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Founder Editor-in-Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

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“Hence, in the united movement, we observe two main ingredients that work against unity : one is coercion and the other sectarian attitude. Apart from this, ... the over-sensitiveness of some of the revolutionaries who fear that if they have any association or work together with the non-revolutionaries, they would lose their revolutionary character. Marxists, particularly Comrade Lenin had sounded a note of caution time and again against this tendency. He once said that those who cannot work together with their enemies, with foes and non-revolutionaries, if need be, having failed to recognize the need of revolution, the necessity of unity that has arisen in the course of revolution, are in fact haunted by their own shadow. They are frightened having seen their own spectre within themselves. Actually they lack firmness of character. They are no revolutionaries. They must know how to work with all, even with difficult people. Revolutionaries must have the ability and strong base of character to work with anyone. But the wish or capability to work with anyone does not mean, ipso facto, that working with anybody will be possible. The question of working with one and all depends on many a factor. These constitute the main reason why splits occurred time and again in the unity of the trade union movement in India.”

[From 'On Preserving Unity In and Establishing Revolutionary Leadership on Workers' Movement' — speech at the delegate session of the Conference of Steel Workers' Co-ordination Committee, Durgapur, delivered on March 18, 1974.]

On the occasion of 60th anniversary of SUCI on April 24, 2008, we take firm resolve to accomplish Indian revolution guided by his illumining thoughts

Build up countrywide intense united democratic movement based on specific demands to resist latest unprecedented price rise

The fangs of savage economic assault on the toiling millions by ruling capitalism are now poised to snatch away even the last morsels of food from them. Already the people are gasping under savage fiscal attacks, mounting unemployment, massive retrenchment and lay-off, fall in real wages and rapid decline in purchasing power. It is a suffocating situation that is making it extremely difficult to eke out a bare living. On the top of it has come the recent attack of harrowing price rise. While systematic price spiral is inevitability in ruthlessly exploitative capitalist system now enmeshed in an insurmountable

market crisis endemic of the system, the spurt witnessed in the last few months particularly of cereal, pulses, edible oil and vegetables has been menacingly threatening to the very survival of the toiling millions. The Congress-led CPI(M) backed UPA government who hitherto was merrily vending a 'growth' story and fable of 'inclusive development' suddenly finds all its camouflages torn asunder to bare the ugly facet of the reality. Bewildered, the government is now desperately trying to hold out that this surge is on account of sharp increase in the global commodity prices and demand outstripping supply. An

insinuation is also being made that because of economic growth, there is excess money in the hands of the people leading to inflation and hence the price spiral. Pretending to be extremely concerned about the situation, the central cabinet announced slash in duties and ban on export of certain food items. But the common man going to market everyday knows that there is no impact of these much-trumpeted measures on the soaring price line. The situation is extremely grave.

Why this price rise?

The first question that arises in every mind is that what is triggering

this price rise on a sustained basis? Is it just because of some exclusive faulty policy of any particular government? The answer is no. This is spawning from the very capitalist system bestriding the country like a dead weight. In a capitalist economy, there is bound to be a steady nosedive in the purchasing power of the people as production does not take place with the objective of meeting the need of the people but to earn maximum profit for the owner of the means of production. And the owning capitalist class can not earn maximum profit unless it deprives

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Hoarding, black marketing, speculative manipulation, rampant corruption triggering price spiral

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the labour of its due legitimate wage and squeezes the buying people even to their last drop of blood. The price is so fixed as to ensure this maximization of profit. In the process, real income of the people falls, purchasing power depletes causing production to stagnate. The capitalist owners face market crisis, close factories entailing more job loss and mounting unemployment resulting in further fall in people's purchasing power. But the profit greed of the blood-sucking capitalists does not wane. They continue to adopt all dirty tricks to swell their coffer by accentuating the squeezing act. So they create artificial scarcity by hoarding, resort to all kinds of manipulative tactics including large scale speculation to soar up prices and sell the commodities in black market at exorbitant price with impunity. When the people of the country starve, the capitalist owners do not mind exporting essential foodgrains to fetch maximum profit. This crisis-ridden decadent moribund capitalism is ruthless, heartless, unfeeling, and corrupt to the backbone. To it, only one thing counts — maximization of profit. So this is a system based on discrimination, inequality, swindling, defrauding and deprivation. Hence it is futile to expect that so long as this capitalist system exists, there can be any fundamental change in the situation.

There is another aspect and that is in regard to inflation. Put in simple terms, inflation indicates excess money circulation compared to goods and commodities up for sale. If too much of money chase too little goods, it is normally called an inflationary situation. Capitalist class and its ideologues as well as economists often try to explain this inflation as a sign of prosperity by arguing that more money has come in the hands of the people. The deception lies here. As any sensible mind will understand, in a system mount on inequality, there can not be equitable distribution of 'prosperity' or 'development'. It has to be discriminatory and heavily tilted to the class in power and its privileged lackeys. In capitalism also, the yawning gap between the handful of rich and myriads of poor is widening every moment. So

wealth is getting concentrated in the hands of the owners and affluent. Hence the system is not generating prosperity for all but breeding fortune for handfuls while certain aberrations in the system are causing the inflation. As we have discussed many a times in the pages of Proletarian Era, the governments irrespective of hues and subserving capitalist class interest are remaining indulgent onlooker to huge generation of black money. Moreover, the governments on many occasions had undertaken easiest way of printing additional currency notes to finance budget deficits—the practice normally known as deficit financing. Moreover, of late here is huge inflow of foreign currency in speculative capital market operations against which the Reserve Bank of India has to release domestic currency in the market. In order to inflate foreign currency reserve particularly dollar in the kitty so that rupee appreciates in comparison to dollar, Reserve Bank of India often purchases floating dollars from the market by paying in terms of rupees. Accumulated effect of all this is causing increased currency circulation and hence exerting inflationary pressure. The government all through was claiming pegging down the inflation rate around 3 to 4%. But now despite all manoeuvres, suppressions and manipulations, it is admitted to have touched 7.4%. Year-on-year inflation rates for vegetables, pulses and oilseed were 29%, 24% and 27% respectively. Inflation experienced by primary articles stood at 12.3% as per government data.

Bite of capitalist globalization

We now turn to certain specific factors behind galloping rise in the prices of foodgrains and such other essential items. It is argued by the government that it needs to improve the supply side. In other words, it admits shortage of supply. But what caused this supply? If facts are presented in sequence, the government would be caught in its own web. It till the other day was boasting of increase in food production. In the Economic Survey of 2007 (i.e. last year), foodgrain production reported was 209.2 million metric ton, slightly higher

than 208.6 million metric ton reported in 2005-06. It was also reported that wheat was sown in an extra 17.5 lakhs hectares and production of wheat and pulses were expected to increase by 4.5% and 8.2% respectively. There was reportedly abundance in sugar production and good harvest of onions and cereals. But it did not reach the people but shipped overseas to 'boost export'. When domestic price began rising, the government was found importing back these items at much higher price to 'improve supply position'. "In wheat, State trading Corporation tendered overseas for 55 tonnes of wheat, private trade was permitted to import wheat at zero duty from September 9, 2006 and exports were banned from February 9, 2007. In pulses, imports were allowed at zero duty from June 9, 2006... Exports grew fast, but import grew faster." (Economic Survey, 2007) Traders thus reaped twin benefits of both export and import while country's people bled white.

The position is unaltered in the current year as well. "Foodgrain production is estimated at 219.32 metric tonne for 2007-08, compared to 217.28 mt, which is the final estimate of last year," Agriculture Secretary P K Mishra said the other day. When asked about the lower projection of wheat output, Mishra said: "It is a conservative estimate and is almost the same as last year. The way weather conditions have been favourable so far, I think we will cross 75 mt." Rice output is estimated at record 94.08 mt, compared to 93.35 million tons during the review period, while maize production is expected at record 16.78 mt, against 15.10 mt. (ET- 07-02-2008) India's sugar output is also envisaged to fall next year. Output in the year to Sept. 30, 2009, might total 22 million metric tons compared with 26 million tons forecast for this year, S.L. Jain, director general of the Indian Sugar Mills Association, said in Mumbai. Production was 28.3 million tons last season. India may sell more sugar abroad this year than previously forecast as mills boost shipments before the government scraps a subsidy in October, seven months sooner than planned. Statistics available with the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies also

reflect the precarious situation, with the buffer stocks of both wheat and rice below the minimum level set by the government. The stocks of these two commodities available in government warehouses were 19.2 million tons in January against the minimum norm of 20 million tons. This is a sharp decline from the level of 24.4 million tons in January 2004. In fact, the bourgeois government earlier brought forth the theory that a buffer stock creation was being resorted to so that in case of price increase due to supply shortage, this stock would be drawn upon to make good the shortfall. But that too has become a thing of the past.

This apart, the rate of growth of food grain production actually decelerated to 1.2 per cent between 1990 and 2007, lower than the annual average population growth of 1.9 per cent, official data showed. "The chances of having a food crisis can't be ruled out if the government does not take corrective measures by increasing the productivity of farmers," said Devinder Sharma, a food and agriculture policy analyst. (Arab News April 2, 2008) It is thus clear that there is discernible decline in the food production. Interestingly, when the production was falling, the government was pointing at increased surplus (production over consumption) to claim overproduction completely suppressing the fact that this build-up was happening because per head demand was falling (due to continuous pauperization of the people particularly the rural people) even faster than per head output was declining. This decision on the part of the impoverished people to lower consumption was not voluntary but under compelling situation of plummeting purchasing power.

What is worth noting is that when food production is going down, the government instead of laying due importance and emphasis on increasing the output of food crops, are criminally allowing thousands of hectares of land to remain fallow and unused, despite enormous scope of their turning into fertile lands through application of modern technology prevailing, and which all the experts in agriculture are stressing upon unequivocally, the government is criminally

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SUCI West Bengal State Committee on Bidhan Chatterjee's letter and his subsequent unnatural death

Bidhan Chatterjee who was a member of the West Bengal State Committee of the party wrote a letter to the party leadership which reached the party office on April 8, 2008. Thereafter, for two days he remained untraceable. On April 10, evening media reported that he had committed suicide in a guest house in Puri, Orissa. The letter was an extremely distasteful and slanderous one containing some totally baseless and false allegations against the party leadership. Right at the same time, it was known that, different news media, more so some particular TV channels had also received copies of the same letter and those channels had, by that time, very hastily started to give that letter wide publicity. It was in that background, on April 9, an emergent extended meeting of the West Bengal State Committee of the party was held in Calcutta. It discussed the issue in details and finally reached some unanimous decisions. Soon after, Comrade Provas Ghosh, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee, issued the following press statement on April 10, 2008 morning explaining the situation and the decisions arrived at :

A letter of Bidhan Chatterjee containing filthy and baseless allegations against our party and party leaders has been made public in the news media. People of the state have been witnessing for long that our party, on the basis of noble ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought, has been waging relentless struggles against all anti-people policies and programmes of the Central and the state governments, playing its historic role as a revolutionary party with a revolutionary ideology, higher ethics and morality and strict discipline. Our party has played an important role in the recent Singur-Nandigram movements too. Naturally, a high regard, feeling of trust and emotion about our party have gradually developed among the people. In such a situation, this letter of Bidhan Chatterjee has surprised many. The question whether there is any conspiracy behind it, has also arisen. So, it is necessary to state the party's stand on this issue for the knowledge of all.

It should be made known that the Central Committee of our party has been for sometime conducting a revitalization and consolidation movement within the party with the object of further strengthening and consolidating the party ideologically, ethically and organizationally with a view to further strengthening and intensifying the working class struggles and the mass movements on the burning problems of the people's life and as also to organizing an international anti-imperialist movement in face of the imperialist attacks on different countries including Iraq. The aim of this movement is to resist the creeping in of bourgeois ideology

and culture into the party and to help and equip the leaders and workers at all levels to keep themselves free of shortcomings and deviations and weaknesses of all sorts. With this object, a widespread movement of criticism-self criticism has been going on at all levels of the party. Booklets and articles on this have been published by the party. Participating in this movement, many leaders and party workers are unreservedly admitting their mistakes with an honest mind and carrying on the struggle to free themselves from their shortcomings.

For quite some time, various complaints and criticisms about Bidhan Chatterjee too were coming up in the party. The leadership repeatedly tried to alert him about and rectify his deviations like ultra-individualistic tendencies, lust for high posts, self-conceitedness, naked expression of craving for self-publicity and vanity, collecting funds immorally without the knowledge of the party and squandering of money, a revengeful attitude towards anybody who criticized him, passing distasteful remarks about the leaders and workers anywhere and everywhere violating accepted norms and processes of the party, violating also the party decisions and discipline if these were not to his liking, serious lapses in performing his duties, leading an undisciplined, individualistic life, concealing many things from the party, forming impressions about events or persons on his own without collective discussion and expressing the same here and there and holding bourgeois populist conduct, all alien to communist characters. But alerts and suggestions from the leadership fell flat and his degeneration went on deepening. As some party

workers recently raised serious charges against him about some of his activities and conduct, three senior leaders, Comrades Anil Sen, Ranjit Dhar and Manik Mukherjee asked him to come to the party central office at 4 p.m. on 8th April last to place his views about the charges raised against him and to discuss the matter. Bidhan Chatterjee agreed to come. But finally instead of coming, he sent a letter containing false charges and arranged for wide publicity of that letter in different news media. Here he made use of the scopes he had earned of late, by virtue of his being entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining links with the media to send and publish party news. Some leaders of the CPI(M) also particularly helped Bidhan Chatterjee in this.

People know that the CPI(M), for long, has been infuriated against the SUCI, particularly, after being forced to re-introduce English at the primary education level, for our role in the Singur-Nandigram movement, for the Trinamool-SUCI combined movements against the central and the state governments and for participation in the coming Panchayat polls. All this have made the CPI(M) more alarmed and infuriated. So, in such a situation, in a conspiracy to tarnish the bright image of the SUCI imprinted in the mass mind, they enthusiastically arranged wide publicity of Bidhan Chatterjee's letter in some news media. People know it well at the same time that the same media seldom publish many important news about our party.

Incidentally, the charges raised in Bidhan Chatterjee's letter are not just false; he never raised these questions within the party at any stage. The content of the letter, the manner of expression and language of the letter betray a low standard and a bad taste. No one with a healthy state of mind and sound ethical standard can indulge in these. It is clear that as a result of being thoroughly degenerated, he has become involved in a well-planned conspiracy to tarnish the image of the party out of personal grievance, grudge and revengefulness and from the fear of being criticized. It is also clear that he has fallen victim to a conspiracy, which itself would be responsible for any outcome that may befall

him.

The image of our party is not built upon the support of any news media, or the strength of holding ministerial chairs, or of the number of MLAs or MPs. It has developed through the continuous, intensive practice of the noble Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought, the intense cultivation of higher revolutionary culture and the observance of strict discipline within the party. It has grown through mass movements and working class struggles developed at the cost of the blood and self-sacrifice of innumerable leaders and workers. Our leaders have no personal property or separate individual life. The leaders live along with the workers in Party Communes and Party Centres where everything is open and un concealed from others there. Many people are aware of this practice of ours. The party activities are sustained on the funds collected from people, either from door-to-door fund raising drives in the localities or through street collections from the members of the public at large. This, too, is quite known to the people of the state. The CPI(M) could not stall the progress of our party at all, by even murdering over 150 of our workers, subjecting 29 of our leaders and workers to life imprisonment, implicating them in false cases and by spreading many a calumny and slander earlier to this present one. This time, too, however, much they may try to malign our party by using Bidhan Chatterjee's letter as a weapon, their vile effort will go in vain. This is what everybody firmly believes.

It is necessary to inform all that Bidhan Chatterjee was not that important a leader of the party, he being one of the 38 members of the State Committee. But he used to be always busy in projecting himself as a big leader before the media.

While, on the one hand, this outcome of Bidhan Chatterjee's degeneration is painful, on the other, there is a lesson to be taken from this. If any leader or worker at any level continues to deviate on and on from the revolutionary ideology, politics, culture and discipline, if he attaches no value to the criticism of the party, and places himself above everything else, he is bound to continuously fall victim to

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SUCI launches movement against exorbitant price rise

Against the spiralling and unprecedented rise in the prices of all essential commodities, our party SUCI, staged demonstrations etc. in different parts of the country.

Delhi State Committee of SUCI held a protest demonstration in **New Delhi**, on April 9. On being stopped by the police, the protesters held a meeting at Parliament Street which was addressed by leaders like Comrades Pratap Samal, A.K.

Mazumdar, Harish Tyagi and R.K. Sharma.

On April 9, a mass demonstration was also held in **Patna**, Bihar which ended in front of the Collectorate office. Patna District Secretary of SUCI, Comrade Shiblal Jadav, as also Comrades Sadhana Mishra, Suryakar Jitendra and others addressed the gathering. A charter of demand was submitted to the district authority.



Protest demonstration in New Delhi, on April 9, 2008

Statement of W B State Committee

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bourgeois politics and culture and ultimately become utterly degenerated. At the meeting of the West Bengal State Committee held on April 9 last, all the members firmly concluded that the charge raised by him were frivolous; they condemned his anti-party conspiratorial action in unambiguous terms and took the decision to expel him from the party with the approval of the Central Committee. We hope that the news media, in the interest of honest and impartial journalism will publicize this statement of the State Committee giving it the same importance as they have given to the allegations made by Bidhan Chatterjee and the news related to it.

Addendum: It was learnt towards the evening on April 10 that Bidhan Chatterjee had been found dead in a hotel-room at Puri in Orissa. Thereafter, on April 11, in answer to questions of the reporters, Comrade Provas Ghosh said : To whatsoever extent anti-party activities Bidhan Chatterjee might have carried out, such a tragic death of his is really painful to us. We would have liked to see him alive; for that we had been searching everywhere for him. When the

media persons commented that Bidhan Chatterjee had held Provas Ghosh responsible for such an end of his, Comrade Provas Ghosh replied : Yes, in a sense I am responsible. In fact, as the State Secretary it is my responsibility to help each and every leader and cadre of West Bengal develop as a communist and maintain his or her standard. But in spite of my efforts, I could not save Bidhan Chatterjee from his moral degeneration. I cannot disown that responsibility of mine.

When the media persons asked further why such allegations are being raised against SUCI leaders, Comrade Provas Ghosh said : Myself and my colleague-comrades are mere ordinary organizers in revolutionary movements. You must be aware that ideologically degenerated and morally degraded people and reactionary forces have often given vent to much filthier slanders against many eminent characters including great communist leaders. Those have found their place only in the garbage of history. Leaders and cadres of our party know me and my colleague-comrades closely; common people, even workers of other parties, too, know us well.

Exploitation of immigrant Indian workers in USA

On behalf of the International Anti-imperialist and People's Solidarity Coordinating Committee (IAPSCC), General Secretary, Manik Mukherjee has said the following in a statement :

"The strike of the Indian shipyard workers in Pascagoula, Mississippi and Orange, Texas has once again brought to light the sordid underbelly of the economy of the richest imperialist country USA. Exploitation of immigrant workers in sweat shops and factories flouting the labour laws is rampant in USA. The Indian workers were brought into USA with false promises of a rich future in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to provide cheap labour and services. They were herded into labour camps to work as forced labour in the shipyard and were forced to live like slaves under inhuman living conditions in the camps. They were under constant threat of deportation by the labour bosses. When some workers started to organize they were sacked and armed guards were sent to threaten the workers. The IAPSCC registers its protests against such human trafficking and demands that the workers must be given their fair wages and be provided with decent living conditions and that their rights as workers be protected. We urge the Indian Government to take up the issue with the US administration for protecting the rights of the striking workers.

JPA on the sixth CPC report

In his initial reaction to the report of the 6th Central Pay Commission, Comrade Achintya Sinha, all India President of the Joint Platform of Action (JPA) of Government and Associate Services Employees' Organizations, said that as forewarned and apprehended by the JPA, the recommendations of the Commission stand detrimental to the legitimate interests of the employees. He said that contrary to the long-standing demands of employees' movement to reduce the gap between the minimum and the maximum salaries, the Commission has widened it, making the maximum salary over 15 times higher than the minimum salary. For general employees, the 'big hike' is a big joke, because it denies even the irreducible minimum wage of more than Rs 13,600.00 as on 1.1.2006, as recommended by the 15th ILC and later upheld by the apex court of the country. Comrade Sinha pointed out that, among these and other recommendations, the proposed Performances Related Incentive Scheme (PRIS) is the most dangerous and deceitful. The proposal of paying the incentive from the savings accruing on account of downsizing and outsourcing would simply facilitate increased resorting to the said two measures along with causing a rift among the employees and strengthening the hands of the bureaucracy.

Manik Mukherjee attends Press Conference at Cuban Embassy

The Embassy of the Republic of Cuba, New Delhi, invited our party to a press conference on 3rd April 2008. On behalf of our party Comrade Manik Mukherjee, Central Staff and Deputy, International Affairs, attended the press conference. Comrade Fernando Ramirez de Estenoz, Head of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, who had been visiting India, addressed the press conference.

Comrade Abelardo Cueto Sosa, in-charge of the Asia-Oceania area of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party along with the Political Councilor of the Cuban Embassy, Comrade Indira Lopez had a thorough discussion with Comrade Manik Mukherjee on party-to-party relation between SUCI and the Communist Party of Cuba. In course of the discussion the Cuban representatives assured to restore the party-to-party relation that was eventually not maintained during the last eight years.

On the issue of joining the International Anti-imperialist and People's Solidarity Coordinating Committee (IAPSCC), the Cuban representatives expressed solidarity to our initiative; but as they were preoccupied with the task of maintaining relation with large number of Latin American countries, they expressed their inability to actively join the committee. They, however, pledged to continue their help and assistance to the global anti-imperialist struggles.

All India Conference of UTUC-Lenin Sarani

Vows to develop workers' political power to overthrow capitalist rule

Pledged to free workers from exploitation and equipped with the invaluable teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, the UTUC-LS held its 19th All India Conference in New Delhi from 27 to 29 March, 2008, with the open session at the Ram Lila Maidan and the delegate session at Shah Auditorium, Shammath Marg.

The conference came in culmination of a countrywide massive campaigning and public meetings, as well as relentless movements organized by the UTUC-LS involving all sections of workers of both organized and unorganized sectors. It had not only helped UTUC-LS increase its membership to more than 22 lakhs. The impact was evident also in the massive gathering at the Ramlila Maidan, where thousands of delegates and participants streamed in from different corners of Delhi and from across the country to voice their protest against grinding oppression and exploitation under the capitalist rule of the country, which, at the same time, is giving effect to the devastating imperialist policies of globalization-liberalization and privatization. Fraternal delegates from abroad-Comrades Zelikov Borisovich from All Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Russia, Cai Yide and Wu Chuan Hua from China, Quim Boix, General Secretary of the Spanish Communist Party as also the Incharge of the Trade Union and Foreign Affairs and Razequzzaman Ratan from Socialist Labour Front of Bangladesh, graced the occasion by their presence and participation. Representatives of other central trade unions of the country were also present as a mark of fraternity.

The session began with the rendition of the song on the departed beloved leader and former President of UTUC-LS, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and was presided over by Comrade Krishna Chakraborti, President of UTUC-LS. Conveying their greetings to the Conference, delegates from abroad presented their views. Comrade Zelikov Borisovich drew attention to the intense crisis of US imperialism, which faces mounting unemployment and growing

recession and called upon the workers to be more militant so as to give defeat to this crisis-ridden world capitalist-imperialist system led by US Imperialism. Comrade Quim Boix narrated the instance of militant movements of workers in Spain having become victorious and pointed out possibilities of similar victories in the working class struggles in India and the rest of the world. Comrade Cai Yide of China, with Comrade Hua acting as translator, commended the role played by UTUC-LS in the working class movement in India and expressed solidarity with the UTUC-LS. Comrade Razequzzaman Ratan highlighted that the Conference is taking place at a time when the working class is bursting out in violent protests against the misery inflicted by capitalist exploitation and by globalization in particular. He said that unless the working class movement is led by a great thought, it will not succeed in achieving its objective.

Comrade Shankar Saha, General Secretary of the UTUC-LS, in his speech dealt on the all pervasive and devastating effect of capitalist globalization on the lives of workers, which render them jobless through lockout, layoffs, retrenchment and job cuts, while making those who are still in service doomed to perpetual insecurity, their rights, acquired through great struggles, being denied more and more. Defining the objectives of the Conference, he said that it was not a mere ritual but a constant struggle to revitalize the organization, right from the grassroot to the highest level. To change the society, workers need to acquire a higher character and culture and their struggles must be based on a great ideology. He vowed that UTUC-LS guided by the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh would steel the working class movement and lead it on to the path of anti-capitalist Socialist Revolution.

Comrade Krishna Chakraborti, President of UTUC-LS, in his Presidential address, greeted the delegates from abroad and indicated the historic juncture at which the Conference was taking place, when, on one hand, capitalism-

imperialism had launched the world over, an all out attack on the working class, while on the other, the workers were bursting out in anger and resentment, as it is evident from the massive protest demonstrations against the meetings of the WTO or from the militant massive trade union movements coming up in this or that part of the world. The conspiracy of globalization, he explained, was nothing but an attempt to stave off the inevitable doom of moribund capitalism-imperialism and extend the lease of its life. As Lenin showed by elaborating Marxism this is not only the era of imperialism, but also of proletarian revolution. By building a genuine proletarian party based on Marxism-Leninism he had led the Russian revolution which became an inspiration for the working class the world over. China, Vietnam and Cuba too accomplished their revolution and so will India, if the conscious proletariat can build up a correct revolutionary working class party of their own based on Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought and can strengthen it to rise up to the tasks..

Comrade Chakraborti showed how the pseudo-Marxists like CPI, CPI(M) were only social democratic parties, even the worst kind of them, as the CPI(M) had amply demonstrated through its naked subservience to capitalism in the Nandigram incident where it used violence unleashed by the police and its goons to crush a democratic movement. To quell the spirit of the movement, the party even resorted to mass rape of the women, valiantly fighting to save their land and livelihood. CPI(M) is implementing all the imperialist policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization in the states where it is in power while it is making a show of protest where it is not.

Comrade Chakraborti added further how capitalism-imperialism and capitalist globalization in particular have wrought havoc in the lives of peasants pushing them to commit suicide. The all-out attack of globalization is extended beyond economy, to culture and education as well. The ruling class foments and encourages divisive

tendencies through inciting regionalism, communalism, parochialism and such others to shatter the unity of toiling people.

He urged that the working class of the country will have to build up a powerful instrument of its own based on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh Thought to accomplish the revolution. The capitalists' desperate bid to survive is only the last bite of a dying dog. He hoped that the Conference will lead to develop that political power of the workers to overthrow the capitalist class from power.

The delegate session which commenced on 28 March was also presided over by Comrade Krishna Chakraborti. It began with the rendition of the Internationale. Messages of solidarity received from trade unions around the world, were read out by Comrade Shankar Saha.

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Centre of India and Advisor UTUC-LS, said in his message that apart from the bourgeois trade unions, even the so-called Left unions were overtly or covertly helping implementation of the anti-working class policies of globalization. He said that it was therefore the historic responsibility of UTUC-LS to free the trade union movement from these vices and transform it into a 'school of communism'.

Among the other messages received were those from Lic Gilda Chacon Bravo, Coordinator, International Department CTC Cuba, Ana Yanez from Venezuela, Ramon Cardona, Secretary (America) of WFTU, Tan Bich Thuy, International Department CGTV, Vietnam, Francisco Salvador Garcia Trujillo of Front of Salvadorian Trade Unions, Victor Mendibil, Secretary CTA, Argentina, Jean-Pierre Page, former CC member of Communist Party of France, AGWU from Mauritius, Ethiopian Trade Unions Confederation, Maria Pimental on behalf of the leadership of CGTB Brazil, Yousaf Baloch Of National Trade Union Federation and Nasir Iqbal of Labour Education Foundation, Pakistan. In one voice, the messages expressed the need for

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Anti-people policies of the government abetting skyrocketing of prices

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ignoring it. Not only has it not taken any remedial steps to increase the production internally by expanding the areas of agricultural land, there is a spree of destroying even vast stretches of fertile multi-crop lands in the name of so-called industrialization and setting up Special Economic Zones, conclaves of accelerated exploitation in a globalized economy. Following this policy all the state governments aided and abetted by the central government are through muscle flexing forcibly snatching such lands from the farmers, killing them in hundreds and evicting them from their hearth and possession.

Further, ever since the ruling Indian bourgeoisie, as inalienable part of world imperialism-capitalism seeking to provide extra lease to its moribund life by hook or by crook, introduced the model of capitalist globalization that called for gradual withdrawal of food subsidy, dismantling of whatever little mechanism was there for regulating prices of essential commodities through government intervention, rendering the Public Distribution System (PDS) introduced under public pressure defunct and allowing free entry of private players in the agricultural production, things started to get from bad to worse. From 1997 onwards, says a report, the

government started cutting allocations of foodgrains under PDS by taking an average of the preceding 10 years as an indication of what the allocation should be. As we said earlier, dwindling purchasing power coupled with mounting unemployment forced the toiling masses to buy less food. Progressive increase in the PDS tariff also contributed to that. And pointing towards this reduced consumption rate, the government concluded that PDS allocations were to be drastically slashed. This is bourgeois government's way of assessing demand and addressing supply needs.

In fact, there is a concerted attempt on the part of both central as well as the state governments to gradually dismantle the system and shirk off their responsibility to provide essential food and other items to the common people at affordable price. The modus operandi, as we had stated many a time earlier, is simple. Deliberately, sub-standard and even rotten stuff is being supplied. Progressively, the quantity is being cut. Also the number of items to be distributed through the rationing is being systematically reduced. Moreover, though the PDS distribution outlets are called fair price shops, there is steady escalation in the tariff so much as to be on par with open market.

Even there is institutionalized flaw or fraud in procurement of food items from the peasants. We know that the peasants do never get remunerative price for their produces. Here also is extended the tooth and claw of capitalist globalization. For example, despite all limitations and shortcomings, a kind of government machinery operated in buying agricultural produces from the farmers. A calculation shows that by the end of 1980s, 45% of the foodgrain sales were made through Food Corporation of India at a minimum support price and the private traders to some extent were restrained from jacking up open market price much higher than fair price shops of rationing system. But as the PDS was being gradually given a decent burial, the government also slowly began to withdraw from the scene allowing private parties to establish their hold in the arena. In 2005, the government amended the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) act to accord legal sanction to this. As per the original Act, agricultural produces were sold by the peasants in the APMC yard to a group of merchants licensed by the APMC, a body elected by the peasants. Notwithstanding many limitations, APMC had some control over the merchants and some kind of pricing mechanism operated. By amendment, a parallel private market besides APMC yards was established opening direct purchase centres, promoting private-public partnership for management and development of agricultural markets and contract farming arrangement. The private operators were expected to come forward with better prices, corner the produces and render the APMC yards defunct. Once the process was complete, these private operators would begin dictating terms, fleece and exploit the peasants and force them to opt for cash crops instead of foodgrains to maximize their profit greed. Exactly that has started happening. Monopoly retail chains, both domestic and foreign, have already captured a sizeable part of the market. While the peasants are denied remunerative price, retail prices are soaring sky high to suffocate the common consumers. It is these middlemen and private traders who are fattening their purse

by pocketing the differential amount through such manipulations. Moreover, while PDS is being run down, the peasants were lured to opt for growing millets, cotton, coffee, pepper or sunflower which had profit-potential in foreign market. It is reported that nearly 8 million hectares of our agricultural land have been shifted to horticultural crops, cotton, sugarcane but the peasants who took to these crops have ultimately not benefited since they have been ruined by exposure to sharp price declines in overseas market as whatever little protection was there was removed. This was one of the reasons for cotton farmers to commit suicide en masse. The logic on the part of the power that be was simple. There was no need to worry about food security. Let the monopoly-controlled supermarkets be the order-givers for agricultural producers even if that means mass shifting from essential food crop production to other items. In case it is so warranted, food stuff would be imported. And if the import cost was higher, the burden would be on the end consumers. Thus the whole agriculture production has been placed at the mercy of the profit-sucking profit sharks and the common people are paying the price.

Moreover, there is neck-deep corruption at every level of operation. As per a government study, not even 25% of the food reaches the poor—most of it is sold in the black market. (Arun Firodia's article in Times of India 28-02-07) This happens at the very nose of the governments and the ruling parties, irrespective of hues, which, as is an open secret, blatantly protect these anti-social forces in exchange of favours. There are reports of huge quantity of food items having been pilfered from government godown in Maharashtra. Unholy nexus of ration dealers-government officials-ruling party bigwigs in West Bengal has been thoroughly exposed.

Not only this. The monopolists and the MNCs have been freely allowed to enter the retail trading destroying interest of millions of small traders and thus monopolize the whole trade system pushing the prices up at will. The UPA government has permitted wide capital market speculation in essential items in the name of

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UTUC-LS All India Conference

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strengthening of ties and for developing international working class unity against the attacks of imperialist-capitalist globalization. Representatives of National Union of Venezuelan Workers and Confederation of Workers of Ecuador could not attend, as the Government of India refused them visa.

Umraomal Purohit, General Secretary of HMS and President of All India Railway Workers Union, P K Ganguli of CITU, S. P. Tiwari, General Secretary of TUCC, Kesobhai Thakur of BMS, H. Mahadevan, Deputy General Secretary WFTU and Deputy General Secretary of AITUC, S Roy of AICCTU expressed their solidarity on behalf of their respective organizations and wished

the Conference success. They expressed the need for united trade union movement to fight against the policies of globalization, liberalization and privatization.

The delegates deliberated in details on the organizational report that was placed by Comrade Shankar Saha and was seconded by Comrade Sunil Mukherjee, Secretary. Several amendments were adopted on the basis of suggestions coming up from the discussions. Finally, the all India committee was reconstituted with Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, as the Advisor, Comrade Krishna Chakraborti as the President and Comrade Shankar Saha as the General Secretary.

The Conference decided to rename the organization as All India UTUC.

Introduce all-out state trading of essential items

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derivative trading. Under this trading system, a speculator purchases or sells a specific quantity of a commodity at, what is called in the capital market parlance, the current or spot price with delivery or settlement at a future specific date. As big capital is creeping into this market to net speculative gains, it is contributing towards price manipulation allowing unscrupulous merchants and big business communities to hold the people in ransom.

To sum up, the farmers are earning less, and the poor is paying more. Produce prices are falling but consumer prices are soaring. Unscrupulous traders, price manipulators, hoarders are making merry.

In the name of free market economy, with the plea of market forces to adjust and balance the price level, the government has criminally allowed the upswing of the prices of even the most essential commodities putting in stake the barest subsistence of the people. As discussed above, the ruinous prescriptions of globalization-liberalization, the outright anti-people pro-capitalist policies and practices of the governments protecting bourgeois class interest have systematically abolished whatever little price control mechanism hitherto existed. This provides the widest opportunities to the unfair, unethical, and immoral trader community, to fleece the people through illegal and illegitimate black-marketeering, hoarding and profiteering. The noxious operation of an unholy nexus of dishonest traders and businessmen, the profit-greedy monopolists and MNCs, corrupt administration and political managers of the ruling bourgeoisie is creating artificial shortage of the foodgrains in the country.

To pretentiously resist the price rise and inflation the government has announced cut on tax and excise duty on the essential items to facilitate their imports. It has also banned export of cereals, rice and edible oils. But will the benefits of such steps accrue to the people? Experience speaks that it would not. The whole benefit will be swallowed up by the business community and manufacturers. The prices would remain almost same as it is now. The import too would not hold any good. For it is the

hoarders, black marketers and profiteers who hold sway over the market. They would stash away the articles to create artificial scarcity and earn huge black money under direct or indirect protection of the ruling parties in power in collusion with the administration. For this even the target of imports may remain unfulfilled with crisis intensifying and prices further going up beyond reach of the common people. In fine, so long as capitalism is not overthrown from power, there will be no abolition of all this.

Need of the hour

From the above discussion, it is clear that so long as capitalism is not overthrown, there can not be total abolition of all these plights and miseries, repression and suppression, deceit and deprivation of the toiling millions. Ruling capitalist class and its henchmen and lackeys would continue this fleecing operation, run the grinding wheel of ruthless operation in every walk of life the economic sphere included. As a sequence to that, price line will continue to soar slaying the slain yet more. But that does not mean that one has nothing to do but only moan or bewail and resign to fate. The suffering people must consciously find way out in order to live, fight injustice and accelerate the remedial process. And the only course open before them is to embrace the path of movement. They can surely wrest some relief, mitigate the hardship to some extent if they could launch a countrywide massive united organized protracted conscious movement against this atrocious price rise and other economic savagery perpetrated on them by ruling capitalism. But people know from their experience that most of the opposition parties are wedded to bourgeois class interest and hence all their show of protest, anti-government postures and tirades are simply playing to the gallery with the sole intention to brighten electoral prospects. They would never let the real cause come to the fore and cunningly shield and protect the ruling class. So they are not considered as forces of movement.

But the biggest impediment before building up this desired movement as is now gradually becoming clear to the masses is the treacherous role of the pseudo-Marxists in either obstructing the process of developing this people's

movement or breaking such struggles by adopting different tricks and deviant tactics. Of late, these pseudo-Marxists who have become part and parcel of this exploitative capitalist machine and frantically trying to appease the ruling capitalist class for pelf and power are openly advising the working people not to wage militant struggle against the owners and advocating hated theory of class collaboration. They are shamelessly vying deceptive formulation that 'development and employment' would come by if capitalism is encouraged and capitalists are extended necessary co-operation. Not only that. They are now branding democratic movements as 'disruptive activities', 'subversive of industrial peace', 'anti-development conspiracies' and hence are not hesitating to crush legitimate people's struggle in worst fascistic way as of late was seen in Nandigram peasants' movement. Surely, one can not expect them to indulge in anything but worst forms of deluding tactics to shortchange people even when the latter are in the throes of severe predicament like the present situation of murderous price rise. For example, the CPI(M) on whose unstinted support runs the central government has been, in its bid to escape unscathed is wailing that since the erstwhile BJP government had blunted the Essential Maintenance Act, its governments in the three states are unable to invoke the same to book hoarders and black marketers. What it is not saying that before the Act was emasculated by the BJP government in 1999, how many times did its governments invoke the Act for hauling up unscrupulous traders and price manipulators? Moreover, if it felt the Act was so important in checking unfair trade practices, why did it not compel the present government dependent on its backing to annul the BJP initiated amendments and bring back the punitive Act in its original form? In fact, all these are mock-shows, ploys to divert people's attention from the real cause of this back-breaking price spiral and dissuade people from adopting the correct course of intense mass movement. That is why, the pseudo-Marxists are being showered with praises and accolades from the ruling monopolists and blessed with huge publicity in the bourgeois media as

'leftists', 'able administrators', 'investor friendly', 'pro-development' and such other encomiums and certifications. In fact, the bourgeois class and its subservient media have taken it upon themselves to bring these perfidious pseudo-Marxists to the forefront so that people under sway of incessant propaganda rally behind these forces to have their genuine grievances and fighting mood petered out in the blind lanes of isolated sporadic aimless short-lived stirs and their cause backstabbed.

Hence, it is imperative that the desired people's movement does surge forth in the country under correct leadership involving toiling masses. On behalf of our party, we have been consistently trying to build up this movement. But, this movement would not be decisive if conducted on the singular strength of our party. It can only assume desired strength and momentum if the toiling masses from every walk of life, all right thinking people, progressive individuals, honest citizens, democratic forces, fighting leftists join the movement with genuine revolutionaries working at the core to rear and steer it in right direction. It ought to be understood that this people's movement would be a prolonged one and hence needs to be developed in a well-organized well-coordinated manner right from the grass root level. A mentality for conducting sustained movement has to be built up. For that, innumerable people's committees and mass scale enrolment of volunteers are needed to come up as instruments of struggle that will in the course of the struggle impart necessary political education and clarity to the fighting masses and imbibe them the true spirit of legitimate democratic movement.

Alongside, it is essential that the demands of the movement are correctly formulated and appropriately pressed for. In the context of this abnormal price rise of most essential items particularly foodgrains, edible oil and vegetables, it is essential to raise the demand for all out state trading of food and other essential items that our party has been consistently insisting on for the last four decades. Under that system, both wholesale as well as retail trade in the given essential items will be totally under government control.

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SUCI holds the government solely responsible for the unprecedented price rise of essential commodities

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in course a statement issued today (02-04-2008) expressed deep concern at the latest spurt in the prices of essential commodities that is making the common people gasp to hold on to bare survival. The Congress-led CPI(M)-backed UPA government who till the other day was exuding confidence of an economic upturn and maintaining a combination of 'high growth and low inflation' is now at its wit's end to even concoct a suitable explanation of this turtle turn into 'low growth and high inflation', commented Comrade Mukherjee. Charging the government to be solely responsible for this unprecedented price spiral, Comrade Mukherjee observed that instead of taking appropriate remedial measures to contain the upswing, the government is indulging in all kinds of pedagogic gymnastics to attribute the cause of climbing price line to uncontrollable factors like spurt in global tariff of essential items and fuel and fall in agricultural output coupled with mounting inflation due to excess liquidity in the system. Following the prescripts of so-called globalization-liberalization that espouses for privatization of every

field of public welfare to provide newer avenues for the capitalist owners immersed in a welter of crises endemic of the very capitalist system to maximize profit, this government subserving bourgeois class interest has systematically dismantled whatever little price control mechanism was hitherto in vogue, said Comrade Mukherjee. This whopping increase, pointed out Comrade Mukherjee, is due to the outright anti-people pro-capitalist policies and practices of the government in pursuit of ruinous prescriptions of capitalist globalization-liberalization like flawed corruption-ridden procurement of agricultural produces, allowing free export of wheat, cereal, rice, sugar and such other food articles without ensuring necessary availability for meeting domestic needs, planfully giving a decent burial to the Public Distribution System, opening up retail trade to monopolists and MNCs, acquiescing in rampant hoarding and black-marketing by crooked traders aided and abetted by corrupt administration, import of foodgrains at exorbitant price, permitting stock market speculation in essential items in the name of derivative trading — a package of enablers for the unscrupulous

merchants and big business to hold people in ransom. Inflation that the government is pretending to be so worried about is also, contrary to the government version of availability of more money in the hands of the people in general, triggered and pushed up by massive deficit financing resorted to by the government to meet budget shortfalls and increasing circulation of black money in the system to which the government is an indulgent onlooker, mentioned Comrade Mukherjee. He also added that phenomenon observed in the capitalist economy stumbling from crisis to crisis is not just inflation but stagflation a combination of stagnant or falling output and rising prices. Government's persistent refusal to introduce all-out state trading in food and other essential items — a demand the SUCI alone has been raising since long for giving some relief to the people in at least managing to secure items of essential use within this capitalist system breeding all such woes and maladies has also allowed the situation to drift away from bad to worse, reminded Comrade Mukherjee.

Vehemently criticizing the treacherous role of the CPI (M)- CPI who are gnashing their teeth at the

UPA government in an apparent bellicose gesture seemingly for public consumption and latching on to popular discontent to buttress electoral compulsions, Comrade Mukherjee said that these pseudo-Marxists without whose support this government can not stay in power are creating no decisive pressure on the UPA dispensation to implement specific and concrete measures to bring down prices, not even revival of PDS in the desired form. Rather, the state governments run by them are following the same set of anti-people policies be it in procurement, or in distribution or in doling out retail trade to private hands or in checking hoarding, black-marketing, nepotism or administrative corruption, added Comrade Mukherjee. Comrade Mukherjee called upon the toiling people to come forward and raise their voice against the bourgeois conspiracy to stonewall truth behind deceptions and fabrications, build up militant democratic movement against both central and state governments squarely responsible for this plight and peril of common households and force them to undertake appropriate measures to bring down the prices within affordable limit.

Build up united movement to resist unprecedented price rise

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Private trade in these areas will be completely banned. Government itself will procure from the base producers at reasonable remunerative price and then distribute to the people through its own network of outlets at fair price. All existing small retailers and groceries could be absorbed in the system as government's approved distribution centres. It is to be understood whenever the people rightly raise pointed fingers at the government for such plight and misery stemming from anti-people policies and practices, it, whether run by the rightist forces or pseudo-Marxists, tries to absolve itself of its responsibilities basking on some vacuous pleas and cunningly shifting the onus on some extraneous frivolous factors so that

the fleecing operation in the interest and under direction of the ruling capitalist class it is obligingly undertaking does not come to the fore. This time also, the Congress-led central government is already raising a bogey of spurt in international foodgrain prices and massive switch from growing cereals to biofuels in US and other western countries as reasons behind domestic price rise. As if, but for those, everything was hunky-dory in the country. It is precisely for this reason that the demand for all-out state trading must be raised so that the government does not get any scope for shunning its primary responsibility to reach out to the citizens the vitals of life at affordable price. But as this will jeopardize the very interest of the ruling capitalist class particularly in

their pursuit of capitalist globalization where liberal privatization of all state sectors and activities are so strongly emphasized and espoused for, it may take time to compel the government yield to this demand under pressure of movement. So, side by side, the following demands should also be raised with due seriousness.

- i) Immediately revive PDS in the desired form so that rural and urban people do get appropriate quantity of food and other essential items regularly at affordable price
- ii) Haul up and mete out stringent punishment to hoarders, black marketers and unscrupulous traders
- iii) Amend Essential Commodities Act suitably to punish the

offenders of price manipulation and hoarders

- iv) Totally ban export of essential food and other items
- v) Abandon plan to handover retail trade to domestic monopolists and MNCs
- vi) Ban speculative derivative trading on food articles
- vii) Stop destroying fertile land in the pretext of industrialization
- viii) Concentrate on increasing food production

We call upon the countrymen reeling under the draconian price rise to build up this movement with all their strength. Otherwise, the situation will take yet worst turn and the enemies of the people will rule the roost. Must we all respond to this need of the hour and tear asunder the strangulating noose.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE