



Red Salute Comrade Tapas Dutta

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On the Recent Happenings in Latin America

—Maelstrom of Anti-Imperialist struggle

The whole of Latin American countries is now seething with anti-imperialist fervour. The stir started from the 80s of the last century, when the imperialism-designed policy of globalization-liberalization-privatization cracked down on the hapless people of those countries. The people, in revolt, burst out with any form of leadership they could catch at as a straw and sometimes spontaneously. The movements gained momentum over the years with occasional victories on this or that issue and are continuing till date. The people of Latin American countries has to brave the enemies of the people, the imperialism, particularly US-imperialism and their native stooges that had been nurtured since long. The struggle of the Latin American people against imperialism is an inspiring and brilliant saga of the day. Here, we render some study over the recent happenings in Latin American countries with a brief reference to its background.

The Historical background

Latin America constitutes a vast geographical area comprising of 28 big and small countries with some territories that extends from Mexico to Panama in the western hemisphere. Twelve countries of South America (Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, Venezuela, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Surinam, Uruguay), seven countries from Central America (Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Belize, Nicaragua, Panama), Mexico and countries of Caribbean islands (Haiti, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Dominican Republic etc.) and some territories en bloc are called countries of Latin America. This vast continent-like territory is full of rich natural and mineral resources like oil, gold, silver, copper, tin etc. coupled with a variety of agricultural produces including coca, alluring imperialist gluttony.

Once abode of renowned civilizations like Incas, Aztecs, Mayas, Andes, the countries of this region developed a highly organized society. But they fell into the colonial clutches in the 16th century as preys of plunder of the rich natural and mineral wealth. Over the span of 300 years these countries were under subjugation of and exploited by the Spanish, British, Portuguese and the French colonialist powers. Sucked of their wealth these countries were rendered pauper. Tearing poverty, destitution and wretchedness were the permanent companions of these countries. Apart from that, these colonial powers seeking to destroy the rich civilizations of these countries wholly or partially imposed its own religion, beliefs, culture, mannerism, especially their language on the people of this continent. In the 19th century, epitomizing hope and aspirations of

the people of this region, particularly of South America, Simon Bolivar, the great patriot and nationalist fighter born in Caracas of Venezuela, tried to free the region from foreign domination and exploitation, particularly Spanish colonialism. Himself a military fighter, Simon Bolivar gave a clarion call to the native military personnel, "Damned is the soldier who uses his weapon against his own people." He dreamt of a united Latin American federation of states by the name of "greater Columbia" and succeeded in carving out 5 states, namely, Columbia, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela and Bolivia from foreign domination. Bolivia was the last state to be freed in his life time and was named after him in 1825. He asked for end of slavery, end of feudal exploitation under Spanish domination, end of exploitation of the tribal people and realization of "land to the tillers". Karl Marx, himself, paid posthumous tributes to this great fighter (died in 1830) who was inspired by the French Revolution and the American Independence struggle. Simon Bolivar could foresee that the US capitalism was going to be the main occupying force in Latin America in the days to come as he said in his last days – "The United States of America appears ... to plague America with misery in the name of liberty. ... very hostile and capable of anything."

In the wake of the rising freedom struggles of the Latin American states in the first quarter of the 19th century, the US hegemonism responded with "Monroe Doctrine" in 1823. Formulated by the 5th American President, James Monroe, the doctrine asserted that any attempt by the European powers to interfere in the affairs of the Americas or to

acquire territory on the American continent would be treated by United States as an unfriendly act. Under the slogan of "America for the Americans" the US hegemonic regime tried to pose itself as the sole colonizing power in the western hemisphere. From then on, the US hegemonists intervened twenty times in between 1857 and 1891 – from Mexico in 1857 in north to Chile in 1891, in south. This invited hegemonic war between US and European powers over this region that resulted in the great Spanish-American War (1895-1898). Truce arrived at Paris in 1898 tilted towards 'advantage – America' and US imperialism became the chieftain of imperialist exploiters in Latin America. US imperialism extended its clutches by either direct military aggression or organizing internal coup or dismantling democratically elected governments and replacing them with by its stooges, military or civil. Between 1914 and 1929 US investment in Latin America doubled, making it the leading foreign investor and economic force in the region. During 1920s the petroleum industries of Peru, Columbia, Ecuador, and Venezuela were captured by the US imperialists. Sugar, bananas, coffee, cocoa, tobacco, rice, indigo, cotton, beef and ranches industries etc. were placed under foreign control, US control in the main. Since then the countries of Latin America have been the hunting ground of savage US imperialism. Let us now have a deeper look into the history of US policy on Latin America during the past century.

Twist and turns of Latin American policy of US imperialism

Major General Smedley D. Butler of American army, in his reminiscences confessed, "I spent 33 years and 4 months in active service, as a member of our country's most agile military force – the Marine Corps. ... And during that period I spent most of my time being a high class muscle man for big business, for "Wall Street" and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism ... I helped Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City

Bank boys to collect revenue in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American Republics for the benefit of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brow Brothers in 1909-12. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras "right for American fruit companies in 1903." ('America's Armed forces' – Butler, 1935-36) clear! He thus made the state of affairs explicitly clear.

Pursuing "Monroe Doctrine" US hegemonism intervened in the affairs of the Latin American states continually from 1914 to 1933 which includes 19-year occupation of Haiti, 18-year occupation of Dominican Republic, multiple interventions in Panama, 8-year occupation of Nicaragua and all these were done in the name of "fight for democracy", introduced and coined by US President Woodrow Wilson and followed by Presidents succeeding him. In 1933, F.D. Roosevelt replaced all-out military diplomacy partially by dollar diplomacy through his "good neighbour policy" which actually meant to bracket the Latin American countries refusing to obey the dictates of "dollar and arms" as 'bad neighbours'. The so-called declared policy of non-intervention was in fact a subterfuge for covert intervention with dollar to buy US stooges in these countries. Batista government of Cuba was a glaring example. Retention and strengthening of military forces in Guatemala Bay, Cuba, in the Panama Canal Zone also continued to pose indirect threat to Latin American countries.

