SUCI which is in alliance with Trinamul Congress in W.Bengal, RSP and Forward Bloc which are part of the LF in W.Bengal for 33 years and another miniscule group, MCPI(U), only succeeded in further tarnishing the image of the left image in the state. As far as the CPI(Maoist) is concerned, after declaring boycott of elections, as usual its anarchist squads supported JD(U) or RJD in some places while planting land mines in some other places to terrorise the people from voting. It also contributed its mite in destroying the revolutionary prestige of yester years in the state.

As all these forces in their own ways are incapable of putting forward a programmatic left alternative before the people, it is the serious responsibility of the revolutionary left to take up this task urgently uniting all the communist revolutionaries. The JD(U)-BJP alliance which has achieved a thumping victory in the elections is following the very same neo liberal policies in the name of 'development', the policies which are responsible for pauperization of the masses, intensification of neo colonial slavery and devastation of the environment. Though it has promised many things during the election campaign, like the central and other state governments it is also going to lead the people to a blind alley and going to get alienated from them fast. The revolutionary left forces should redouble their efforts to mobilize the masses and to launch powerful mass movements to advance towards people's alternative. ■

The Marxist Leninist

Issue 7

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Contents

1. Report of Fifth Congress of NDMLP, Sri Lanka
2. Open Letter to Indian Communists by CCs of Communist Parties of Britain, China and Germany (1932)
3. Character of Indian State and Society: Critique of Revolutionary Democracy
4. Report on Participation of ICOR

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Cancun Round Collapses

THE collapse of Cancun talks on protection of environment has multi dimensions. Firstly, as far as India is concerned, it was a lesson how, in spite of clear cut decisions in cabinet and announcement in the parliament, the ministers who represent India come under US pressure at the talk-sites and surrender nationally accepted positions. Cancun was the latest example for this. The government stand announced in the parliament was that unless the developed countries agree for cuts called by Kyoto Protocol, India should not accept any 'legally binding agreements' for any voluntary cuts from its part. Once again Cancun also witnessed US and other major imperialist powers refusing to abide by the Kyoto Protocol. They were also not ready to advance their share for cost of environmental protection.

Still, coming under US pressure Indian delegation breaching their limits became a votary for getting a 'legally binding agreement' signed at Cancun. It should be remembered that the Indian environment minister had gone to Cancun after showing green flag to the Jaitapur nuclear plant being constructed using the outdated technology and equipments from US and France against the advice of the scientists and in spite of the people's movements against it. But once he reached Cancun he became so much concerned for an immediate agreement that he even forgot what was the UPA government's assurance to parliament. So much is the servitude of all these ministers and bureaucrats to the US masters. It was not the concern for the environmental protection with a view to save the human race from the impending catastrophe but the concerns of US to wriggle out of any positive commitments which guided the actions of the India delegation. It is a mistake to expect anything more from these compradors. But in spite of this act of betrayal by Indian delegation Cancun could not be saved. Now the show will continue at Durban next year.

But when this drama of environmental rounds continue without any major results, as the scientists around the world point out the effect of environmental damage are getting manifested in intense forms around us. Even the corporate publications are forced to give space for their publication. Still the US and other major imperialist powers are not ready to recognize its gravity and to change their consumptions and life styles to cope with this. Like everything else they want to shift the burden of this also to the backs of the oppressed peoples everywhere. So the most important struggle to be waged in this field also is a struggle against the US and other imperialist forces to change their perspective of 'development' which is devastating the ecology and the life of the vast majority of the masses. What is getting repeatedly proved is that the delegations from the vast majority of other countries are not ready to wage such a struggle because of their comprador character. As a result in spite of meeting every year as a routine, no positive agreements are arrived at to save the grave situation.

What is happening to environment summits is similar to what happened to earlier summits for a world without nuclear arms. Today no such talks are taking place as the nuclear powers have declared that they are not ready for destroying their nuclear arms. On the contrary all of them are going for more 'sophisticated' nuclear arms. In this situation more and more countries are acquiring them. Instead of nuclear non proliferation what is happening is nuclear proliferation. We are forced to live with this and adjust with this nuclear catastrophe. Because none is talking about it, its seriousness is not reduced in any way.

Similarly, though every year ecology summits are convened and the gravity of this impending catastrophe is discussed the countries who are creating maximum ecological destruction are not ready to cut down their carbon gas emissions or the fossil fuel consumption. So the talks continue aimlessly. Meanwhile many more countries have started increasing their own 'contributions' on these fields, further aggravating the problem. We are being conditioned to live with yet another catastrophe. The pity is that the numerous busybodies and NGOs who talk day in and day out about the ecological disaster today like their predecessors were talking about the nuclear disaster yesterday are not learning any lessons. They continue to talk about ecological destruction, but do not know or pretend that they do not know who are responsible for it. How they can wage a purposeful struggle without knowing the enemy?

No doubt, the capitalist system after its emergence and hegemony during last two or three centuries have produced an abundance of wealth. It has led to tremendous growth of productive forces. But along with this it has given birth to such destructive forces which are capable of destroying this world a hundred times over. In the name of development it is creating devastation. Only Marxism could analyse it scientifically and provide a way out. But, in spite of the Marxist forces capturing power and initiating an alternative development path, as they claimed, within a few decades, in spite of many positive elements in them, it was proved that these models also could not make a qualitative break from the capitalist models and they failed. So, the task before the human race is to reach out for a qualitatively different development model in place of the destructive and barbarous capitalist imperialist system. This is the task which should be taken up by all those who are concerned about the future of humanity.

Recognising that it is going to be a long march, we should utilize every struggle taking place, even the smallest struggles, uniting with them and taking lessons from them, uniting the broadest masses for achieving a new world.

Politics of United Front

Karthik

IN THE struggle for capturing political power, the communist party, or a revolutionary organization has to form various forms of united fronts, in order to mobilize the maximum number of the toiling and oppressed masses against the ruling reactionary system. The tactics of forming united fronts are pursued by the ruling class parties also when they find it not possible to wield power single handedly as we are witnessing at center and state level nowadays. The revisionist CPI[M] is pursuing the united front policy for a long time for sharing political power within the ruling system, after abandoning the path of class struggle. It can be seen that the ruling class parties or various regional parties or the CPI[M] like parties which have degenerated to social democratic path have become adept in wielding the united front policy in maintaining the ruling system which is facing ever mounting crises one after another. They form united fronts in order to safe guard the ruling system, from their class positions. But the revolutionary forces should form the united fronts, even if they are only tactical ones, from their class positions and to advance the cause of People's (or New) Democratic Revolution. Whether tactical or strategic, they should not be opportunist, but should be based on a programmatic approach conforming to the revolutionary needs. While identifying the participants in the fronts a principled approach is needed.

For example, based on the call of the Bhopal All India Conference, when CPI(ML) called for the formation of a united front, it put forward a programmatic approach for discussion by the revolutionary left and democratic forces. A series of bilateral discussions were held with a number of organizations on the suggestions put forward and it was then the 25th September meeting of a number of these organizations arrived at a ten point programme, launching the Democratic People's Front (DPF). It has already started taking up all India campaigns and has decided to form state level DPF committees uniting all those forces who can be united. A number of forces have expressed preparedness to become part of this Front at all India and state level. At a time when the reactionary ruling system is intensifying attacks on the masses, the relevance of this Front is becoming increasingly relevant. This initiative should be compared with some other Fronts formed during this period by some other organisations.

All India Left Coordination of Liberation

The CPI(ML) Liberation took initiative to form a united front with two sections who have come out from CPI(M), the CPM(Punjab) and Left Coordination Committee of Kerala, and with Lal Nishan Party (Leninwadi) of Maharashtra. Though it was claimed that it will oppose the ruling class policies and try to

Cancun may come and go, the imperialists and their lackeys will continue to create illusions. The task of the revolutionary forces is to educate the masses about the root causes of ecological destruction and about those who perpetuate it, wage a relentless struggle to overthrow the present ruling system responsible for it and create a new world, in ever sense qualitatively different from it.

So we should not be disappointed because of Cancun. We shall continue the struggle in every field including in the field of environmental protection, linking all of them to the struggle for a world without imperialism. ■

develop an alternative to the opportunist alliances of the ruling class and social democratic parties, within weeks of its formation the constituents went in opposite directions to forge opportunist election alliances with the parties it had claimed to oppose.

For example, the Liberation as in Jharkhand earlier went for seat adjustments in Bihar. For any political party or organization, participation in election is an important political struggle. Then, how can Liberation make election adjustments with parties who pursue the ruling class policies in W.Bengal, Kerala and Tripura and whom it call social democratic? While Liberation may argue that according to its Programme its looks forward to form a grand left unity with the CPI and CPI(M), how can the CPM(Punjab) and LCC of Kerala who left CPI(M) condemning it, go for a front with the Liberation who is making election adjustments with it?

Meanwhile, in the recent local bodies elections in Kerala, the Left Coordination Committee (LCC) went for undeclared seat adjustments with the Congress led UDF in the name of defeating CPI(M) led LDF. After elections the LCC and UDF collaborated to share a few seats of power. These opportunist exercises in the name of left politics are providing ground for the reactionary forces to attack the left movement as a whole. By continuing in this opportunist alliance the Lal Nishan Party (Leninwadi) as well as the CPM, Punjab are going against the political positions they claim to uphold.

The revolutionary left forces engaged in carrying forward the task of uniting all communist revolutionaries to speed up the rebuilding of the Communist Party at all India level and pursuing a principled united front policy should expose these opportunist policies pursued by such forces who also are claiming to uphold the heritage of Naxalbari uprising and CPI(ML). ■

Maharashtra: “Jail Bharo” Campaign Against Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project

IN RESPONSE to the call given by the Janhit Seva Samiti of Jaitapur, thousands of peasants and fisher-folk took part in a huge “Jail Bharo” campaign on 29th October 2010. About 3000 persons gathered at the small hamlet of Jaitapur in the Sinhadurg district of Maharashtra. Since months there has been a massive agitation going on in the area against the proposed Pressurised Light Water Nuclear Reactor Project which is coming up there. As has been reported earlier in “Red Star” the proposed project will result in the largest nuclear power plant in the world with a capacity of over 10000 MW.

The people living in the area have been agitating against this project since the proposal first became known in 2005. Though the project proposal has not so far been passed, the process of land acquisition has already been undertaken by the Government under the “emergency” provisions which obviates the need to obtain the consent of the local bodies. Some local leaders had petitioned the Mumbai High Court against this but the High Court held that the need for nuclear power in the country was so great that this project qualified to be called a “public purpose” and justified the emergency provisions.

The local committee, the Janhit Sewa Samiti, which is a part of the Kokan Bachao Samiti, gave a call for a massive “Jail Bharo” on 29th October. 29th October was also a day for country-wide agitation of the fish-workers and was also the date on which the Expert committee for environment impact appraisal was to visit Jaitapur for a site visit.

The police had come well prepared with 15 vans to take away the agitationists. They also executed large-scale road blocks on all roads leading to Jaitapur to stop vehicles carrying people into Jaitapur and blocked about 1500 people from neighbouring villages from entering the area where the agitation was to be held. However, fearing such high-handed tactics, the organisers had already got thousands

of persons into Madban village where the agitation was to be held beforehand. Many people also came on foot crossing fields where the police were not able to stop them. About 5000 people ultimately reached the spot of the agitation and shouted slogans against the proposed power project, against the use of nuclear power and for Obama and Sarkozy to go back – Obama was to visit India on 6-8 November and Sarkozy was here on 6-8 December. The US is the main force in the Nuclear Suppliers Group which will supply fuel for the plant and France is the main country behind building the plant and wants to build many more.

The police arrested the demonstrators who were marching onto the power plant site, under the leadership of Pravin Gavankar, President of the Janhit Sewa Samiti and Arun Velaskar, State Secretary of the CPI (ML) and also Secretary of the Kokan Bachao Andolan. All 15 police vans were filled and then 4 ST buses were requisitioned from the local ST station. However, all these vehicles were not enough to accommodate all the persons and the police were obliged to humbly request all the demonstrators not to insist on being arrested. The demonstration showed great militancy. What distinguished this demonstration is that over half the demonstrators were women. From Nate village alone, over 250 women belonging to the fishing community joined this demonstration.

The Kokan Bachao Andolan has decided to take the next demonstration on 4th December which is the Environment Day and to observe which a call has been given by the ICOR and the CPI(ML). A massive demonstration is held on that day. At the same time, according to the latest reports, the Central Government has decided to give permission for the nuclear power project though four other thermal power projects in the area have not got environmental clearance. It is understood that the permission is being given by the Ministry of Environment and Forests with many reservations and in the face of clear evidence that the impact on the environment is massive. The Kokan Bachao Andolan has given a call for all democratic forces to support their struggle and to join it. It has vowed to further intensify this struggle. ■

Massive Public Meeting Against Shai Dam

ABOUT three thousand people gathered at the remote village of Sakharpada in Shahapur Taluka of Thane District in Maharashtra to protest against the Governments plans to make the Shai Dam in the area. The dam will result in over 52 villages with over 15000 houses being submerged. The villagers have submitted an alternative to the Government. They have suggested that over 13 small dams can be built upon the Shai and its tributary whereby not any village will be submerged, water will be available in plentiful and even the local people will get water. However, after a cursory survey, the Government

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Contact:

**No. - 21, 1st Main, 2nd Cross
Hanumanathpuram, Shrirampuram
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has rejected this proposal saying that not enough water will be made available.

The proposed dam on the Shai will not help the local population at all. It is earmarked for the burgeoning population of Mumbai and Thane and the surrounding metropolises. The dam is, of course, mired in corruption. Though handed over to a foreign concern to execute, there are many irregularities in the awarding of the tender and in the costs sanctioned. Ministers like Ganesh Naik and Ajit Pawar, who are the very persons sanctioning the project, have already brought huge tracts of land on the adjoining hilltops. When the dam is completed, the water will rise upto their lands and they have already got plans for boat clubs and water sports passed for these areas.

Besides such corruption the dam once again brings into focus the question of large dams. Since long, environmentalists and seismologists have been warning against such large dams and have been claiming that many small dams make for a much more nature-friendly and farmer-friendly alternative. However, obviously, such small dams do not afford the same level of “boating” and “creaming” as massive dams.

One more new question is posed by the Shai project. The question of balance between the urban and rural areas and how large are we to build our large cities. Mumbai and Thane have been made into a builders’ paradise with building permissions being given in absolutely dangerous and unhealthy manners. The plan for Mumbai shows only in its lack of any real planning and its servility to builders. The land prices in Mumbai are also artificially pushed through the roof. Today land prices in Mumbai are comparable to land prices in London and New York though the wage levels are 40 to 50 times lower. The question being posed is how much water must the villagers of the nearby areas yield and how much unjust displacement must they tolerate before the thirst of a city like Mumbai must be satisfied. Can the “development” of such mega cities justify such drowning and such human anguish? Probably the answer lies not only in replacing massive dams with many small ones but also in replacing massive cities with many small ones!

The villagers from all the affected villages and even from a wider area gathered in Sakharpada on 18th November to initiate their protest. The massive meeting was attended by over 3000 villagers with almost 1000 being women. The meeting was addressed by Sanjay Singhvi, General Secretary, TUCI, Shri Bhuskute of the Adivasi Nyay Andolan, Com. Rajan Raje, a union leader from Thane, Com. Vaishali Patil, a social activist from the Mahamumbai area, Com. Bharat Patankar of the Shramik Mukti Dal and the leaders of the local Shai Dharan Virodhi Kriti Samiti. Com. Prashant Sarkhot, Secretary of the Shai Dharan Virodhi Kriti Samiti and State Secretariat member of the CPI (ML) conducted the meeting.

The speakers all spoke about how the understanding of development was warped and how this has to change. It was also pointed out how the permissions for the proposed dam were illegal and how the villagers had a strong right to oppose the dam. The Shai Dharan Virodhi Kriti Samiti has planned to have protests against the dam by way of a “Chain Dharna” in the coming days. Starting 22nd November, each day, protestors from one particular village (or a few chosen villages) will stage a dharna outside the office of the Tahsildar at Shahapur. The program has started and is being successfully carried out. ■

Chhattisgarh: Seminar on Environmental Destruction and Development Policy

EXPRESSING concern over indiscriminate utilization of natural resources at the cost of environment, the international agricultural economist and environmentalist Dr. DK Marothia said that natural resources are the property of the community, but it has been converted into private property. Although five-year plans from 1st to 11th were formulated keeping in mind the ecosystem, they were not implemented effectively, said Dr. Marothia while addressing a seminar “Environment Destruction and Outlook Towards Development Policy” organized by “Vimarsh” at Raipur on 4th December 2010. According to him the government policies on unused land and agriculture basically remained ineffective. Exploitation of community resources would divert not only the present generation but the future generation from mainstream of society, he apprehended.

Dr. Marothia said that all natural resources of state should be considered as social capital. Chhattisgarh having a large number of village ponds once remained most prosperous state in country with respect to water resources, he said. Unfortunately government remained callous towards underground water and maintenance of these ponds which is a community resource and not an individual property.

Tuhin Deb, convener of *Vimarsh* said that environmental disbalance had become a major threat to mankind. According to him neo-liberal and neo-colonial economic policy was responsible for large scale destruction of environment. Although the issue was discussed in G-8, G-20. United Nations and WTO summits, yet no serious attention was paid towards its gravity. He said that pro-imperialist development policies were being adopted by the central and state government at the cost of environment. He further called for joint bid of all progressive democratic forces and public to launch a crusade against imperialism and its development model for protection of earth and mankind. *Nadi Ghati Morcha* convener Goutam

Bandhopadhyaya presided over the seminar. NIT professor Dr. Sameer Bajpai and socialist thinker Anand Mishra were present as special speakers. Dr. Manisha Vatsa conducted and Ms. Sabana Azmi gave vote of thanks. Many intellectuals attended the seminar which called for united action by all concerned forces to resist the devastating policies of government and for organising movements to protect the environment. ■

Kerala: International Environment Day

AS PER the call by ICOR and CPI (ML) Central Committee to observe December 4 as the International Environment Day, the party State Committee had a printed poster campaign throughout Kerala with the slogan "Imperialism Destroys Nature, Destroy Imperialism". A militant march to the Hindustan Insecticides Ltd. at Eloor, near Kochi in front of which the indefinite hunger strike by RYFI and AIRWO is going on, followed by Convention was held. It was inaugurated by Com P N Provint, State Secretary CPI(ML). Noted environmental activist, Dr. CM Joy and MK Ravindran, district president, KSSP and Dr. G Sadasivan Nair, chairman, Endoslfan Struggle Aid Committee participated in the Convention demanding immediate stoppage of production and distribution of endosulfan from HIL. In Trissur district, the Convention against the proposed Athirapally project was inaugurated by Com K Sivaraman, CCM of CPI(ML). Dr. T K Vasu, environmental activist participated in the Convention. ■

Delhi : Seminar on Environment Day

THE International Environment Day was observed at Delhi by CPI(ML) State Committee, Delhi Platform and other like minded organizations including the supporters of CPN(Mashal) with a lively discussion on the theme "Global Environmental Crisis and the Way Forward" at Gandhi Peace Foundation hall in the evening. Addressing the meeting com KN Ramachandran explained the seriousness of the environmental crisis faced by the human race. Experience of what happened to *Kyoto protocol* and what is happening at Cancun following the failure of Bali and Copenhagen conferences show that the imperialists and their lackeys in power are not ready either to change their 'development' policy which is devastating the ecology or to cut down their consumption level, he said. Com. Nagraj of Delhi Platform explained the consequences of the present neo liberal policies which are destroying the ecology and pauperizing the masses. A number of participants who participated in the discussion, even while some of them expressed divergent ideological positions, agreed that a broad based joint struggle at the global level is needed to

save human race from this catastrophe and to create an egalitarian society. ■

Karnataka: Demonstration on 4th December

ALL over the state of Karnataka, rallies and demonstrations were held. In Bellary, Chickmagalur, Somwarpath, Koppal, Raichur (all District Headquarters) and other places, people gathered and held rallies or meetings in which slogans were given that "Imperialism destroys the environment, We will destroy Imperialism!" ■

AP : Save Environment

AT THE call of the International Conference of Marxist Leninist Parties and Organisations (ICMLPO) and ICOR the *International Environment Day* on Fourth December was observed by CPI(ML) AP state committee and AIRWO. In this programmes a good number of people participated. They took out rally culminating with a dharna and burnt the effigy of imperialism at Patancheru, Hyderabad. The imperialist powers and their lackeys have destroyed the environment in the name of development, said Mallepally Prabhakar, CPI(ML) AP secretary. He said that The fossil fuels are used at an alarmingly increasing rate leading to depletion of ozone cover. The increasing number of nuclear power plants are also posing great danger. The struggle against imperialist barbarity and comprador ruling systems should lead to evolve an alternative development perspective with socialist values. The rally called on all progressive forces to launch a vigorous campaign against imperialist policies that destroy the environment, as part of the class struggle to overthrow the very exploitative system itself. CPI(ML) Medak district secretary GVN Goud, AIRWO AP secretary S Padmakka and others addressed the rally.

Many other demonstrations and programs were organized in different provinces and districts. A very lively campaign was conducted and the struggle against environmental destruction was conveyed. ■

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With rising seas, looming catastrophe

Justin Gillis

THE world's ice sheets are melting faster than previously believed; some predict sea levels will rise one meter by 2100. At great risk and with diminished support, scientists are racing to answer one of the most urgent and most widely debated, questions facing humanity: How fast is the world's ice going to melt? Scientists long believed that the collapse of the gigantic ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica would take thousands of years, with sea level possibly rising as little as 18 centimeters in this century, about the same amount as in the 20th century.

But researchers have recently been startled to see big changes unfold in both Greenland and Antarctica. As a result of recent calculations that take the changes into account, many scientists now say that sea level is likely to rise perhaps one meter by 2100, an increase that would pose a threat to coastal regions the world over. And the calculations suggest that the rise could conceivably exceed 1.8 meters, which would put thousands of hectares of the American coastline under water and would probably displace tens of millions of people in Asia.

The scientists say that a rise of even one meter would inundate low-lying lands in many countries, rendering some areas uninhabitable. It would cause coastal flooding of the sort that now happens once or twice a century to occur every few years. It would cause much faster erosion of beaches, barrier islands and marshes. It would contaminate fresh water supplies with salt. Some of the world's great cities — London, Cairo, Bangkok, Venice and Shanghai among them — would be critically endangered. In the United States, parts of the East Coast and Gulf Coast would be hit hard.

Climate scientists readily admit that the one-meter estimate could be wrong. Their understanding of the changes is still primitive. But, they say, it could just as easily be an underestimate. "I think we need immediately to begin thinking about our coastal cities — how are we going to protect them?" said John A. Church, an Australian scientist who is a leading expert on sea level. "We can't afford to protect everything. We will have to abandon some areas."

Sea-level rise has been a particularly contentious element in the global warming debate. One estimate suggested the threat was so dire that sea level could rise as much as 4.6 meters in this century. Global warming skeptics contend that any changes occurring in the ice sheets are probably due to natural climate variability, not to greenhouse gases released by humans.

A large majority of climate scientists argue that heat-trapping gases are almost certainly playing a role. They add that the lack of policies to limit emissions is raising the risk that the ice will go into an irreversible decline before this century is out, a development that would eventually make a one-meter rise in the sea look trivial. Yet, while the rise of the sea could turn out to be the single most serious effect of global warming, no wealthy country has made understanding the changes in the ice a strategic national priority.

The consequence is that researchers lack elementary information, and the missing information makes it impossible for scientists to be sure how serious the situation is. "The things I've seen in Greenland in the last five years are alarming," said Gordon Hamilton, of the University of Maine. "We see these ice sheets changing literally overnight."

On a late summer day in southeastern Greenland, a helicopter pilot, Morgan Goransson, dropped low toward the water. Hanging out of the side of the aircraft, scientists sent a measuring device between the ice floes. The frigid waters of Sermilik Fjord were only nine meters below, so any mechanical problem would have sent the chopper plunging into the sea. "It is so dangerous," Mr. Goransson said. Taking the temperature of waters near the ice sheet is essential to understanding what is happening in Greenland. But it is complex and risky.

The scientists Fiammetta Straneo of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts and Dr. Hamilton are part of a larger team that is financed by the National Science Foundation, a federal agency. Not only do they remove the doors of helicopters and lean over icy fjords to get their readings, but they dodge huge icebergs in tiny boats and traipse over glaciers with crevasses that could swallow large buildings. A few weeks ago, the scientists obtained a reading of 4 degrees Celsius near the bottom of the fjord, the highest they had seen there. The reading fit a broader pattern. Warmer water that originated far to the south is flushing into Greenland's fjords. Scientists suspect that as it melts the ice from beneath, the water is loosening the connection of the glaciers to the ground and to nearby rock. This allows the glaciers to move faster and dump more ice into the ocean. Within the past decade, the flow rate of many of Greenland's biggest glaciers has doubled or tripled.

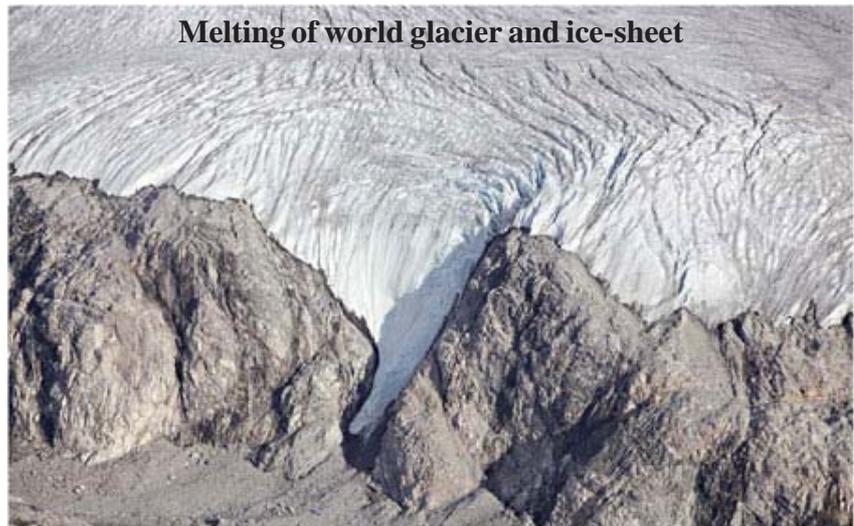
Satellite and other measurements suggest that through the 1990s, Greenland was gaining about as much ice through snowfall as it lost to the sea every year. But since then, the warmer water has invaded the fjords,

and air temperatures in Greenland have increased markedly. The overall loss of ice seems to be accelerating, an ominous sign given that the island contains enough ice to raise global sea levels by more than six meters. Strictly speaking, scientists have not proved that human-induced global warming is the cause of the changes. They are mindful that the climate in the Arctic undergoes big natural variations.

John R. Christy, a climatologist at the University of Alabama who is often critical of mainstream climate science, said he suspected that the changes in Greenland were linked to this natural variability. For high predictions of sea-level rise to be correct, "some big chunks of the Greenland ice sheet are going to have to melt, and they're just not melting that way right now," he said. Yet other scientists say that the recent changes in Greenland are occurring at the same time that air and ocean temperatures are warming, and ice melt is accelerating, in much of the world.

Helheim Glacier, which terminates in Sermilik Fjord, is one of a group of glaciers in southeastern Greenland that have shown especially big changes. Something caused the glacier, one of Greenland's largest, to speed up sharply in the middle of the last decade, and it spit so much ice into the ocean that it thinned by some 91 meters in a few years. The glacier has behaved erratically ever since, and that pattern is being repeated all over Greenland. "All these changes are happening at a far faster pace than we would have ever predicted from our conventional theories," Dr. Hamilton said.

To a majority of climate scientists, the question is not whether the earth's land ice will melt, but whether it will happen too fast for society to adjust. Recent research suggests that the volume of the ocean may have been stable for thousands of years. But it began to rise in the 19th century, around the same time that advanced countries began to burn large amounts of coal and oil. The sea has



risen about 20 centimeters since then, on average. That sounds small, but such an increase is enough to cause substantial erosion. Governments have spent billions pumping sand onto disappearing beaches and trying to stave off the loss of coastal wetlands.

In its last big report, in 2007, the United Nations group that assesses climate science, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, said that sea level would rise at least 18 more centimeters, and might rise as much as 61 centimeters, in the 21st century.

But the group warned that these estimates did not fully incorporate "ice dynamics," the possibility that the world's big ice sheets would start spitting ice into the ocean at a much faster rate than it could melt on land. Scientific understanding of this prospect was so poor, the climate panel said, that no meaningful upper limit could be put on the potential rise of sea level. Satellite evidence suggests that the rise of the sea accelerated late in the 20th century, so that the level is now increasing a little over 2.5 centimeters per decade, on average ??about 30.5 centimeters per century. Increased melting of land ice appears to be a major factor. Another is that most of the extra heat being trapped by human greenhouse emissions is warming the ocean, not the atmosphere, and as it warms, the water expands. Scientists have been trying to figure out how much the pace might accelerate.

One approach, pioneered by a German climate researcher named Stefan Rahmstorf, entails looking at the past relationship between the temperature of the earth and sea level, then making projections. Another, developed by a glaciologist named Tad Pfeffer, involves calculations about how fast the glaciers might be able to dump ice into the sea. Those methods yield approximately the same answer: that sea level could rise by 76 centimeters to two meters between now and 2100. A developing consensus among climate scientists puts the best estimate at a little over one meter. Calculations about the effect of a one-meter increase suggest that it would cause shoreline erosion to accelerate markedly. In places that once flooded only in a large hurricane, a routine storm could have the same result.

The worst effects would probably occur where land is sinking even as the sea rises. That applies to some of the world's major cities. Defenses can be built to keep out the sea, of course, like the levees of the New Orleans region and the famed dikes of the Netherlands. But the expense is likely to soar as the ocean rises. Storm surges battering the world's coastlines every few years would almost

certainly force people to flee inland. But it is hard to see where the displaced would go, especially in Asia, where huge cities and even countries, like Bangladesh are at risk. And, scientists say, if their projections prove accurate, the sea will not stop rising in 2100. By that point, the ice sheets could be undergoing extensive melting.

"Beyond a hundred years out, it starts to look really challenging," said Richard B. Alley, a climate scientist at Pennsylvania State University. "You start thinking about every coastal city on the planet hiding behind a wall, with storms coming."

After a decade of budget cuts and shifting space priorities in Washington, several satellites vital to monitoring the ice sheets and other aspects of the environment are nearing the end of their lives, with no replacements at hand. "We are slowly going blind in space," said Robert Bindshadler, a polar researcher at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, who spent 30 years with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration studying ice. In the meantime, NASA is flying airplanes over ice sheets and glaciers to gather information, and projects are under way in various agencies to plug some of the other information gaps.

The satellite difficulties are one symptom of a broader problem: because no advanced country has made a strategic priority of studying land ice, scientists lack elementary information that they need to make sense of what is happening. They do not know the lay of the land beneath most of the world's glaciers well enough to calculate how fast the ice might retreat. They have only haphazard readings of the depth and temperature of the ocean near Greenland, needed to figure out why so much warm water seems to be attacking the ice sheet.

The information problems are even more severe in Antarctica. Much of that continent is colder than Greenland, but in recent years, parts of the ice sheet

have started to flow rapidly, raising the possibility that it will destabilize like much of the world's other ice has. Figuring out whether Antarctica is losing ice over all is essential, because that ice sheet contains enough water to raise global sea level by nearly 61 meters. Daniel Schrag, a geochemist and head of Harvard University's Center for the Environment, praised the scientists who do difficult work studying ice, but added, "The scale of what they can do, given the resources available, is just completely out of whack with what is required."

Climate scientists worry that extensive melting of land ice may become inevitable before political leaders find a way to limit heat-trapping gases, and before scientists even realize such a point of no return has been passed. "The past clearly shows that sea-level rise is getting faster and faster the warmer it gets," Dr. Rahmstorf said. "Why should that process stop? If it gets warmer, ice will melt faster." ■

(The New York Times, 20 Nov, 2010)

Politics of 'Left Coordination Committee' in Kerala

THE recent local bodies elections in Kerala has brought out the opportunism of the 'Left Coordination Committee', the CPI(M) dissidents' group in the state. Its leaders were claiming that they came out of CPI(M) to struggle against its revisionist and opportunist positions. Because of these claims the CPI(ML) state committee tried to share platforms with it and to organize joint struggles against the anti-people policies of the CPI(M)-led LDF government. But very soon its opportunist positions started coming out in the open with its eagerness to go near to Congress-led UDF in last year's Lok Sabha elections. Then it started insisting that some of the Congress and other UDF leaders also should be brought in the joint fronts.

When it joined the all India front with CPI(ML) Liberation it was expected that at least it will stop its flirtations with the UDF. The local bodies elections have proved that it is in no way different from the earlier CPI(M) dissidents in the state. It is following the same path of MV Raghavan, KRGowri like dissidents who joined the UDF.

In the present elections, in two municipalities and a couple of panchayat samithies when the LCC got few seats and became the determining factor in electing its chairmen, it has openly aligned with the UDF. All its claims of fighting CPI(M) on ideological and political grounds are proved hollow. It has openly

aligned with the number one ruling class party, Congress, and has become part of the ruling system shamelessly.

With LCC of Kerala aligning with UDF, the united front forged by Liberation has become a strange circus tent. In Bihar elections in spite of calling CPI(M) a social democratic party, Liberation had no qualms about making seat adjustments with it and CPI. It had done so earlier in Jharkhand also. At the same time, it goes for making united front with dissidents of Kerala and Punjab who have gone out of CPI(M) not for any ideological political reasons as proved repeatedly. They are proving that they have no hesitation even to align with Congress, the number one ruling class party in the name of opposing CPI(M). These opportunist exercises in the name of left politics are providing ground for the reactionary forces to attack the left movement as a whole. ■

Trends in Employment Relations in India : Towards Hire and Fire

Sanjay Singhvi

ALMOST everybody admits that “outsourcing” and the contract labour system are growing, leading to most of the new jobs being created mainly in the informal sector. Most labour economists will also agree that this phenomenon has a link to what we generally call “globalisation”. However, most persons illustrate this link only by a deductive process by an empirical method – *The spurt in the growth of contract labour and the informal sector coincides with the advent of globalisation and therefore the two are linked*. However, if we are to study this phenomenon in greater depth and make a useful analysis to make predictions such an empirical link is not sufficient. For this, we have to try and inductively show the process by which globalisation has brought about the growth in contract labour and the growth in the informal sector.

On Globalisation

Capital has always been global. In pre-capitalist society, under the feudal system itself, “mercantile capital” had assumed an international character. We can pinpoint the advent of capitalism proper to the understanding that there was a greater profit to be made from the exploitation of surplus value than from the mere trade in goods. With this, capital, not merely as money but as a relationship of production started to become international or global. Capitalism became one of the most profound and far-reaching forces of globalisation in the history of man. As Marx and Engels put it in the “*Communist Manifesto*” :

It (the bourgeoisie) compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to

adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, i. e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

Imperialism was the next stage of capitalism, when national boundaries were further assaulted. The latter 19th century saw the massive colonisation of nations in Asia and Africa. Lenin states in “*Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism*” that in 1876 only 10% of Africa was colonised, whereas by 1900, 90% was colonised. In this same document, he further wrote,

“Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of “advanced” countries.”

In the aftermath of the 2nd world war, the colonial system in its earlier form came to an absolute end. However, the attempt to recreate the world in its own image was never abandoned by capitalism. Though the “handful of advanced countries” no more held “colonies”, the relationship of exploiter and exploited nations never ceased to exist. The new forms of exploitation adopted by the “advanced” countries were based on exploitation through the market, especially the capital market for which institutions like the IMF and the World Bank (and later WTO) were set up. This new form of exploitation, which Nkrumah had christened as “neo-colonisation”. led to more efficient and more pervasive exploitation of the human and natural resources of the world. It also required the further lowering of national barriers to the market.

The boom in the post-war period ended by the early 70s and the resulting crisis caused a shift in the economic policy of the major economic powers from a “welfare state” or “Keynsian” policy to a more “monetarist” policy leading to “neo-liberal” regimes with little or no regulation of the market from the state.

New production systems

Both the above policies, of neo-colonialism and of neo-liberalism found their fruition in “globalisation”. Globalisation required that the last vestiges of regulation which might restrict the free flow of capital all over the globe be done away with. It needed that capital be allowed to move from country to country, from one industry to another, from one commodity to another, with no restraint whatsoever.

What this requires is that labour must become expendable. “Flexibility” required by Capital in this scenario must be reflected in the “flexibility” of labour, which means that the capitalist must be allowed to use only as many workers for only as much time as he wants and these numbers must be allowed to be constantly changed. This then, is the motivation behind the spurt in “outsourcing” over the past few decades.

Not coincidentally, management gurus date the “Toyota system” of production, also called the “just-in-time” system or the “zero inventory” system to the early 70s. The change to a neo-liberal system in economics also was a fillip for changing the production system from a Fordist “assembly line” to a just-in-

time system. Shorn of the window-display, the “Toyota” system emphasises “outsourcing”.

How globalisation supports outsourcing

A number of factors were responsible for this new system of production prevailing

Cost of land: With rapid urbanisation all over the world with the advent of neo-colonisation, the cost of land in the cities started shooting up. Factories could no more afford to occupy large areas. It made much more sense to outsource to other manufacturers in rural areas and keep only critical processes like quality-control and final assembly in urban areas.

The information revolution: During the second world war, the US had developed many new technologies for communications. It is these that have eventually given rise to the new leaps in telephony and the internet. These developments allow the managers sitting in New York to keep minute to minute watch over production facilities in India, Vietnam or Africa.

Reduction in labour costs: Moving production from more advanced locales to less advanced locales has always resulted in significant lowering of labour costs, not least because of...

Restriction of union activity : The earlier large assembly line based plants were easy to form unions in. With outsourcing, forming unions is a hard task as there is no focus like a factory where to organise the workers. The workers also get divided themselves into different classes like permanent, casual, temporary and contract. This further creates hurdles to the formation of a consolidated union.

Responses to the new system of production :

With neo-colonisation and the new system of production also came new laws all over the world and mainly in the neo-colonial countries. The period of the Keynesian “welfare state” saw the rise of many laws like the BIR Act, the Industrial Employment Standing Orders Act, the Industrial Disputes Act, the Factories Act, the ESI Act, the PF Act, all passed in the period of 1946 to 1952. At the fag end of this period, before neo-liberal policies got a strong hold of the economy, in 1970, the Contract Labour Act was passed. Even before the Act was passed, the Industrial Tribunals in the country had evolved the formula for when contract labour should be abolished – when the work is of a perennial nature, when it is connected to or incidental to the main work of the establishment, when it is sufficient to employ a considerable number of full-time workers and when it is normally done by permanent workers in other establishments. This formula was repeated by the Supreme Court in the judgment in the *Standard Vacuum Oil Refining Co’s* case in 1960 and then by the First Labour Commission under Justice Gajendragadkar in 1967. This is the formula that was used for abolition of contract labour in the 1970 Act.

At the same time, as we have seen the economic crisis hit imperialism in the early 70’s. The “Toyota” system also started to make its presence felt all over the world by the early 70’s. It is no coincidence then that we have not seen any new laws for the welfare of workers generally applicable to all workers all over India since the Gratuity Act of 1972. The policy of the Government changed from that of a “welfare” state to that of a “neo-liberal” state. The Structural Adjustment Policies of the IMF, the directions of the WB, policies leading to privatisation and liberalisation of the economy all started in this period and were forcing India down a neo-liberal path.

How our laws are changing today

The earlier aim of the Indian state, when the dreams of liberty, equality and fraternity fanned by our Constitution had still not died down, was to help the workers fight against the capitalist to get some “reasonable” share of the produce. The laws, the courts, the Industrial policy paper of 1948, the Bonus policy, were all in this direction. It was said that every labour law was an assault upon the law of Contract and upon the contract between the employer and the employee. Today, all of them have become mere dead letters. Today the ruling philosophy is to allow the market to regulate the wages on the basis of the employers and employees’ “freedom to contract” with the state playing only a minimal role.

This is the reason why, since the Gratuity Act of 1972, there has been no real general law passed in India, applicable to all workers all over India which compels the employer to pay some amounts to the workers. At most, we can say 1976, when some amendments were made to the I. D. Act, to bring in chapter VB which restrains employers from retrenching workers or closing establishments.

The Second Labour Commission of 1999, which submitted its report in 2002, has a changed point of view. They call upon the working class to change their mindset where they can rely upon permanency in employment. They conclude that there is no way for India to progress without accepting changing labour relations like “hire and fire” and fixed term contracts, albeit with certain social security being provided.

The Central Government amended the PF Act in 1996 to bring in Employees pension. However, it is pertinent to note here that not a single naya paisas extra burden was put upon the employer. It was only a part of the employees PF which would be diverted to provide for the Pension

Fund. In fact, in terms of class, no social produce was diverted from the bourgeoisie to the working class, it was only that a method used by the Government to keep a large fund of the working class, in trust, was changed.

In 1996 itself, the Government enacted the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Working Conditions) Act and the Cess Act that accompanies it. Besides the fact that this Act is not being implemented in most states in India, this Act does not call for a greater share of the produce going to the working class. All it calls for is that a small portion of the produce be turned over to the Government, in trust, to use in welfare activities and social security for the working class. It accepts the fact that builders are never going to give social security like ESI and PF to their workers and creates a new level – a clearly lower level – of social security for the construction workers. In the same mould is the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act of 2008. Both these acts, in effect, accept a caste system among the workers. The permanent workers will get benefits like PF, Pension and ESI while the workers of the unorganised sector will only get lesser benefits.

The role of the courts :

In many sectors, it is not possible for the Government to move to change the laws to remove protections already given to workers. The courts in our land have had no such restraint, as they are immune from election.

By definition, the unorganised sector is taken as that in which no laws apply to protect the workers. As such, in view of the fact that more than 92% of the workers of India work in the unorganised sector, very few of their matters reach the Supreme Court. Still, valiant battles have been fought by contract workers, casual workers, constructions workers, etc. in the hallowed halls of the Supreme Court. However, in the wake of globalisation,

the playing field is increasingly tilting in favour of the employers and management.

Regularisation:

Earlier judgements of the Supreme Court like in the matter of **Daily Rated Casual Labour Employed under P&T Deptt. through Bharatiya Dak Tar Mazdoor Manch vs. Union of India ((1988) 1 SCC 122)** and **State of Harayana vs. Piara Singh (AIR 1992 SC 2130)** had all laid down that once the workers had completed 240 days of service they must be regularised. However, the recent trend has been to undo this whole trend of the law. In the case of **MP Housing Board vs Manoj Srivastava ((2006) 2 SCC 702)** the Supreme Court held that a person appointed ad hoc is not eligible for permanency even after 240 days. When saying, *“If...the appointment is invalid the same cannot be validated by taking recourse to regularisation”*, they exposed an ignorance of the fact that it is only an invalid appointment that can be regularised. In conjunction with the judgment in **Umadevi’s case**, the law as it stands today, is that one can be employed as a badli, temporary or casual worker for decades, but if the post against which such appointment is made is not a sanctioned post (which it can never be), then keeping her or him as such is not an unfair labour practise nor does she or he have any right to be regularised under the standing orders. The upshot of this is that the public sector is free to commit unfair labour practices with impunity.

In this discussion on regularisation, we must also pay equal emphasis to the question of the onus of proving that 240 days have elapsed in employment. In the case of **Range Forest Officer vs. S. T. Hadimani ((2002) 3 SCC 25)** and in the case of **Rajasthan State Ganganagar S. Mills Ltd. vs. State of Rajasthan and Anr. ((2004) 8 SCC 161)**, the same wording is used. The court says, *“It was for the claimant to lead evidence to show that he had in fact worked up to 240 days in the year preceding his termination. He has filed an affidavit. It is only his own statement which is in his favour and that cannot be regarded as sufficient evidence for any court or tribunal to come to the conclusion that in fact the claimant had worked for 240 day in a year. ... No proof of receipt of salary or wages for 240 days or order or record in that regard was produced.”* The Supreme Court seems to be oblivious of the reality that a vast number of workers in our country are not given such “receipts” or “orders” or “records”.

This has to be seen in the background of the decision of the Supreme Court given just one year before the judgement in Hadimani’s case in the case of **Tannery and Footwear Corporation of India vs Raj Kumar & Anr. ((2001) 2 LLJ 256)** which had clearly held that if no evidence is led by either side then the statement of the worker that he had completed 240 days would have to be believed. The recent Supreme Court judgements have also not noticed the earlier judgement in the matter of **H.D. Singh vs. Reserve Bank of India ((1985) 4 SCC 201)** which said, *“In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, we have necessarily to draw the inference that the appellants case that he had worked for more than 240 days from July 1975 to July 1976, is true.”* These judgements took into account the social reality that workers in the unorganised sector were exploited and that the law was made for their protection. They accepted the social reality that workers are often given not an iota of evidence to show how and why they were employed. The recent judgements of the Supreme Court accept a different kind of social reality - that globalisation has to be built at any cost - if necessary upon the dead bodies of the workers in the unorganised sector.

Equal pay for equal work:

Right since its judgement in the matter of **Dhirendra Chamoli & Anr. vs.**

State of U.P. ((1986) 1 SCC 637) the Supreme Court has always interpreted the question of “equal pay for equal work” in the light of article 39(d) of the Constitution of India. However, in the recent judgement of three Judges in the matter of **State of Harayana vs. Charanjit Singh ((2006) 9 SCC 321)** it was held that some people would be more equal than others. The Supreme Court has held that equal pay would only be available for “equal work” and not for similar work. Merely because two people were designated as “carpenters” did not mean that they would get the same wage, even in the same establishment, since the “quality” of work that they produced may be different.

Employment on “contract basis”

Besides the labour contractors’ “contract workers”, the Supreme Court has, of late, been referring to a different type of “contract worker”. Any worker who is employed under a specific contract delimited either by time or by the venture, is now referred to as a contract worker. Removal of such a worker has been removed from the definition of retrenchment by clause (bb) of sub-section (oo) of section 2 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. Recent judgements like **Municipal Council, Samrala vs. Sukhwinder Kaur ((2006) III LLJ 502)**, **Municipal Council, Samrala vs. Raj Kumar ((2006) 3 SCC 81)** and **Harayana State Agricultural Marketing Board & Anr. vs. Subhash Chand & Ors ((2006) 2 SCALE 614)** have held that such “contract” workers cannot complain of illegal retrenchment if they are removed from service even though they may have completed 240 days of “continuous service” or even if the establishment employs over 100 workers.

Minimum Wages:

One of the first encroachments on the iniquitous contract between the employer and the employee was the protection offered by the statutory minimum wage. This protection is also being eroded away. In the matter of **Lingegowda Detective & Security Chamber vs. Mysore Kirloskar Ltd. & Ors. ((2006) 2 CLR 392)** it was held that security guards working upon the premises of Mysore Kirloskar Ltd. were not entitled even to the statutory minimum wage prescribed for the engineering industry in which Mysore Kirloskar admittedly falls.

Who is the employer?

In many recent judgements like **Canteen Mazdoor Sabha vs. Metallurgical Engineering Consultants (I) Ltd. & Ors (rendered on 21st August 2007)**, the workers are being found to be employees of ad hoc bodies like the MECON Welfare Committee. The trouble with such a formulation is that bodies like the Welfare committee (in some cases Canteen committees, etc.) have no corporate existence. They have no common seal and no common succession. It is very difficult to hold such bodies liable in any contract.

Conclusion :

To sum up, the change from colonisation to neo-colonisation brought about many changes – but nothing changed. In the words of a character of Gabriel Garcia Marquez in his famous novel, *Love in the Time of Cholera* “...I have seen everything change, even the position of the stars in the universe, but I have not seen anything change yet in this country. Here they make new constitutions, new laws, new wars, every three months, but we are still in colonial times.” New laws came up but they only regulated the hitherto unregulated labour market.

Still, the early years of neo-colonialism were in the mould of the “welfare” state. They upheld social welfare and social security even at the cost of assaulting

the contract of service. This has changed with the advent of the neo-liberal policies starting with the early 70s and fortified with the advent of the new economic policies and “globalisation” in the 1990s.

The policy of the state has moved from the principles laid down in the Constitution and in the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948 and the Bonus Policy of 1960 to a policy which tacitly approves of “hire and fire”. This has resulted in a massive growth in the “unorganised sector” which was already very large. The new laws which are being made are only in this mould and the courts are acting as the pointsmen for this policy.

So what is the answer? Can we call for going back to the Welfare State? History never can go back. As Heraclitus had put it almost two thousand years ago, “You can never step in the same river twice.” The answer does not lie in looking back. Imperialism has struggled to overcome its crises by adopting different forms. From colonialism to neo-colonialism, from the welfare state to neo-liberalism, nothing has worked and there is more misery and poverty and depredation in the world than ever before. In India, though we may boast of being the best in GDP growth in the world, we are still placed at around no. 120 on the Human Development Index. We are also number one in the number of illiterates, in the number of handicapped and in the number of blind in the world. We have to have a change in the system if India as a country, or indeed, mankind itself has to survive. One can only go forward, towards greater democracy, more robust justice and more stringent equality – towards socialism. ■

[Paper presented by comrade Sanjay Singhvi, General Secreary of TUCI at the 52nd Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Labour Economists held at Dharwar on 17th and 18th December 2010.]

Religion And Secularism In The Neo-colonial Context

K.N. Ramachandran

THE relation of religions, religious leaderships and religious institutions to secularism and more broadly towards democracy and democratic institutions is one of the fundamental questions of great relevance in present day world. During 19th century when the democratic revolutions led by the capitalist class against feudal oligarchies and religious influence over them started becoming more and more consolidated in Western Europe and North America, secularism was clearly defined: religion is a private affair, it should not interfere in matters of public interest and the roles of state and religion should be separated. All the political parties had pledged to pursue secular principles. As a result bourgeois democratic values and the state system were separated from religious influence to a great extent. It became reflected in the political structure, culture and social life of these countries where the tasks of bourgeois democratic revolution were more or less completed and the slogans of French Revolution: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity were influencing the society more and more. The renaissance movement preceding and following industrial revolution and their impact in the fields of social life, arts and literature played inspiring role in this. But from the time of mercantile capitalism and more during the colonial period, the colonial forces utilised Christian religion and its missionaries by and large as an ideological tool to dominate, to politically disarm and to maim the peoples of the colonies. Along with export of Christianity as a hegemonic religion, the prevalent caste, race like divisive feudal or obscurantist tendencies were further promoted to subjugate the peoples of the colonies. As in India, the existing

Hindu and Muslim religions were utilised, favouring Hindu forces utilising the Brahminic sections as the bureaucratic and intellectual base for colonial domination, and consciously promoting religious fanaticism and enmity between the two, and among all religious sections and sects, in order to impose its 'divide and rule' policy.

With the transformation of capitalism to monopoly capitalism, imperialism, with the emergence of finance capital with increasing speculative character and with the whole world being divided among imperialist countries for colonial plunder and domination, the situation started changing in the imperialist countries also. The imperialist bourgeoisie started abandoning existing democratic values. When the Great Depression of 1930 led to growth of autocratic tendencies and fascism, influence of religion and various racist, parochial and divisive tendencies started spreading more speedily.

Following World War II as the imperialist forces led by US imperialism initiated neo colonial offensive replacing colonialism to overcome the continuing crises faced by it and the growing threat from the socialist forces led by Soviet Union, utilizing imperialist capital, market system and technology, it started using religion, race and all other divisive and revanchist forces and tendencies, irrespective of the role they have played in the past, for this purpose. In the colonial period, in the colonies, semi-colonies and dependent countries, imperialism was already utilizing religion and racism for its divide and rule policy. Though power was transferred to the comprador classes under so called 'decolonisation' policy, in these 'newly independent' countries under neo-colonisation, secularism was practiced only for namesake. Many countries turned into theocratic countries. In countries like India which were declared as secular in their constitutions, what was put in to practice was the policy of compromising with all religious forces. Along with this, caste system like divisive and reactionary practices were increasingly utilized to divide the people and to keep them under the strangle hold of reactionary ideas and practices. It led to the state system becoming increasingly autocratic and fascistic. All democratic practices were increasingly curtailed. In this manner conditions for intensification of neo-colonisation were created.

In post World War II conditions Israel was created to shift the burden of Jewish problem to the shoulders of Arab people. It was also with the purpose of promoting Islamic fundamentalism in the name of countering Zionism and thereby to put down the challenge from the forces of national liberation and of socialism which were gaining strength in West Asia and other countries which had sizable Muslim population like Indonesia. Even the leadership of Soviet Union failed to recognize this trap and fell in to it. It became one of the earliest countries to recognize Israel without realizing the imperialist designs behind its formation. Soon Israel started creating havoc in the region. In the name of challenging Israel, the Islamisation of the forces fighting for national liberation was promoted. In this manner US imperialism strengthened its stranglehold over this region. Thus, encouraged and funded by imperialists and their lackeys in the post WWII situation religious fundamentalist forces and racist, casteist like forces started gaining strength more than ever.

From 1970s and 1980s as the imperialist system started facing a serious financial crisis following grave *stagflationary* tendencies, it abandoned the Keynesian policies and resorted to globalization policies. In order to serve the neo liberal regime, all religious, casteist, racist like forces were unleashed more ruthlessly. To crush the national liberation tendencies and anti imperialist sentiments among the masses, while Muslim masses were targeted for ruthless attack, close relations were developed and maintained with the Islamist rulers. Besides all forms of reactionary onslaughts were made utilizing various retrogressive ideologies like post modernism and its various offshoots like 'identity politics'. The 'War on terror' declaration in 2001 was combined with promotion of all religious fundamentalist forces in a big way. The former US president Bush openly sought support of fundamentalists like *evangelists* to justify the attack on Afghanistan and Iraq and later during 2005 presidential elections, calling his aggressions as modern day *crusades*. As a result, presently the secular values and principles are thrown overboard and democracy is devalued at global level.

It is reflected in all the imperialist countries where democratic revolution was completed and secular values had come to dominance to a great extent. The *Patriotic Law* of US like acts enacted in imperialist countries reflect this trend. In the name of *war on terror* Muslim masses are targeted everywhere. It intensifies the promotion of Islamic fundamentalist tendencies among Muslim people on the one hand and encourage and finance the activities of all other religious forces on the other hand. The attacks on migrants who are predominantly from Muslim countries are taking place in Western Europe and US under this pretext. It is evident that the secular values are getting continuously eroded. The condition is worse in countries under neo-colonization. All religious forces are openly interfering in public affairs cutting at the root of secularism. Majority religious forces, especially fundamentalists among them, are playing havoc against religious minorities causing further growth of fundamentalist tendencies among them also. Coupled with the consequences of the intensifying global financial crisis, they are leading to the growth of sectarian, autocratic, parochial and fascist tendencies all over the world.

The condition in India and in its various provinces is a reflection of what is happening at international scene. Each and every aspect of social life is increasingly getting influenced by these tendencies. Though vast majority of the followers of various religions are secular, the fundamentalist influence has started dominating all spheres of social life. They dominate fields of education, healthcare, culture and other fields to a very great extent. They instigate attacks on people and divide them under various pretexts using religion as a cover.

How US imperialism utilises religious forces

As already pointed out US imperialism and its allies by planting Zionist Israel in West Asia could succeed to a great extent in utilising it as their reliable military outpost in the petroleum rich region on the one hand and as an *agent provocateur* for promoting Islamic fundamentalist forces including a number of rulers including that of Saudi Arabia, based on it on the other. Through this method they succeeded to a great extent to put down the surging forces of Arab nationalism and social revolution in the region. The failure of Soviet Union in recognising this imperialist plot and later its degeneration to social imperialist path helped them in these pernicious acts. Along with this, the degeneration of China also to capitalist path and its class collaborationist *Theory of Three Worlds* under which it supported US imperialism in the name of opposing Soviet social imperialism, depicting it as the main enemy, severely weakened the international communist movement in detecting the pernicious and heinous tactics of neo-

colonialism pursued by the imperialists, and in detecting the dangers posed by the promotion of religion to intervene in the national and international politics.

When a liberal government took over in Afghanistan throwing out the monarchy and Soviet Union sent its military in the name of supporting this regime, to counter it and to re-establish its hegemony in the region, US imperialists utilising the military regime in Pakistan trained, armed and deployed Islamic fundamentalist forces like *Al Quaida*. The mercenary regime of Pakistan became a reliable base to launch military offensive against Soviet forces for US led imperialist forces which they are continuing even today against Al Quaida and Taliban. During the last three decades, if they first utilised these Islamic Jihadi forces against the Soviet forces, after the disintegration of Soviet Union, when the Taliban regime came to power in Afghanistan, they turned against them. A barbaric aggression was launched culminating in the events leading to the declaration of the so called 'war on terror'. This was nothing but another US led plot to attack the Muslim masses dubbing them as terrorists while maintaining close relation with the ruling Islamic monarchs who are the real fundamentalists. In this manner a situation was created by the US imperialists for the spread of Islamic fundamentalism and all other religious fanaticisms across all continents. Because of the present rhetoric of Islamic fundamentalists against US imperialism, and in the context of the weakening of the communist revolutionary forces, they have achieved some form of radical image which in turn is coming handy for the perpetuation of the reactionary regimes.

The Indian Scene

THE growth of religious fundamentalist forces in general and that of the majority Hindu

fundamentalists in particular should be seen in this context. The numerous *Islamic* terrorist outfits active in South Asia with their bases in Pakistan, more than doing any service to Islam are actually serving the US imperialist designs in the region ultimately, even though they are generally projected as anti imperialist or anti US imperialist. That is why even the barbarous war of aggression is going on in Afghanistan, US and its NATO allies are talking about a future agreement with Taliban in order to scale down their involvement there. That is why, even after the role of Pak army and the ISI in promoting the so called Islamic Jihadi forces are established facts, US imperialists are heavily financing them . That is , even when US talks about the danger from these Jihadi groups, they are in fact financed and promoted through numerous dubious ways by them as a part of their designs to continue hegemony in the region and to prevent the growth of the communist or genuinely secular national liberation forces here. The Jammu and Kashmir was one theatre where this heinous game was successfully enacted. When the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front was a growing secular national liberation force, the US imperialists with the help of Islamic Pakistan government and silent approval of the Indian government utilised the so called Islamic Jihadi groups to annihilate most of its forces and terrorise the remnant forces to submission. Such tactics are fine tuned by the US forces around the world

The growth of the Hindu fundamentalist forces and their terrorist outfits should be seen in this background. Whatever the Sangh Parivar and the BJP leadership may say, there are many terrorist groups active in different names with the blessings of RSS. The case of Lt Col Purohit and the fact that the explosives used in Malegaon blast came from military stock prove that the planned penetration in to military and police forces by the Sangh Parivar forces are well coordinated with these groups

also. The way the Congress leadership is trying to point out this, as it is happening in recent days, is only to fool the people. Congress leadership is well aware of the extent to which the Hindutva forces have penetrated in to the administration, military and police forces, besides their growing influence in various fields like education and 'cultural' institutions. But as it is pursuing a 'soft Hindutva' line it is closing its eyes towards it and only make occasional outbursts like the present one to hoodwink the masses about its secular credentials.

What is happening in India, as elsewhere, is that the line of demarcation between the religious fundamentalism and religion in general is consciously removed and defying even what is written in the Constitution the religious forces are allowed to interfere in political and social life openly. All secular values which had started gaining strength from the time of renaissance movements are eroded at a rapid way. Though India cannot be transformed into a theocratic state like Pakistan, all forces of reaction are engaged in promoting the theocratisation of Indian polity and society. This extremely dangerous tendency is gaining strength day by day. This tendency is rapidly growing as all the religious institutions, agencies, the various 'he' and 'she' gods, and the numerous temples, churches, mosques and other so called places of worship are getting generous funding from the imperialist agencies, and foreign institutions directly or indirectly. The corporate houses and MNCs also finance or provide generous financial assistance to them. In spite of having all details about these transactions the consecutive central state governments are keeping silence about them. The political parties who are sharing power at some level are also silent as religion is becoming the most powerful vote bank.

So it will be a mistake to evaluate that the various religious fundamentalist outfits alone are pausing danger today to the secular polity, progressive values and democratic advances in all fields of social life. The religions and religiosity which are spreading fast are becoming an all pervading force capable of destroying all progressive and democratic values gained by the humanity so far. This religiosity combined with caste system, racial hatreds, national chauvinism and parochial tendencies are effectively utilised by the imperialists, especially US imperialists, and their lackeys and compradors who constitute the ruling forces in the neo colonies. To combat these dangerous tendencies which are trying to drag the humanity back to the horrors of a medieval like situation, a major struggle has to be launched to recreate conditions for a new renaissance movement according to the concrete conditions of today. The struggle at the super structural level should be taken up as the principal aspect, guiding the class struggle forward. This will assist to overcome past mistakes from metaphysical approaches and to take historic initiative in launching uncompromising struggles to overthrow the neo colonial domination of the imperialist forces, especially of the US imperialists, and their lackeys and compradors from all walks of life. ■

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Odisha: Struggle Against Grabbing of Dalit Land

BHUBANESWAR became new capital of Odisha in 1948. Before this, this area was surrounded by villages and jungles. Many Dalit and Adivasi communities/villages were there in this area. Nayapalli Bhoi Sahi is a old dalit village of Bhubaneswar. In our country more than 75 % people are landless now. No land reform is implemented properly. Especially Dalits and Adivasis have no land or if they are cultivating or occupying land, its ownership records are not provided to them. During last 63 years of so called independence, no government showed interest to provide land right to them. After globalisation policy was started, instead of land distribution among them, the pieces of land they had were grabbed from them in the name of development policies. Thousands of hectares of land, jungle and water are provided to Posco, Vedanta, Mittal, Tata like MNCs and Corporate houses, but lands occupied by dalits, adivasis and slum dwellers are forcibly grabbed under the gun point. All ruling class parties, government and police are engaged in this.

Nayapalli Bhoi Sahi dalit dwellers were provided 6 acres of land by then Chief Minister of Odisha in 1957. This land is registered before Bhubaneswar sub-registrar in 1992-93 and 90 years lease patta is given to them . In this deed it is categorically mentioned that out of 6 acres, 5 acres of land is for 36 families habitat and one acre is for their common use, for meetings, open space, play ground, road, club house, mahila samiti and for various functions. Now Bhubaneswar has become a big city. This area is now in heart of the city. Many Corporate houses and MNCs are trying to capture this land for shopping mall and business complex. But the dalit communities did not allow any encroachment to their community land.

To capture this dalit community land, under the order of commissioner of police the police force attacked and destroyed their meeting mandap, mahila samiti houses and constructed boundary wall in April 2008. People of Bhoi sahi became agitated and united against this forcible grabbing by police in the name of constructing modern police station. On 10th April all the dwellers gathered and destroyed the boundary wall and took back their land. When the police tried to attack them, they blockaded the adjacent NH-5 for some time. Since then the land was under their occupation.

Again on 10th November 2010 massive police forces with bull dozers suddenly came in the early morning and started eviction of the mahila samiti house and resident Pravakar Behera's house and again captured the same land, erecting boundary wall and deployed police forces there. Agitated by this illegal action of the police, the people with the help of CPI(ML) and Basti Surakshya Mancha gheraoed Navin Nivas (CM's residence) on 13th November. When they tried to break police barricade, they were beaten critically and arrested about 300 Bhoisahi dwellers including half of women and leaders of CPI(ML), BSM and AIRWO. Still, the Deputy Commissioner of Police did not allowed to submit memorandum to the chief minister.

Even after this incident police did not vacate the place. Against this people demonstrated before Cuttak Police Commissioner cum District magistrate on 15th Nov. A delegation met and discuss with him and submitted ultimatum that if they will not vacate the land they will forcibly capture it. They are ready to die for their land and for this they even formed a squad " Marana Sena". Commissioner of police asked for 2 days to vacate that place. But on 16th mid night again more armed forces were deployed at that spot and on 17th morning police came with some 25-30 labourers to dig the foundation for the police station. People gathered immediately and tried to convince police not to start work, but they did not listen and ordered the labourers to start work. But the hired labourers went back at people's request. Then a large number of people, mainly consisting of women destroyed the boundary wall and captured the land, putting red flag there. At this time more platoons of armed police came and suddenly started lathi charge and arrested 54 people including women and children.

Against this police repression and arrest, CPI(ML), Basti Surakshya Manch and Bhoi sahi dwellers jointly blockaded the NH-5 with burning tyres etc. Police lathi charged severely, even children and old women got injured. Police again arrested 43 people. So total 97 people were detained. Then it was decided to gherao State Secretariat on the very next day. With less than one day preparations more than 10 thousand people participated in the rally and protest meeting before state secretariat. Com. Biswapriya Kanungo, CPI(ML) state secretary, Sivaram, Advocate

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Rebati Ballav Mohanty, TUCI leader Jayadev Nayak, Senior Journalist Rabi Das, Street vendors leader Pratap Sahu and others supported the peoples struggle and condemned the government and police. In spite of this mass agitation, police lodged more than 11 sections including 307 and 506 and lodged many cases against CPI(ML) and BSM leaders.

Struggling Left Coordination of W. Bengal Protest Against Police Atrocities

On November 18, the Struggling Left Coordination – an alliance of six left and revolutionary parties in Bengal – staged a demonstration in front of Utkal Bhavan in Kolkata to protest the torture and arrest of Dalits and CPI(ML) activists in Bhubaneswar. It was joined by other democratic forces in the city. A letter was sent to the Chief Minister of Orissa by Comrade Santosh Rana, convenor of the Struggling Left Coordination. The letter condemned the brutal lathicharge by the police on Dalits and CPI(ML) activists and demanded that the eviction of the Dalits from their land be stopped immediately and all those arrested be released without delay. ■



18 November, Kolkata Demonstration at Utkal Bhavan

Resistance of Slum Dwellers Intensifying

THE struggle of the slum dwellers of Bhubaneswar against the attempt of the police authorities to take over land allotted to dalit families in 1957, which was continuing for about one month reached an important stage with the massive rally on 15th December addressed by com. KN Ramachandran, general secretary of CPI(ML) who called on the slum dwellers to continue their resistance struggle in more intensified forms. The, militant rally was preceded by the evicted dalit families erecting their huts once again on the former plots. The leaders of the slum dwellers who addressed the rally warned the government that its efforts to evict the slum dwellers will be forcefully resisted.

As the minister concerned did not come to receive the memorandum, the delegation reflecting the, militancy of the rally shouted slogans in front of the assembly door forcing the minister to hurriedly reach the place and receive it assuring that necessary action will be taken. The struggle

of the slum dwellers of Bhubaneswar show the immediate need of uniting the different slum movements all over the country.

In a memorandum submitted to the chief minister of Odisha on behalf of Maha Samabesh organised by the *Basti Surakshya Mancha*, the fighting forum of slum dwellers of Bhubaneswar on 15/12/2010 following 10 days long Gana Dharana staged from 6th December to 14 December 2010 before the Odisha Legislative Assembly in protest against the Government policy of forcible slum eviction and forcible dalits land grabbing by Commissioner of Police in the city, on behalf of about 50 thousand families belonging to urban BPL, residing in the public land and other 30 thousand BPL families residing in their own lands or leased out lands, a seven member delegation led by com. Sivaram, state secretary of the BSM demanded an immediate assurance that the evictions will be stopped. The residents of the slums are socially, economically and educationally backward class of citizens, unorganised toiling masses who are either landless or displaced from their forest lands, and from land taken over for mines and other projects. They have migrated to the city for livelihood. Eviction of the slums is not the solution and rather it is increasing the sorry plight of the people. So the people are protesting and resisting slum evictions. In the process of struggle, the state Govt. has been impressed upon to enact some provisions for the permanent settlement of slum dwellers, residing within the jurisdiction of the urban local bodies constituted under OMC Act-2003. It can be specifically stated that, in spite of the said enactment, for over a period of 7 years the same has not been implemented. On the other hand, even without notice, slums are bulldozed.

In a very recent case of Cuttack, the Odisha high court on 15/09/2010 has directed the state Govt. and other local bodies to implement the slum rehabilitation policies scrupulously and in a time bound manner. But instead of adopting a pro people policy for slum rehabilitation and even without honouring the spirit of the decision of the high court, the state Govt. is pursuing the forcible slum eviction programmes. Even the dalits of Nayapalli Bhoi Sahi, who have been granted right over a piece of land in 1957-58 is being threatened to be evicted forcibly by the commissionerate police. Very recently some of the slums of Bhubaneswar have been threatened to be evicted and eviction squad retreated only due to serious resistance of the people. Some of the slums namely Siripur kandha sahi, Radhakrushna Basti, Unit-6 are partly evicted forcibly in a very deceptive and conspiratorial manner.

The state Govt. has committed to develop planned cities and for which Orissa Development Authorities Act. has been enacted by the state legislature in the year 1982. It is claimed by the policy makers that town planning schemes have been formulated and a master plan has been adopted for the planning of Bhubaneswar city. In spite of

the statutory provisions as under section 22 (4) (s) of the O.D.A Act. for reservation of land to the extent of 10 percent of the total area covered under the town planning scheme for the purpose of providing housing to the members of socially and economically backward classes of people, the state Govt. has made a very little provision of housing for the above sections. Non implementation of the above statutory scheme is the immediate cause of creation of slums and thus, it is the state Govt. who should be held responsible for such problems.

The state Govt. is continuously pursuing repressive policy against the slum dwellers. A number of criminal cases have been instituted by the Govt. through the local police to repress the democratic resistance movement of the slum dwellers. For example three cases have been instituted in Nayapalli police station against the leaders of the Basti Surakshya Mancha and members of dalit families of Nayapalli Bhoi Sahi and hundreds of dalit people were detained by the police and 8 of them were sent to jail implicating in false and atrocious cases. We are neither criminals nor the garbage of the city. We are human beings. We cannot be dealt by police as criminals, nor thrown away by the excavators, as the garbage. We have Constitutional as well as democratic rights to live in the urban area with human dignity. If we are denied such rights, we have no other option but to protest and resist the anti people policies of the Govt.

The delegation appealed to the Govt. to stop the slum eviction programme and fulfill the following genuine and democratic demands of the common masses of the state, in general and urban poor, dalits and slum people of Bhubaneswar in particular.

1. Complete ban on slum eviction policy and implement the judgement of Odisha High Court dated 15/09/2010.
2. Repeal the recent amendments on the award of imprisonment and penalties in the case of "unauthorised occupation" .
3. Implement Land ceiling law for urban areas.

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(Marathi Monthly)

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4. Make policy decision for the living wages for urban wage earners.

5. Implement housing schemes for lower income group people. Reserve 10% of the total area covered under the town planning scheme for the purpose of providing housing to the members of socially and economically backward classes of people as provided under section 22 (4) (s) of the O.D.A Act.-1982.

6. Provide free land patta to all landless dalit, adivasi, urban poor and slum dwellers in Bhubaneswar.

7. Implement a slum policy recognising in-situ development of slums as a general principle, and voluntary relocation and rehabilitation as an exception.

8. Implement the O.M.C. Act-2003 with special reference to the provisions laid down from sections 482 to 499 in Chapter-XXI.

9. Decide and declare tenable and untenable slums and rehabilitate slum people before eviction for acquiring land for genuine public purpose.

10. Do not disturb the traditional communal right of the Nayapalli Bhoi Sahi people from the land Sabika plot No. 506 and 694 for any other purpose.

11. Withdraw all criminal cases instituted against the slum dwellers and their leaders who were agitating against forcible eviction etc.

12. Release com. Ganath Patra and withdraw all criminal cases pending against the mass movement leaders and activists and stop the repressive measure.

13. Resettle and rehabilitate all slum dwellers.

14. Don't allow corporate houses and Multinational companies in retail business. Stop forcible eviction of roadside small businessmen.

15. Implement the provisions of the Act. for the building and other construction workers.

16. Provide BPL card to 68,649 BPL families identified by the Govt. in 2004 and provide them rice @ Rs 2.

17. Stop corruption in the name of employment generation programmes for the urban poor.

18. Regulate the prices of essential commodities and provide all essential commodities at a concessional price to all BPL, slum dwellers, dalit and adivasi family.

19. Stop the conspiratorial and deceptive policies to divide to evict the slum dwellers and adopt a free, fare, open and transparent slum policy, recognising the right to housing as a fundamental right of slum dwellers in urban areas.

20. Repeal the policy for displacement of the landless, dalits, adivasis, forest dwellers, etc. from the land, water, mines, minerals, forest and forest products, livelihood etc. and implement a pro-people policy for the genuine development of the toiling masses. ■

Irom Sharmila Day Observed: AIRWO Resist Police

ON NOVEMBER 2, on the occasion of 10th year of Irom Chanu Sharmila's fasting demanding withdrawal of AFSPA from Manipur the AIRWO Odisha State Committee, continued a month long campaign distributing thousands of leaflets all over state. On 2nd Nov 10 am more than 500 women's rally starting from Inquilab Bhawan, IRC Village reached Jayadev Vihar Square shouting slogans and carrying colorful banners and placards. When the protestors started burning effigy of the imperialist agent, prime minister Manmohan Singh, the police forces led by many higher officials threatened not to burn the effigy and forcibly took it from the women and kept in police jeep. But the women protesters gheraoed the jeep and many jumped into the jeep. When the police resisted, all women shouting slogans threatened to burn the effigy inside jeep. When the effigy started burning inside the jeep the officers threw out the effigy and ran away. The AIRWO activists burnt the effigy. It created great enthusiasm among women. In a seminar that followed AIRWO leaders including state president Com. Pramila, comrades Sandhyarani, Sanjukta, Bishnu Sethy, Pratima, Henarani Barik and others declared their resolve to carry forward the women's liberation struggles. ■

Karnataka: Lessons of Urban Land Struggle

UNDER imperialist globalization the central and state governments are speeding up acquisition of more and more agricultural and urban land for projects of MNCs and Corporate houses, for various infrastructural projects like super highways Special Economic Zones etc. As a result, the already acute housing problem of the urban poor is becoming worse. As migration to urban areas increase as a result of the neo liberal policies, the problem is extremely serious. The BJP government in the state assured the Global Investors' Meet held in Bangalore in June 2010 that it will acquire 2.75 lack hectares of land under a 'Land Bank' scheme for these projects. This land will be vested under the Karnataka Public Land Corporation. For this purpose a special task force is formed. In the name of

clearing unauthorized buildings and 'encroachments' the slum dwellers and low income group people are thrown out. When all opposition parties are not coming out against this attack on the poor and transfer of government land to Corporates, the CPI(ML) state committee has launched a militant people's movement to resist this reactionary policy. The studies conducted by teams of Party and the AIKKS has found that when government is grabbing the land of slum people, the land mafia which include leaders of most of the ruling class parties have already grabbed 1600 acres of government land in Raichur city alone. So, under the leadership of the Raichur City House Right Committee agitation is launched demanding the taking over of all illegal land holdings by the land mafia, and distribution of this land to the 22,000 houseless families.

On 20th September a House Right Convention was convened, attended by hundreds of people and prominent democrats, which issued a charge sheet against the top ten land grabbers. Details of the 1600 acres of land under the custody of the political leaders and other land grabbers were made public. The HRC leaders called on the people to get mobilized and occupy the land. With the demands put forward by the Convention from next day a dharna and hunger strike was launched in front of the city municipal office. To start mobilization of the houseless for the agitation the cultural squads, women squads and RYFI squads started campaign for the 15th October mass mobilization with handbills, posters and door to door contacts.

On 15 October more than 3000 people participated in the mass mobilization called *Jana chaluvali*, As the struggle is continuing, emboldened by it people have already occupied 53 acres of land and started living there. But people demand confiscation of all land in the custody of the mafias and their distribution to the families not having house plots. The struggle has united all oppressed sections. Large number of Muslim people, most of whom are living in slums, have joined the struggle militantly. The participation of women in large numbers, even from among the minorities is striking.

The HRC is continuing the struggle mobilizing more and more people. In spite of the struggle not getting quick and total victory fast, people are getting mobilized in larger numbers. That is the guarantee that it will become successful and that the government will be forced to act to take over the whole land occupied by the ruling class' party leaders, bureaucrats and land mafias and distribute it to landless. ■

Peasant Rally For Support Price of Paddy

ACCORDING to the studies undertaken by the Karnataka Ryota Sangha [AIKKS], the rice growing area in the state is getting reduced every year. For example the rice growing area in Koppal, Raichur, Yadgiri like districts has

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Breaking the Shackles

(Organ of AIRWO)

Contact

C-141, Sainik Nagar
New Delhi - 110059

reduced from 5 lakh to 3.75 lakh acres in last decade. But at the same time the cost of rice is continuously rising. The *Sona* like rice varieties produced in this area is costing Rs. 30-35 in the open market. Though the cost of cultivation per acre has gone up to Rs. 20-22 thousand during this period, the peasants, especially the small and poor sections, are forced to abandon the rice cultivation as the procurement price fixed by the government is very low and as the government agencies are not procuring it fully at the time of harvest. Utilising this situation the private agencies are procuring most of the rice as the peasants are forced to make distress sales. That is, though the government has fixed the procurement price as Rs. 1030 for A grade and Rs. 1000 for B grade, in the open market the peasants get only Rs 700 and 600 respectively.

In this situation, instead of addressing the real problem, the leadership of Congress, BJP, JD (S) like parties raised the slogan "Central Government Withdraw Ban on Rice Export". They and CPI(M) formed an all party forum to take this matter to the central government. The BJP chief minister blamed the UPA government of centre for the plight of the peasants and refused to address the matter. In this way when these ruling class parties are utilizing this life and death problem of the small peasantry in this area for their petty political ends, CPI(ML) state committee and KRS have opposed the lifting of the ban on rice export. On the contrary they demanded fixing of remunerative rate for procurement of rice from the peasants as Rs. 1130 per quintal and procurement of the whole paddy by the government agencies immediately after the harvest.

On 2nd November a big rally was organized at Manvi with this demand. More than 1000 peasants participated in the rally. Such big mobilizations are taking place in other taluk headquarters also. The KRS while exposing the anti-peasant, anti-people policy of the ruling class parties have declared that it will continue the agitation and intensify it compel the government to purchase the rice at remunerative prices. ■

Agitation Against Bill Banning Cow Slaughter

IN FEBRUARY 2010 the BJP government in Karnataka has come out with a bill to impose total ban on cow slaughter in the state as per the dictates of the RSS. This bill is for amending the existing Prevention of Cow Slaughter and Cattle Protection Act of 1964. As the governor refused to recommend this bill which will affect not only the minorities but also the dalits, adivasis and other backward sections whose diet include the beef also, the Bajrang Dal, and other Sangh Parivar outfits came out openly with violent slogans attacking the cattle markets and beef shops. They indulged in violent activities against the minorities and all others who oppose the ban on cow slaughter. Police refuse to take any action against this hooligan and rowdy acts.

The CPI(ML) came out openly against this anti people act of the state government and the Sangh Parivar. It explained how the cow slaughter will affect the diet of the poorer sections and employment of thousands engaged in leather industry. Uniting with various democratic forces party and the mass organizations organized state wide campaign against the bill proposed by the BJP government. During the campaign it was pointed out that BJP like forces are only against cow slaughter which benefits the poor people in the country. At the same time they are not opposing large scale slaughter of cows, oxen, buffalos etc. carried out by various big companies for export in some of which the Sangh Parivar leaders also have shares. BJP is mainly taking it up only as a slogan to communalise the society further.

Mobilising the peasantry in a big way from the Northern districts a big rally was organized at Raichur on 12th November opposing the anti people bill proposed by the state government joining hands with all democratic forces. Thousands of people participated in the rally. In front of the office of Raichur district collector beef was cooked and more than 4000 people were served beef meals as a mass protest action. The campaign is gaining momentum day by day. ■

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AIRWO State Conference

AFTER completing district conferences, the First State Conference of AIRWO was held on 11th December. Along with 57 delegates from various districts more than two hundred women activists took out rally raising slogans. Public meeting was inaugurated by CPI(ML) state secretary com. B. Rudrayya. On December 12th delegate's session held attended by 57 delegates and 5 invitees. AIRWO draft programme, constitution and state political organizational report was presented and adopted with some amendments. 11-member state committee was elected with com, Vanajakshi as state president, Mallamma as vice president, Kavitha as state secretary and Channamma as treasurer. 15 member delegation was elected for all India conference. State conference adapted 13 resolutions. ■

Kerala: AIRWO First State Conference

THE AIRWO State Conference was held at PCT Hall Kochi on December, 2010. Altogether 47 AIRWO delegates elected from district conferences participated. The Conference was inaugurated by Com P N Provint, State Secretary, CPI(ML). A nine member State Committee with Com. PT Jaya as president, Com. CA Hazeena as vice president, Com. K S Sindhu as secretary and Com Biji as joint secretary was elected. A 10-member delegation for the All India Conference at Kolkata was also elected. The Conference ended with a public meeting at the High Court junction, Kochi. ■

RYFI Campaign against Corruption

IN KERALA having 3.17 crores of people, more than 45 lakhs of educated unemployed youths are registered with the Employment Exchange in the state. It is in this context that a massive job racket with the involvement of Public Service Commission officials and connivance of LDF government is being exposed. Against this corruption, the RYFI conducted a rally and convention at Kalpetta, Wayanad. Com M K Dasan state secretary of RYFI inaugurated the convention and asked the authorities to immediately book the culprits involved in this racket. ■

Jharkhand: Agitation against making CNT Act ineffective

THE Chhota Nagpur Tenancy Act (CNT Act) took birth in the state for preventing the sale of adivasi and dalit land and to stop procurement of their land in the name of various projects. But though it was enacted, no

practical steps were taken to implement it as usually happens to such acts. One after another coalition governments ruled the state, creating new records of corruption. In spite of coming to power in the name of serving adivasi interests, none of them tried to implement the act to prevent the usurpation of the land of these oppressed sections. Now the chief minister Arjun Munda has taken action to freeze it and to get it cancelled, in spite of opposition from even his own party leaders.

Opposing this reactionary step by the BJP chief minister, the CPI[ML] activists burned the effigy of Arjun Munda on 17th November at Ranchi and demanded the withdrawal of the chief minister's order. The CPI[ML] Jharkhand state committee has decided to field com. John Miran Munda, general secretary, All India Kranthikari Adivasi Mahasabha (AIKAM) against Arjun Munda in the bye-election to Vidhan Sabha which is going to be held by March 2011 in order to wage a political fight against the corrupt and anti people government led by him. ■

Release Binayak Sen

THE order of the Raipur Sessions Court of Chathisgarh sentencing Binayak Sen along with Piyush Guha and CPI(Maoist) leader Narayan Sanyal on so-called sedition charges for life imprisonment exposes how the Kangaroo Courts in a country under neo-colonisation act. For these courts the chief minister of the state who is selling the land, minerals and other properties of the people to corporate houses and MNCs and pocketing hundreds of crores of rupees along with the bureaucrats, who has deployed para military and police forces to suppress all people's movements against it is not anti-national. Those who have imprisoned hundreds of adivasis and other oppressed sections who are waging struggle for their democratic rights and perpetuated state terror are not anti-national. But Dr. Binayak Sen is anti-national.

Sentencing Sen and political leaders for sedition when scores of scoundrels involved in 2G Spectrum scam and so many other scams are kept free to loot the country more is a typical act of the anti people government and its Kangaroo courts. We strongly condemn this order of the Court and the government who foisted this trumped up case. We demand the release of all of them.

CPI(ML) appeals to all democratic forces to raise their voice for the release of Binayak Sen and the two others.

*K.N. Ramachandran
General Secretary, CPI(ML)
24 December 2010*

Chathisgarh: A Government of Scams and its Anti-Maoist Campaign

THE BJP government in Chathisgarh is competing with the Jharkhand and Orissa governments to sell the land, minerals, forest and even rivers to corporates, MNCs and land mafias. Rather the government is run under the writ of the corporate. Almost the entire state is covered by numerous MoUs signed with the corporate houses. Earlier the Vajpayee government at the center had shown the path to its state leaders that in spite of the Constitutional provisions, even the public sector units with huge holdings of adivasi land, the transfer of which is illegal can be privatized with immunity as even the Supreme Court will turn a blind eye towards it, by privatizing the profit making BALCO unit at Korba to Sterling company. Similarly the earlier Congress government in the state had privatized a 26 KM stretch of Sivanath River, setting an example that under liberalization-privatisation raj even rivers can be sold. Only after a long struggle by the peasantry and other sections of people there, the government withdrew part of the earlier order allowing the use of river water by the villagers and their animals. Similarly the Special Economic Zone announced at Rajandgaon was withdrawn only after a strenuous struggle by the people. In spite of these mass movements, the BJP government is hastily going ahead signing numerous MoUs involving huge scams. Virtually it is a scamsters' raj in the state.

Presently the Raman government is blatantly violating the laws relating to the scheduled areas and the autonomy rights to the gram sabhas enshrined in the Constitution in signing the MoUs. All the mass movements coming up against them are suppressed dubbing them as Maoist ones. Thus the presence of Maoist squads in the forest areas of Dantewada district has become useful to suppress all mass movements against the anti people policies of the government. Besides, in spite of the 'boycott election' slogan given by the Maoists it has helped the BJP to win from the so called Maoist areas with good majority. Thus the Maoists have become a blessing in disguise for the corrupt rule of the BJP.

A number of petti bourgeois intellectuals in the state and outside do not try to recognize these realities. For example, when Vinayak Sen was detained they had organized a big campaign to get him released. While joining this campaign the CPI[ML] had demanded that the campaign should be continued for the release of the large number of the adivasis detained alleging Maoist connections. But nothing of this sort has materialized. Similarly except for glorifying the Maoists they are not ready to join the mass movements coming up spontaneously or organized by CPI[ML] like forces.

What is happening in the state is that while the Maoists pursue a militarist line, the line of armed struggle as the only form of struggle, the state is retaliating with a thousand time more striking force in the name of suppressing them. Under this pretext all democratic rights are snatched away in the name of 'Operation Green Hunt' and Salwa Judum like suppressive policies and various black laws. Violence is used as the only solution by both sides. As a result the adivasis and other oppressed sections in the area are caught in the cross fire. For the ruling system and its military-police establishment such areas have become the killing fields for the combat training of their para military-police forces. It is also immensely useful to them for continuing their neo liberal policies under the cover of waging war against the so called Maoists.

It is in this situation the CPI[ML] state committee and the All India Krantikari Adivasi Mahasabha [AIKAM] have decided to launch a vigorous campaign against the anti people and suppressive policies of the state and central governments, while ideologically exposing the bankrupt and anarchist line of the so called Maoists. ■

Red Salute to Comrade Karmkar

COMRADE Harekrishna Karmkar passed away at the age of 72 on 19th December 2010. He was the first state secretary of CPI(ML) of undivided MP.

He started his political life in leftist student movement in West Bengal. After getting employment at Bhilai Steel Plant in early 1960s he shifted there and started playing active role in working class movement. In 1964 he joined CPI(M). After Naxalbari movement broke out, he supported it and along with com. Jogi Roy and com. Sankar Guha Niogi played leading role in the formation of MP Co-ordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries in 1968. When CPI(ML) was formed in 1969, he became its MP state secretary.

He was imprisoned for 19 months during emergency and dismissed from service. After coming out of jail, though he was not politically active, he was supporting trade union movement led by TUCI till his last days.

Com. Soura Yadav, CPI(ML) Chhattisgarh secretary and com. BB Pandey, TUCI state president and other comrades put red flag over the body and extended Party's condolence to the family members. ■

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Unite for liberation, Unite against patriarchal society and the rule of capital ! First All India Conference of AIRWO, Kolkata

THIS report is prepared when the preparations for the First All India Conference of All India Revolutionary Women's Organisation are vigorously carried forward at state level, and the propaganda work is progressing in Kolkata. The AIRWO had a small beginning with about twenty five women comrades from eight states assembling at Chennai in February 2010 to discuss the draft approach paper prepared by the Central Committee of the CPI[ML] on the problems faced by women in present conditions and the need to build a revolutionary women's movement, upholding the heritage of the revolutionary work in the field so far. Following a good discussion, the meeting adopted the basic orientation of the draft with a number of proposals to develop it. The meeting also decided to form the AIRWO and to carry forward this task an organizing committee was formed with com. Sarmista Chowdhary as its convener.

By October the organizing committee succeeded to prepare a draft Programme and Constitution of AIRWO which was distributed to the organizing committees in the states to prepare themselves for the First All India Conference at Kolkata on 27-28 December to finalise the documents and elect a Central Committee and office bearers. Meanwhile the organizing committee could establish relation with the International Organising Committee formed to take up the task of organizing an international women's conference at Caracas, Venezuela in March first week of 2011 to conclude on 8th March, the 100th anniversary of the first observation of the International Women's Day, at the initiative of the revolutionary women's organization of Germany. AIRWO observed the International Women's Day on March 8, 2010, highlighting the decision taken 100 years ago to start observing 8th March as International Women's Day and to take up campaigns and struggles at state level focusing on women's issues. Though it decided to send a delegation to meet com. Irom Sarmila who is waging a great struggle against the military deployment and imposition of the draconian Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), the delegation could not go as the road traffic was blocked as a result of the internecine conflicts

in the North-East instigated by the occupying armed forces and the central agencies. But as per the decision of the organizing committee, 2nd November when Sarmila's great struggle was completing ten years, was observed at all India level as a day of solidarity with her struggle. Solidarity programmes were organized at a large number of places on that day.

The organizing committee succeeded to publish its bi-monthly in English, "Breaking the Shackles" in November and the Hindi version is expected to come out soon. Meanwhile the draft programme and constitution were translated into different languages and district and then the state level conferences were started from beginning of November. Already state conferences are completed in Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, AP, Maharashtra, Chathisgarh, MP, UP, Orissa. Besides these delegates will participate from Jharkhand and W.Bengal. Altogether 250 delegates and about 50 observers are expected to participate. Fraternal delegates from Germany, Nepal and Bangladesh are also participating. The organizing committee expects that the women's rally from College Street to Esplanade and the public meeting there with hundreds of women comrades participating on 27th December will provide a militant start.

As the concluding paragraph of Breaking the Shackles declares: *AIRWO seeks to unite the many struggles that women are spontaneously waging to obtain their rights in to a fierce and determined revolutionary movement aimed at the overthrow of private property. AIRWO seeks to unite the struggle for women's emancipation with the revolutionary struggle of the working class and gives the call to join the struggle for a revolutionary transformation of society with a view to emancipate the masses of women from the millennia of oppression, discrimination and violence. AIRWO calls upon all democratic and fighting women to join this freedom struggle. Unite and struggle against the patriarchal government, which is a direct and conscious representative of big capital. Unite for the overthrow of capitalism and private property. Unite for a new dawn.* ■