At the end of the Second World War when Soviet Russia appeared as a mighty socialist state providing strong impetus to the anti-imperialist movements round the globe, US imperialism, having already attained the super power status, found in raising the bogey of "containment of communism" another pretext for meddling in the internal affairs of Latin American states. In 1945, H.S. Truman became the President of the US and vowed to "containment communism and rolling it back whenever possible" – which came to be

Contd. on page 7

LONG LIVE COMRADE TAPAS DUTTA

Comrade Tapas Dutta, veteran member of the Central Committee Secretary, Orissa State Committee of the SUCI, former General Secretary of UTUC-Lenin Sarani and a renowned sculpture breathed his last on Saturday, December 29, 2007, in a hospital in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. He was 82. He was admitted to the hospital on 15 December following severe respiratory trouble. Then he developed septicemia and had an attack of pneumonia. Finally the end came with a massive cardiac arrest.

A life long revolutionary who in course of leading an arduous painstaking struggle covering all aspects of life imbibing the essence of the noble ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh thought attained a very high standard of communist character, Comrade Dutta was initiated to the revolutionary movement at a very young age when he was a student of Government Art College in Kolkata in late forties.

That was the time when Comrade Shibdas Ghosh with a handful of his revolutionary compatriots was in the vortex of an exemplary struggle to build up a correct communist party on the Leninist model on this soil. After being released from jail, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh as a part of the complex process of recruiting and developing cadres of the revolutionary movement used to conduct study circles on the rooftop of Shiva temple on Lake View Road in South Calcutta. The conduction had to be shrouded in utter secrecy. It was Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta, another veteran member of Central Committee of the Party who first brought Comrade Tapas Dutta to one of such study classes sometimes in 1947. Since then, there was no looking back. The association of Comrade Ghosh, the truth incarnate in his teachings, the fervour of indomitable revolutionary spirit he reflected made so indelible a mark on Comrade Tapas Dutta that he made it a point to attend the study circles without fail and gradually released the process of remoulding himself as an ardent student of Comrade Ghosh with the aim of dedicating his life to the cause of revolution and struggle for emancipation of the proletariat. It then became a mission of his life. Right from the childhood days, his was a nature to protest against anything he though was unjust and incorrect. He also nurtured a quest for truth. Living association of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, his invaluable teaching that revolutionary politics is not just an act spawning from intellectual understanding of social reality but is equally spurred by higher emotional faculty to grasp truth and hence calls for nobler feelings of heart, made so penetrating an impact on Comrade Tapas Dutta that he took up the dignified but different course

of a revolutionary life. He also earned the distinction of being a delegate to the founding convention of the Party at Basanti Natyamandir in Joynagar, West Bengal, held from 22nd to 24th April, 1948.

He was a brilliant student of fine arts and sculpture, most endearing to his teachers for creative talent and tender passion. But once he was illumined by the advanced thoughts of Marxism-Leninism enriched and developed by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in the process of concretizing the same on the concrete situation of Indian soil, it became clear to him that alienated from the rising trend in the society and excommunicated from the struggle for articulating the yearning of the seething society to free itself from exploitation of man by man, tenor of artistic activities would lose its propelling force. More steeled he became in grasping revolution, more radically changed his concept about thematic aspect of art and realization dawn on him that content of art ought to be conducive to the revolutionary needs of the society. So he alongwith Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta took pioneering initiative in developing conscious revolutionary students' movement in the Government Art College. At that time, sometimes in the later half of 1948, the College authorities decided to inaugurate an art exhibition by K.N.Katzu, the then governor of West Bengal. Comrade Tapas Dutta and Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta opposed the decision saying that such exhibitions ought to be inaugurated by one of the leading artists of the time and not by an administrator who hardly had any knowledge of painting-sculpture. They mobilized the students against such a wrong move of the authorities and built up a powerful movement in the campus. A students' strike was called in

protest. This invited wrath of the authorities and Comrades Tapas Dutta and Sitesh Dasgupta alongwith five other fellow students were expelled from the College.

That was the end of formal education of Comrade Tapas Dutta. But the artist in him not only remained shinningly alive but grew and developed as he progressed in the struggle for attaining higher communist character. Under the guidance of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Comrade Tapas Dutta and Comrade Sitesh Dasgupta set up an organization called Institute of Art

Congress, attacked Comrade Ghosh with lethal weapons. It was Comrade Tapas Dutta and one worker of the Dock Labour Union by the name Palwan who courageously stood up against the attackers and made them retreat. But for their bravery and presence of mind, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh could not have averted a major assault if not a murderous attempt on that day. At that time, Comrade Tapas Dutta had also taken active part in organizing the jute workers in North 24 parganas district of West Bengal and also worked for a brief period in building up Party



Mortal remains of Comrade Tapas Dutta in front of Shaheed Kshudiram statue in Calcutta

and Culture. At the auspices of this Institute, a poster exhibition on the evolution of human society was organized by them at various venues to propagate the history of development of human society captured on the canvas in sequence as scientifically brought out in the doctrine of historical materialism. It not only drew appreciation from one to all as a novel venture but also helped the party in securing revolutionary cadres. Comrade Provash Ghosh, Central Committee member and West Bengal State Secretary of the Party had his initial contact with the Party when he came to see the exhibition in a south Calcutta school he was then studying in.

At the initial stage of his Party life, Comrade Tapas Dutta drew his first lesson of organizing working class movement through involvement in the Trade Union activities of the workers of Calcutta Dock which Comrade Shibdas Ghosh himself used to oversee and conduct. Once the hoodlums of INTUC, the labour wing of the then

organization in North Calcutta. He also took part in the famous Tebhaga (two-third share of the crop) movement of the peasants in West Bengal that stirred the entire nation in early 50s. Comrade Tapas Dutta had a strong desire to paint the life of the mine workers whose impoverishment and destitution knew no bound. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh immediately agreed and sent Comrade Tapas Dutta to the Jiolgora area in Jharia mines of Dhanbad district, now in Jharkhand state. There Comrade Tapas Dutta used to stay in a grocery shop of one of our Party sympathizers and got deeply engrossed in captivating on the easel the life struggle of the mine labours. And as the reality unfolded before him, Comrade Tapas Dutta goaded on by social purposiveness and driven by higher sense of beauty and subtler sensitiveness in drawing his paintings became so moved by the misery and wretchedness of the oppressed mine workers that he resolved to engage himself

Contd. on page 4

Life-long revolutionary and leader of the masses

Contd. from page 3

completely in developing militant working class movement on the correct base political line enunciated by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

The Party in 1956 assigned him the responsibility of building up organization and working class movement in Orissa. First he conducted a school of politics of those having expressed interest in the revolutionary politics of the Party at Akhuapada in Balasore district.

He then went to Rourkela and began work among the unorganized contractors' workers and steel workers there. He had no place to stay, no means for having food. But with indomitable spirit and revolutionary audacity, he stuck to his task and succeeded in setting up a revolutionary trade union there. In May, 1957, Rourkela Workers' Union was formed under his leadership. Under the banner of this union, he led a historic movement of about 17,000 workers of Hoch-Tiff-Gammon company. As a concomitant to this inspiring struggle, many other unions like the Hindustan Steel Mines Workers' Union, Lathikata Refractories Workers' Union, Orissa Fertilizers Workers' Union, Orissa Cement Workers' Union and Jharsuguda Ceramic Workers' Union were formed under his stewardship. Under his guidance, workers of Probhat Iron Foundry led a six month long struggle over their legitimate demands. When police opened fire on the agitating workers, two courted martyr's death and many more injured. Following this movement was formed the Rourkela Engineering Workers' Union. In course of these milestone movements, Comrade Tapas Dutta became an undisputed working class leader of this large industrial belt. In the process he also developed quite a number of effective trade union organizers many of whom were carefully nurtured by him to be later transformed into valuable party comrades. To imbue them with correct ideological-political consciousness and help them achieve yet higher standards, he as per the guidance of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh used to conduct regular study circles alongwith day to day union and other party activities.

Alongside developing militant working class movements, he also

organized the poor tribal people in the agglomerates of Rourkela to rise up against forcible eviction from land then being acquired for the Rourkela steel plant. As a result many of the demands of the ousted people were achieved. He then concentrated on organizational expansion throughout the length and breadth of the state and travelled extensively from Sundergarh, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sonapur, Balasore to Bhadrak, Jajpur, Cuttack, Angul and Ganjam. He also developed movements of hapless tribal people at Udala, Kashpada and Keonjhar. At that time, no one dared to take on the Tatas who were assailing and exploiting the mine and related industry workers of Orissa. Comrade Tapas Dutta came forward to crumble the inertia and built up a historic movement of adivasi workers of Tata-owned Sukinda Mines under the banner of Sukinda Upatyaka Mines Workers' Union that sent chill down the spines of the ruling capitalist class. Sukinda agitation hit headlines all over the country and the countrymen came to know about the plight and penury of these hapless workers who for the first time broke open the shackles under revolutionary leadership of Comrade Tapas Dutta. He had to go underground alongwith other leading organizers of the movement and despite best efforts, police of the then Congress government could not get hold of him. In disguise, he used to stay in the houses of poor villagers who gave him shelter, protection, food and held him in high esteem as their most revered and beloved leader. Legendary Sukinda movement stands out as a milestone not only in the history of working class struggle of Orissa but also militant mass movement of the country in the post-independence era.

In 1989, the movement of evicted people of NTPC, Kaniha, under his guidance assumed so militant a character that Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister could not dare visit the spot and had to fly back to Bhubaneswar. Alongside working class movements, he also organized the peasants and other sections of the toiling masses. It was under his guidance that notable students' movements grew and developed in 1969, 1980-81 and then in 1984 at Burla Engineering College. His commendable role during the worst

1964 communal riots in Rourkela made so decisive an impact on late Nabakrushna Chowdhury, one of the most venerated Gandhian leader and first chief minister of Orissa after independence that he was greatly attracted towards Marxism-Leninism and particularly towards the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. He alongwith Nabababu played a significant role in developing JP movement in the state in 1974-75. During emergency, he conducted Party activities underground. His adroit handling of the inflamed situation in the state over an engineered feud between the Bengali and Oriya communities did not take a worse turn. In the light of the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, he scientifically evaluated the significant roles of some of the legend of Orissa like tribal leaders Birsu Munda, Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das, litterateur Fakirmohan Senapati, Baji Rout and such other renaissance personalities so that in the correct continuity, socio-cultural movements conducive to current necessity could be developed. He took initiative to publish 'Nabapatra', a cultural magazine in Oriya. Thus through tireless painstaking efforts, he created a strong base of Party organization in Orissa and in the process emerged as a most respected mass leader.

The revolutionary activities of Comrade Tapas Dutta did not remain confined to the state of Orissa only. In 1969, he, in the Jharia conference of UTUC-Lenin Sarani, the trade union arm of the Party, was inducted as an All India secretary. In the All-India conference of UTUC-LS in Delhi in 1985, he was elected General Secretary of the organization, a position he held till in year before last his prolonged ailment and other physical afflictions considerably restricted his movements. He also was elected a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Apart from a number of domestic conventions and conferences, he also represented the Party and UTUC-LS in programmes overseas like China, Russia, Albania and other countries. As Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had taught that acquisition of true knowledge and real revolutionary consciousness means true realization of revolutionary party consciousness and total identification of the individual interest with the class, revolution and party interest,

Comrade Tapas Dutta, in course of applying this invaluable teaching in his struggling life attained a very advanced level of communist character, gained staff membership of the Party and elected a member of the Central Committee at the First Party Congress in 1988.

Though Comrade Tapas Dutta as a senior leader of the Party was totally involved in the multifarious organizational activities, yet excellence as an artist, his capacity to portray life in the aesthetic form of his chosen media, his creative acumen to convey message of life, cherished ideal, valour and values on a piece of carved stone did not erode a bit. Rather, as he plumbed human life in more depth while organizing their struggle for emancipation, his concept of art, his grasp over the language of visual art, his mastery over the medium became more refined, more fine-tuned. In 1969, when Comrade Subodh Banerjee, member of the first Central Committee of the Party and a renowned mass leader became PWD minister in the second United Front government in West Bengal, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh desired that the government should take initiative to install in various parts of the state statues of the great freedom fighters of uncompromising trend under supervision of PWD.

To start with, it was to be of Shaheed Kshudiram, the first martyr of India's freedom movement to embrace gallows, who stands immortal as the epitome of the valiant fight of the countrymen to free the motherland from the tentacles of alien rulers. Accordingly, tenders were called and the model submitted by Comrade Tapas Dutta was unanimously approved by a selection committee comprising noted experts in the field. Concomitantly, was produced a masterpiece that has practically no parallel in the contemporary period of Indian sculpture. Amazed at the grace and monumental poise of the statue first erected in front of Calcutta High Court and later replicated in parts of the state and country, Ramkinkar Baiz, one of the celebrities of Indian sculpture in the modern period wondered as to how could one say that the country ceased to produce marvels?

Anyone looking at the statue

Contd. on page 8

The Last Journey

Comrade Tapas Dutta, veteran member of SUCI Central Committee, State Secretary, SUCI Orissa State Committee, eminent mass leader of the toiling people of the country, particularly of Orissa and endeared "Tapas-da" to thousands of party workers, supporters, sympathizers, political activists cutting across party lines and intellectuals, social activists, human right activists and well meaning people of Orissa from all walks of life, who took his name with immense reverence, breathed his last on 29th December at around 10 am at Bhubaneswar, the state capital. With his death ended an illustrious revolutionary life spanning more than half a century, most of which was spent in Orissa.

Though Comrade Tapas Dutta had been fighting his old age and a host of debilitating diseases for quite some time, news of his death sent shock waves in the political and social firmament of the state. It spread fast across the districts and a steady stream of grief-stricken party workers, supporters, sympathizers and common people from all walks of life set out for the Bhubaneswar party office to pay their tribute to their beloved leader "Tapas-da". Even before the mortal remains of Comrade Dutta reached the party office, a huge congregation of mourners from nearby party units and Bhubaneswar had assembled there. The Red Flag was dipped half-mast and the body of Comrade Tapas Dutta was kept at the SUCI Bhubaneswar party office for two days for comrades and members of public to pay their last respect to Comrade Tapas Dutta. On hearing the news of rapid deterioration in the condition of Comrade Dutta, Comrade Asit Bhattacharya, member, Central Committee, SUCI rushed to Bhubaneswar. On his way, Comrade Bhattacharya received the

heart-rending news. On arrival, he placed floral wreath on the mortal remains of Comrade Dutta followed by the Party's Orissa State Committee members. Addressing the assembled huge gathering in the Party office premises Comrade Asit Bhattacharya said : We will have to turn our profound grief into firm revolutionary determination. Comrade Tapas Dutta developed himself as a great revolutionary through a life-long struggle based on the scientific course of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh thought. The revolutionary legacy and heritage concretely developed by Comrade Tapas Dutta on the soil of Orissa was to be carried forward by all comrades of Orissa.

To the party office then came, inconsolably crying, Sm. Krishna Mohanty, Secretary, Utkal Navajivan Mandal and the daughter of late Naba Krishna Choudhury, the well-known towering mass leader and former Chief Minister of Orissa and Malati Devi Choudhury. Many eminent intellectuals, professors, doctors, litterateurs, lawyers, social activists, human



82 half-mast red flags in front of the bier bedecked in flower

right activists, poets, newspaper editors and journalists along with thousands of common people and political leaders cutting across party lines, thronged Bhubaneswar Party office to have the last glimpse of the mortal remains of Comrade Dutta and pay their homage to his memory. Noteworthy among those who placed wreaths were CPI leader Comrade Nityananda Pradhan, CPI(M) State Committee member Comrade Suresh Panigrahi, CPI(ML) State Secretary Comrade Kshitish Biswal, former minister Jagannath Pattanaik, Samajwadi Party President Baishnab Parida, leader of Orissa Communist Party Comrade Susanta Barik, HMS State Secretary Panchanan Senapati, IPTA State Secretary Ramesh Padhy, Mohan Jena, MP, former MP Anchal Das, former MLA Radhakanta Sethi, AISF State Secretary Jyoti Mahapatra, Niranjan Mohanty, Editor, *Kholadwar*, Krishna Nayak, Executive Editor, *Amari Katha*, Prafulla Mishra, Editor, *Utkal Samaj*, Laxmi Narayan Raysingh, Editor, *Nua Dunia*, Mahendra Parida, Convenor, Lok Adhikara Mancha, Siba Bhoi,

Secretary, IDBI Workers' Union, Manoj Lenka, Secretary, Orissa Government High School Contract Teachers' Association, eminent poet and social activist Sailaj Rabi, Professor Birendra Nayak, eminent columnist Prof. Benudhar Padhy, Dr. D Nayak, State President of Medical Service Centre, Narendra Mohanty, Convenor, Orissa Jana Adhikara Morcha, Akshya Kumar of Naba NirmanSamity, Secretary, All Orissa LIC Employeess' Union, Subhas Chandra Nayak, Secretary, All Orissa Bank Officers' Association and others. Many eminent trade union leaders, social activists and political leaders sent condolence messages, as they could not come personally.

From the Bhubaneswar Party Office, the last journey started at 2 p.m. on 30th December. The mortal remains of Comrade Tapas Dutta were draped in the Red Flag and placed in the flower-bedecked carrier. With incessant chants of 'Tapas-da Long Live', 'Tapas-da, We Will Not Forget You', 'Tapas-da, We Will Fulfill Your Behest', 'Long Live Revolution' and 'Red Salute to The Great leader of the Proletariat Comrade Shibdas Ghosh' and with heavy heart and tears flowing down their faces, party workers coming from different remote and inaccessible areas of the state, joined the thousands waiting to take part in the funeral procession. The long silent procession wound through the city of Bhubaneswar to end at the Vani Vihar Square. Along its course, curious, yet admiring the discipline and solemnity of the rally, many onlookers, passersby and sympathizers of the party, stepped into the files on their own to make the procession swell into a sea of humanity.

Since Comrade Tapas Dutta had been a member of the Central Committee of the SUCI, his mortal remains were scheduled to be sent to our party headquarters in Calcutta. En route, it was taken to Cuttack and kept there for some time at the Murad Khan Patna Harijan Sahi, epicentre of revolutionary activities of Comrade Tapas Dutta for nearly three decades. Here too, common people in long files paid their tribute to their beloved departed leader by placing wreath on the remains of Comrade Dutta. Finally, on the night of 30th December, the body



Sea of humanity joins the last journey

Secretary, IDBI Workers' Union, Manoj Lenka, Secretary, Orissa Government High School Contract Teachers' Association, eminent poet and social activist Sailaj Rabi, Professor Birendra Nayak, eminent columnist Prof. Benudhar Padhy, Dr. D Nayak, State President of Medical Service Centre, Narendra Mohanty, Convenor, Orissa Jana Adhikara Morcha, Akshya Kumar of Naba NirmanSamity, Secretary, All Orissa LIC Employeess' Union, Subhas Chandra Nayak, Secretary, All Orissa Bank Officers' Association and others. Many eminent trade union leaders, social activists and political leaders sent condolence messages, as they could not come personally.

Contd. on page 6

The Last Journey

Contd. from page 5

was taken to Calcutta.

The city of Calcutta, where Comrade Tapas Dutta had begun his revolutionary life, waited eagerly with heavy heart to receive his mortal remains. Party leaders and cadres of all ranks and activists of its mass organizations poured in to the Central Office on Lenin Sarani in Central Calcutta. The body was first taken to the Saheed Kshudiram statue in front of Calcutta High Court, a cherished creation of Comrade Tapas Dutta who, inspired by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, forsook a carer of a bright art-professional to embrace revolutionary life but nevertheless responded to take up this creative challenge when enjoined upon by Comrade Ghosh. The body was laid down on a platform erected in front of the statue. There lay a revolutionary of the present times, now mute and lifeless with death, and with an immortal revolutionary of the past standing erect in front of him, also mute and lifeless, but speaking eloquently of the genius, commitment and zeal of its creator. The brief sojourn, the few moments of meeting of the two revolutionaries of the two ages was ended with the rendering of the songs on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and the *Internationale*.

The body of Comrade Tapas Dutta was then brought to the Central Party Office and was placed in the hall of the office solemnly decorated with flowers and red flags. It was kept open for comrades and others to pay their tributes to the departed leader. Grief of revolutionaries never does give way to waywardness. The entire procedure went on with streams of people cutting across political lines, age, social standing and all other aspects of life responding with well-knit discipline and organization. Each visitor was received downstairs, announced upstairs to lead to the central hall, where he or she placed wreaths or bouquets on the last remains of the departed leader, passed around the body and left the hall, often with tears flowing down the cheeks. Those who paid their tributes included the members of the Central Committee of the Party. Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, Office Secretary, Central Committee placed wreath on behalf of Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, who was prevented from coming on strict medical grounds,

followed by Comrades Anil Sen, Central Staff Comrades Ranjit Dhar and Manik Mukherjee on behalf of Comrades Sukomal Dasgupta and Sitesh Dasgupta respectively, Provash Ghosh and Krishna Chakraborty. The others included Comrades Hem Chakraborty, Secretary Jharkhand State Organizing Committee, Shibshankar Jha, Secretary and Arun Singh, member, Bihar State Committee, Pratap Samal, Secretary, Delhi State Organizing Committee, Dwarika Rath, Secretary, Gujarat State Organizing Committee, Bhabani Shankar Ghosh on behalf of the Madhya Pradesh State Co-ordination Committee, Swapan Chatterjee, member, Uttar Pradesh State Committee, Madhab Bhonde and Rabi Shakhre on behalf Nagpur unit. From Orissa, Comrades Binapani Das, Bishnu Das, Sambhu Nayek, MLA, Raghunath Das, Shankar Dasgupta, Dhurjati Das, Sadashib Das, Uddhab Jena, Jagabandhu Boral, Gobinda Maharana, Chhabi Mohanty and all other members of State Committee paid tributes to their beloved leader. Others offering floral tribute to the departed leader were Comrades Yakub Pailan, Prativa Mukherjee, Sunil Mukherjee, Subrata Chowdhury, Soumen Bose, members, West Bengal State Secretariat, Debaprasad Sarkar MLA, Swapan Ghosh, Salil Chakraborty, Sanjit Biswas, Sadananda Bagal, Tapan Roy Chowdhury, Prasanta Ghatak, Chiraranjan Chakraborty, Kenaram Mandal, West Bengal State Committee members, Manab Bera, Secretary Midnapur District Committee, Swapan Ghosal, Secretary, Murshidabad District Committee, Khoda Baux, Secretary, Nadia District Committee, Tapan Bhowmik, Secretary Jalpaiguri District Committee and Ratan Mukherjee, Secretary Birbhum District Committee. Leaders from other political parties and mass organizations who placed wreaths included Comrades Ashok Ghosh, West Bengal State Secretary of Forward Bloc, Biman Bose, West Bengal State Secretary of CPI(M), Mihir Banerjee, Member, West Bengal State Secretariat of RSP, Kalyan Bose representing CPI(ML) (Central Committee), Saral Deb, President TUCC, Ashok Ghosh, State Secretary UTUC, Ranjit Guha, State Secretary AITUC, Basudeb Bose, State Secretary AICCTU and



Last journey commences at Bhubaneswar

Dilip Pal representing BMS. Leaders of class and mass organizations paying floral tribute included Comrades Chhaya Mukherjee, President, AIMSS, Shankar Saha, General Secretary, UTUC-LS and Debashish Roy, General Secretary, AIDS. Even after a long stretch of nearly three hours there were comrades waiting for their turn to place wreaths and pay their tributes. However, as scheduled, the funeral procession was arranged and started at around 3 pm. after the body was placed on the carrier truck with Comrades Asit Bhattacharya and Ranjit Dhar as pall-bearers. Those still waiting placed their wreaths as the procession moved.

In front of the procession, marching with firm, resolute steps in files were the eighty two young communists of the KOMSOMOL each carrying a half-mast flag symbolizing the age at which Comrade Tapas Dutta was leaving them. Comrades Anil Sen, Provash Ghosh, Krishna Chakraborty and Asit Bhattacharya, members, Central Committee and Comrades Ranjit Dhar and Manik Mukherjee, Central Staff, grief-stricken yet calm and composed with determination and revolutionary purposiveness joined the last journey. Seated by the side of the bier were Comrades Provash Ghosh, Asit Bhattacharya, Ranjit Dhar and Manik Mukherjee while Comrades Anil Sen and Krishna Chakraborty, because of indisposition, were in the car that followed carrying heaps of flowers and wreaths. Then followed the members of the Orissa State Committee who had come along with the body of Comrade Tapas Dutta to take part in the final Last Journey. Thereafter moved the files of members of the West Bengal State Committee and then came thousands of comrades, Party workers, supporters, sympathizers, well-wishers of the party from

among the members of public, continuously joined en route by people of the locality which the procession went on winding through. It was a human wave, but the entire mass moved with silence, reverence and discipline. The only sounds were the singing of songs, the *Internationale* and the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, that batches of comrades sang continuously along the entire stretch. The city looked with admiration. Some had seen such processions during the last journeys of the other departed leaders of the same party SUCI, including the Last Journey of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in 1976. They knew it was nothing new for this party: the same reverence and discipline was sure to be repeated as many times as it may be required. Others, who had not had the occasion to see such procession earlier were simply wondering that how could such a vast mass of people, from elderly gray-haired to youngest kids, could move with such solemn discipline to mourn the death of their leader. They understood that the procession that had started from the Central Party Office at the Subodh Mullick Square and moved via Moulali, SN Banerjee Road, Esplanade, Chowringhee Road to Rashbehari Crossing was heading towards the Keoratala Burning Ghat in South Calcutta, a long way of several kilometers. It had started in the warm afternoon sun of winter and passed through the gradually cooling evening, to end in a chilling night when the procession would reach the burning ghat. But the mourners defied all these and looked only ahead of them to remain with their leader till his last remains were lost for ever. From there, the mourners knew, would they have to carry the legacy of their leader and fulfill his unaccomplished tasks. Nothing

Contd. on page 8

Machinating US imperialism

Contd. from page 6

known as "Truman Doctrine". By that, the US imperialism tried to stall all pro-people measures even of purely democratic reforms in these countries. In 1946, US imperialism established a Caribbean army training center in Panama, which was renamed in 1963 as the "School of America" (SOA) that trained indigenous army officials of Latin American countries serving US interest there. This produced many dictators in this region who were brutality personified. Even the American church bantered SOA as "School of Assassins". Later on, SOA was shifted to Fort Benning of Columbus, Georgia and renamed again to cover the sins associated with the name and was holed in "Pentagon". Some of the "products" of SOA may be named – Manuel Noreaga (President of Panama), General Hector Grahmese (Guatemala), Leocoldo Galotieri (Argentina), death squads Peru and Honduras, notorious army General Augusto Pinochet with 47 officials who led the coup d'etete of Chile (Alende) in 1973 and the like.

In 1948, US imperialism launched the 'Organization of American States' (OAS) to develop pan-American policy in Latin American countries that paved way for its naked intervention anytime on this or that pretext. In 1951, the creation of Mutual Security Act (MSA) rendered security of the region in US hands. In the same year when the democratic reformer Jacobo Arbenz of Guatemala declared redistribution of land to the tiller, it was condemned as 'communitistic' and he was under attack for that. In 1953, when D.D. Eisenhower replaced Truman as the President of US, the tirade against any kind of democratic reforms whatsoever in Latin American countries continued on a heightened note. In 1954, CIA-controlled invasion dethroned Arbenz in Guatemala to replace him by Casillo Armas. He was very close to US corporation of United Fruit Company. Trade Unions were banned, parties suspended, majority of voters disfranchised and at least nine thousand persons arrested with an unknown number killed. But despite all these atrocities Cuba, one of the important Latin American countries led by Fidel Castro accomplished socialist revolution in 1959 and established a socialist state in the very "backyard" of US

hegemonism.

Infuriated, US imperialism got its right personification in John F. Kennedy who became the US President in 1961 and did not miss to proclaim that he would "assist democratization of Latin America through socio-economic aid and thus inhibit the spread of communism." This, he called, the policy of "Alliance for progress", later on, renamed as the "modernization theory" aimed at 'modernizing' underdeveloped Latin America to combat communism.

But whether the "Monroe Doctrine" or Wilson's "Fight for Democracy" or Roosevelt's "Good Neighbourhood Policy" or Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress" – all these policies were deceptive formulations to hide brutal exploitation of those countries by US imperialist rulers pursuing hegemonistic aspirations in this region. In 1962, the constitutional government of Peru was overthrown by a military coup, President Prado was arrested and in his place was seated Colonel Gonzalo Bricens trained in SOA. In September 1963, the democratically elected President of Dominican Republic, Juan Bosch was ousted by military coup backed by US imperialism. In April, 1964, President Joao Goulart of Brazil was overthrown by a military coup masterminded by US imperialism. Since then, there was a 15-year long ruthless military rule in which thousands of people just "disappeared". In 1964, under the presidency of Lyndon Johnson, US imperialism ousted Cheddi Jagon of Guyana. In 1965, Johnson's American force directly occupied Dominican Republic. In 1973, US backed bloody coup d'etat killed Salvador Alende, the elected President of Chile known to be an ardent proponent of Marxism. The notorious Army General Augusto Pinochet, trained in SOA, replaced Alende. In 1978, when Sandinistas overthrew Somoza dictatorship, Nicaragua was under fierce attack by the US proxy army of CONTRAS formed of Somoza's National Guard. Nicaragua for the next eight years was made victim of widespread violence, killing, burning, rape, torture, bombing and strafing. In 1980s El Salvador was put under continual attack by the CIA backed military forces.

But, since the 1980s, especially after the great revolt of the popular forces led by Sandinistas, US

imperialism was compelled to move away from supporting dictatorship in these countries. In 1983, US imperialism put forward a new project "National Endowment for Democracy" (NED) which was funded by millions of dollars to export "Democracy, made-in-America". To curb the influence of leftist and other progressive forces, one of the main functions of the project was to finance two major bourgeois parties and ensure that parliamentary elections remain confined to those two contenders only so that it could be a "head you lose, tail I win" for US imperialist interest. To buttress this agenda, it created International Political Committee (IPC) to extend "aid, training and organizational support for foreign governments and private groups for democracy." The other impelling reasons for this overture were to diffuse the adverse reaction following publication of the reports of America's "Church Senate Committee", "The Pike House Committee" and "Rockefeller Commission" who exposed criminal activities of CIA in Latin America in the 70s. The US imperialists found that if they could give a coat of "democracy" to any of their policies, projects or missions, it facilitated eliciting endorsement from American Congress, the media, church and also the people. NED was a camouflage born out of this realization. So the '80s saw introduction of this NED funded by World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) with much fanfare. It was nothing but a vile doctrine of neo-colonialism, neo-liberalism. The Bank-Fund-Washington nexus was given a gaudy name of "Washington Consensus". Latin America thus became the first victim of guinea pig experiment of Bank-Fund slaughtering. It needs a bit more elaboration.

Under the axe of the "Washington Consensus"

Since the '80s "Neo-liberalism" was a new catchword in Latin America to mean thereby 'structural adjustment', dismantling of social protections for toiling people, trade liberalization, financial deregulation, privatization of state-run enterprises and 'marketisation' of everything. 'Washington Consensus' made way to unhindered access of the foreign enterprises to the region's natural and human

resources as well as financial markets. By taking away the hard-won labour rights and scrapping the social welfare schemes, it made the region attractive for global capital. The rulers of Latin American countries willy-nilly succumbed to its pressure and the people, within a short time felt the pinch in every sphere of their life — economic, social, political, and cultural. The 'Washington Consensus' did not seek a total repayment of debt, rather intended to keep the debt running so as to hold the debtor country as thrall. The neo-colonizers need not take charge through territorial occupation or annexation. They can pull strings from behind and operate through remote control. Let us cite some examples.

In Mexico, all the erstwhile state-owned basic or key industries including steel, telephone, copper, railway etc. numbering more than one thousand, were privatized. Mexican currency Peso was devalued twice between 1982 and 1994. Mexico became the largest exporter of cheap labour to US and the migrant workers were known as "unauthorized transient servants through a national guest work programme". Compelled to swallow "expand export" policy vended by US imperialists, Mexico became the premier supplier of agro-goods and beef when her own people were starving. Though beef was produced in abundance domestically, to the Mexicans, it posed to be a luxury item. Mexico's share of export revenue from oil was 70% but most of that was used for debt-servicing. In 1981-82, 2 lakh 40 thousand jobs were cut down along with substantial reduction in salary on the pretence of imposing 'austerity'.

Brazil turned herself to be a major exporter of soybean, orange juice, coffee and other agro-foods to US and was made to import from US wheat which is not an item of habitual consumption of the Brazilians. The staple food was for the rich. Subsidies in agriculture were slashed by IMF-dictate. The peasants got no benefit of export business.

Bolivian people of 6 million ('80s) sank into worst position – lowest GNP per capita, lowest literacy, highest infant mortality rate, lowest life expectancy. The government statistics in 1986 showed 50% of the rural women as malnourished, 70% of pregnant women along with 47% children

Contd. on page 8

Long Live Comrade Tapas Dutta

Contd. from page 4

would feel the radiant ardour in which the spirit of indomitable courage and undying patriotism emanated from the pulpit of gallows this great martyr embraced to awaken the people from slumber. Comrade Tapas Dutta, as sculptor of this masterpiece, won acclaim and admiration round the country. But he, as a true revolutionary, attributed this success to the guiding philosophy of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh thought that brought out the artist in him to set the million hearts aflame in revolutionary fervour. Without even a slightest of hesitation, he deposited to Party fund the entire money the state government paid to him for this stupendous work proving what height he ascended by that time in acquiring a true communist character. Everything material he had was handed over to the Party. So much praised was the Kshudiram statue that Central Government requested him to give a miniature model of a statue of Jawaharlal Nehru proposed to be installed outside Parliament. Comrade Tapas Dutta submitted the model in which he intelligently

portrayed the dual role of Nehru as a freedom fighter and then chief executive of exploiting bourgeois government. But so beautiful was that as a piece of art that the government immediately approved that. But then as per the decision of the Central Committee, he declined to accept the order saying that it was unbecoming of a revolutionary to make idol of a caretaker of oppressive bourgeois state. In 1997, at the behest of Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, our beloved General Secretary, Comrade Tapas Dutta made a full figure statue of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh for installation at the Study Centre of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought at Ghatshila in Jharkhand state. A host of foreign delegates who came down to Calcutta at that time for participating in an anti-imperialist convention became spellbound at the creation and acknowledged to have had a glimpse of the revolutionary personality of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in this exquisite creation. He used to feel deep pain and anguish at any incident of destruction or deformation of any great piece of art. He was visibly upset when

incensed mob at the instigation of Hindu communalists destroyed Babri Masjid in 1992 and outraged when invading US army ransacked and demolished the famous museum of Baghdad in 2003. He was also a great connoisseur of music and could sing himself as well.

He was a fatherly figure to all comrades who had opportunity to come in contact with him. With utmost care, love and affection, he, on the lines of the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, reared and steered the comrades in developing into worthy revolutionaries by releasing all-embracing struggle and wading all hazards and hassles.

Particularly the Orissa comrades felt the warmth of his lively association and found way out to all problems, personal as well as organizational, under his able guidance. His emotion for the comrades was impersonal, while his care for developing each comrade was personal.

With the demise of Comrade Tapas Dutta, the Party has lost a time-tested revolutionary leader, a true disciple of Comrade Shibdas

Ghosh and an artist of reckoning even of the highest order. The kind of artistic talent Comrade Tapas Dutta possessed could easily fetch him money, fame, recognition of the establishment and a so-called settled luxurious life. History is full of such examples where talents even significantly lower to what Comrade Tapas Dutta had, fell victim to such temptation and though having been initially in social movement, abandoned the path of struggle, embraced compromise and sold their talent for self-aggrandizement. But his was a completely different genre. With disdain he overcame all this lure of lucre as soon as he could realize by coming in contact with Comrade Shibdas Ghosh that dignity of life lies in fighting against injustice, aberration, discrimination, inequality, all sorts of oppression, suppression and exploitation. This is most honourable a life, noblest, fulfilling and a true embodiment of human essence. So he remained steadfast in pursuing his revolutionary objective, unrelenting in discharging social obligation as a true detached vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat and through a lifelong struggle set an example worth emulating. Long live Comrade Tapas Dutta !

Latin America

Contd. from page 7

anaemic. In '81-'86, 42% of export revenues were spent for interest of World Bank loan. On the other hand. Drug trade, legal or illegal cocaine export to consumer US was used as excuse for interference by the US hegemony.

In 1986, Peru was put in 'pariah' list (bankrupt) by IMF and Guyana followed. Entire oil of a small country like Ecuador (10.2 million people) went to US. 80% of the people there were below poverty level of which 20% in a total impecunious stage. Costa Rica tried to free herself from the loan burden selling coffee to USSR. US rulers retaliated by engineering ouster of the country's President. Repayment liability of Latin America climbed to astronomical levels with no end in sight.

The story of pauperization is common to all the countries of Latin America under "Washington Consensus". So, the one time

Brazilian labour leader Luis Ignacio Silva (later became the country's President) said in Havana debt conference in August 1985, "without being radical or overly bold, I will tell you that the third world war has already started – a silent war, not for the reason any the less sinister. This war is tearing down Brazil, Latin America and practically the third world. Instead of soldiers dying, there were children, instead of millions of wounded there are millions of unemployed; instead of destruction of bridges there is the tearing down of factories, schools, hospitals and entire economies ... it is a war by the United States against the Latin American continent and the third world. It is a war over the foreign debt, one which has its main weapon interest, a weapon more deadly than the atom bomb, more shattering than a laser beam."

(To be continued)

The Last Journey

Contd. from page 5

could and should hold them back or deviate them.

En route, immediately after starting from the Central Party Office, the procession halted for some time in front of the central office of the UTUC-LS of which Comrade Tapas Dutta had been the General Secretary for a long time and under banner of which he had organized so many movements of workers of different sectors in the country. Trade union leaders of different unions and the UTUC-LS placed wreaths in memory of Comrade Tapas Dutta when the carrier reached them. In addition, different local Party units of the Calcutta District Committee paid their tributes when the procession passed through their localities.

Darkness was already there in the sky. It was quite late in the evening. It was chill all around. Only the burning ghast was busy. There were so many dead bodies

already there awaiting funeral. So, there had to be a long wait. But the comrades, right from the Central Committee members carrying on the behest entrusted to them by Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, the beloved General Secretary of the Party, down to the ordinary comrades stood rock-firm at their posts. They left, some weeping, some crying and others holding their breath to prevent tears from coming down, only when the mortal remains of their endeared 'Tapas-da' was no longer there. What remained, was his memory and the cherished legacy, bequeathed upon them from their precious comradeship as followers of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought.

The air rent with slogans —
 "Long Live Comrade Tapas Dutta"
 "Tapas-da, We Won't Forget You"
 "Long Live Revolution"
 "Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought!"

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE