

Proletarian Era

Volume 40 No. 21
June 15, 2007

Organ of the SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA
Founder Editor-in-Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

Price : Rs. 2.00

RECENT AGITATION OF GUJJAR PEOPLE OF RAJASTHAN

Ominous sign of country getting embroiled in worst caste feud and caste war

The state of Rajasthan and the adjoining areas of the four bordering states of Delhi, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have been in flames for a week when a violent agitation by the people belonging to the Gujjar community in demand for inclusion in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category erupted with full fury causing at least 26 deaths and wounding a large number of people besides severely disrupting road and rail traffic there as well as in the neighbouring belts. Normal life throughout Rajasthan was completely paralyzed. The nightmare of the Gujjar quota demand fury turned into a full-blown caste conflict with Rajasthan's dominant ST, the Meenas, turning on the Gujjars.

Incensed mobs of both Meenas and Gujjars fought pitched battles in several places and break-up of the toll between them are three Gujjars and two Meenas. It must also be added that hesitant to take necessary action at the very onset of the agitation to diffuse the tension, the BJP-led state government responded much later only by ordering indiscriminate police firing on the agitating people. On the other hand the Congress-led UPA government was found to be conspicuously reluctant to do anything effective in controlling the situation that was spinning out of hand and just kept itself limited to textbook role of providing some contingencies of armed forces. It was obvious that though life and property of the people were under threat, both the

Congress and BJP were afraid of running afoul of either Gujjars or Meenas lest they lose out the support of the communities in the ensuing assembly elections. Stunned countrymen became beholders of another most reprehensible fratricidal bloodbath over issue of reservation in jobs and education that is being systematically nurtured by the vote-seeking bourgeois politicians from the most ulterior motive of deriving electoral mileage by playing one section of the people against the other.

After a blood-curdled week when the raging Rajasthan turmoil snowballed into wider caste conflagration and flames of violence spilled over to engulf other states singing the national capital as well, Vasundhara Raje, the BJP

chief minister of Rajasthan, already having drawn flak from all quarters for failing to stem the rot, kick-started her direct parleys with agitating Gujjar leaders to resolve the impasse. Following a meeting with her on 4th June, the Gujjar agitation leaders headed by Col. (Retd.) Kirori Singh Bainsla agreed to suspend their agitation in exchange for a promise to get their demand examined by a three member committee in three months.

Background of the agitation

The Gujjars are currently categorized as OBCs (Other Backward Classes). But for last few years, they have been demanding inclusion in the ST (Scheduled Tribe) group. Many among the

Contd. on page 2

Nandigram — a saga of mass movement

Nandigram, where the CPI(M) government, hooligans and the police perpetrated genocide, resorted to inhuman mass rapes, and injured several hundreds in their attempt to crush the people's resistance against the globalization policy of SEZ under the garb of setting up a chemical hub, is already known to the world as one of the largest ever fierce battle ground against the globalization policy. Since the beginning of the movement, our party has been engaged in organizing people of Nandigram in their struggle. On the 30th May last, we held a mass meeting there. About 20 thousand people from different parts of Nandigram, from all walks of life

thronged the meeting place at Nandigram Bus Stand. It was a historic meeting in the sense that despite inhuman attack and terrorization for months together, the determination people expressed in their face and body language was unbelievable. "We have been putting up resistance for over five months, we shall continue it for another five years, if necessary, still we shall not cede our land for chemical hub" — such was the fighting grit, as one farmer blared, that a protracted battle with revolutionary politics as the driving force could give birth to.

Before the meeting a huge rally went round the area. Comrade Bhabani Prasad Das, a leader of

Bhumi Uchchhed Protirodh Committee garlanded the statue of Sudipta Tiwary, a martyr of the eighties.

At the start of the meeting the SUCI Central and West Bengal State Committee Members, Comrades Anil Sen, Provas Ghosh, Ranjit Dhar, Asit Bhattacharyya, Pratiba Mukherjee, Debaprasad Sarkar, Soumen Bose, Manab Bera and Sanjit Biswas, All India Secretary of MSS Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, and others placed wreaths at the column erected in memory of the great martyrs of Nandigram and Singur.

The meeting was dedicated to pay tribute and the deepest regard to the brave martyrs of Nandigram, to

take lessons from the historic struggle of Nandigram. Nandigram has taught how deprived, tortured people can turn around; Nandigram has taught how the life and death struggle is to be put up to protect the rights of toiling people. This is what Comrade Provas Ghosh, the State Secretary of the party and the main speaker of the meeting highlighted in his address, when he said : Those mothers and sisters who have been victims of beastly attack on their chastity, on their womanhood should not be ashamed of, should not bow their heads. It will be totally unjust, if anybody looks at them with disrespect, with dishonour. I salute those mothers

Contd. on page 8

Vested interest sparks nasty caste feuds dangling Reservation carrot to disunite people

Contd. from page 1

Gujjars feared that enlargement of the OBC list with induction of more and more communities now and often would significantly eat into their benefits under reservation provisions. Particularly after the Jats of Rajasthan were granted an OBC status, the Gujar people became more apprehensive of their future. Hence, they have been pressing for downgrading their status into ST presuming that such a switch to the bottom of the caste pyramid would brighten their chance in benefitting through quota route. It may be mentioned that in a bid to secure Gujar community votes on the caste line, the BJP before last state assembly poll had assured them that if voted to power, it would accord them ST status. But after assuming power, the BJP developed cold feet to the promise made to the Gujar people following strong opposition to this proposal from the influential Meena community which in turn were afraid that if Gujjars gatecrashed into the ST category, it might have to share fruits of reservations with another group. The BJP leaders were aware that a strong resentment was brewing up among the Gujar people but the party and its government did not make any serious and sincere effort to talk to them and other communities to amicably settle the issue.

In fact it had been a catch- 22 situation for the BJP. If it succumbed to the pressure applied by the Gujjars, it would have risked alienation from the Meenas who are not only numerically more powerful, but also have a large clout in vote-politics. On the contrary, if it refused to buckle, the Gujjars would have turned against the party. Ultimately, to bid time, the BJP leadership formed a state cabinet sub-committee in last September to decide on the issue. The Gujar people hoped that something tangible would now come out of it. But nine months later, sensing that nothing was being done, an umbrella group named Gujar Sangharsh Samiti gave a call for protest agitation and started putting up blockades on the highways. Agitation turned violent following a crackdown by the police. At this point there was enough instigation to the Meena community to counter

the agitating Gujar populace. Thus the growing arc of violence and the volatile campaign ultimately turned into a caste conflagration between the Gujjars and the Meenas and spread across large swathe of the state and subsequently in the neighbouring states. It has also come to light that while the Gujjars were provoked to indulge in violence by the politicians of one bourgeois party, the Meenas were instigated to retaliate by another bourgeois party. Thus lifelong friends suddenly developed visceral hatred for each other because of string-pulling from behind by power-greedy corrupt politicians.

It may be added that though this agitation has been sought to be projected by its exponents as a democratic movement of the aggrieved people against the government for not honouring election promise, it can not be so characterized for obvious reasons. When a movement develops involving all sections of the toiling people irrespective of caste, creed, region, ethnicity or language based on their unity and in legitimate demand for redressal of burning issues afflicting their life, we call it a genuine democratic movement. But in the instant case, there was no such content of a democratic movement, as this agitation virtually became an internecine clash between two groups of people.

Bourgeois politicians fanning divisive mentalities

It may be added that this tragedy has become quite common in the country today. Like the Gujjars, many other groups and communities are also raising demand for inclusion in the ST, SC or Other Backward Classes (OBC). For quite sometime the Rajbanshi community of Assam who are in the general category has become vociferous in demand for being conferred with ST status expecting such downgrading in caste hierarchy to secure reservation benefits. And as a reaction to this, the tribal population of both the hills and the plains who genuinely belong to the ST category are visibly tense since such would mean, they apprehend, substantial erosion in the benefits they are entitled to in the quota regime. There is indeed a vertical divide

among the people and enough commotion has been created in the state on this issue. In Rajasthan itself, people belonging to Rajbaris, Rawats and Sahariyas, currently in the OBC list are reportedly intending to seek ST status. Some quarters in the country are now pitching for special reservations for the minority community and as a reaction to that, various non-minority segments of people seemingly being prompted by agent provocateurs are threatening to stir. One would recall that last year, Arjun Singh, the minister for Human Resource Development in the Congress-led ministry at the Centre, announced extension of reservation for the OBCs in premier management and technology institutions, medical colleges and all central universities. As high as 27% quota was sought to be earmarked for the OBCs over and above 15% and 7.5% reservations for the Scheduled Caste (SC) and ST people. It sparked off widespread protests particularly from the students. Rallies, class and outdoor boycotts, mass hunger strike were all resorted to. Even incident of an attempt to self-immolation, as was widely seen during anti-Mandal agitation in the late eighties, also happened. And in retaliation, there were a few counter rallies and demonstrations by forces supporting the government decision. Most unfortunately, in some places, the agitation against the government's policy of extending reservation provisions turned out to be a movement against those supporting reservation. Clashes between the supporters and opponents to the government decision were also reported. Incidentally, the framers of the Constitution did not view the OBCs as any separate caste or could not even identify who would come under this classification. Hence, they addressed these relatively disadvantaged segments of the populace as a separate 'class' to segregate from the caste people becoming beneficiary of the reservation policy due to the specific socio-historic reason and prescribed no reservation originally for the OBCs in the Constitution. Moreover, the criteria for determining as to who should be regarded as OBC were also under dispute. Despite all this and well aware of the ramifications of such a

declaration, the Congress seemingly to counteract the creation of communal vote-bank by the arch communal BJP, by constituting its caste-based vote-coffer, raked up the reservation issue to precipitate a fresh controversy. However, the matter got referred to the Apex court which stayed implementation of the government proposal. Pending the final judicial verdict, the agitation was temporarily suspended. But there is a strong undercurrent centering on this extremely delicate issue with mutual distrust and disaffection among various sections of the people not only persisting but also aggravating.

So it is clear this is a cleverly thought out plan on the part of the bourgeois politicians to merrily foment this warped mindset and convoluted mentality to keep the people divided on caste, community, religion, ethnicity so that by handling the stand-offs among the various sections of the toiling masses, they could create and nurture their respective vote-banks to make fortunes in electoral politics. In the recently concluded UP elections also, one has seen how the bourgeois parties starting from the Congress, BJP to Mulayam Singh's Samajwadi Party or Mayawati's Bahujan Samajwadi Party openly pandered to casteist-communal feelings to carve out a space in the rendezvous of power. Even the self-styled Marxists like CPI(M), CPI instead of taking any initiative to project an alternative politics shamelessly aligned with one or the other bourgeois outfits, overtly or covertly, for securing crumbs here and there and thereby allowed this casteist-communal polarization to dominate with alacrity. It was not the plight and penury of the people cutting across caste or religion but the rigorous arithmetic of possible swing of votes along caste or communal lines which formed the main issues before the hustings. The bourgeois press too went whole hog to orient the minds of the voters along caste or communal line.

This open indulgence to caste and communal factors is not only stoking the fire of casteist or communal bloodbath but also stirring up various separatist, chauvinist even secessionist and

Contd. on page 6

Assembly Election in U.P

Elections for the state legislature of U.P., the most populous state in the country, held in seven phases and commencing on April 7, at last came to an end on May 8 last. The results were declared on May 11. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) led by Ms Mayawati won 206 seats out of the total 402 for which elections were held and formed the government. The Samajwadi party (SP) headed by Mulayam Singh Yadav won 97 seats, the BJP 51 seats and the Congress 22 seats. Thus, a single party majority rule has been established in the state after a gap of about 15 years. The last such government was headed by Kalyan Singh when the BJP, riding on the Rama wave, formed the government on its own in June, 1991.

Background of the election

There has been countrywide media hype about this election. The election results have given rise to some hope and aspiration among some people. But in order to realize the true significance of this election, the economic, political and social background in which this election has been held should be understood and the nature of the basic problem in the life of the people of UP, of the country as a whole, should be examined. What is the background in which this election has been held? The Indian capitalist class came into state power through independence of the country on August 15, 1947 and wielding the state machine, started further developing the country capitalistically at a time when capitalism as a world force was

already reactionary, decadent and crisis-ridden. As a result, capitalistic development of the country was always associated with the shadow of crisis and stunted. Over the years, capitalist exploitation of the people mounted, and so did the poverty and misery of the people. The rich few got richer and richer at the expense of the people while the people were dogged by unemployment, hunger and pauperization. 15 years back, crisis-ridden world imperialism-capitalism introduced globalization as the means to conduct world-wide exploitation in a more organized and intensified manner. Since then, the people of the country have been in the grip of ruthless exploitation by foreign and Indian monopoly capital even more intensified through the globalization scheme. This has

further aggravated the problems and sufferings of the people. They are plagued with all-out crisis — economic, political, social and cultural. Retrenchment, lay-off, lock-out and closure of factories, establishments and offices go on on a massive scale. For each new factory that is put up in the name of globalized industrialization, several existing ones close down due to the market crisis of capitalist economy. Whereas the new factories employ high technology and so require small work forces, the existing ones that close down, being labour-intensive, throw out of employment thousands at each stroke. Monopoly capital has penetrated deeply into agriculture as well. As a result of all this, the already acute unemployment, industrial and in agriculture, urban and rural, is rising further sharply. The people are subjected to fresh

Contd. on page 4

International Communist Seminar at Brussels

As in yesteryears, an International Communist Seminar was held this May at Brussels under the auspices of the Workers' Party of Belgium. The issue was 'Our experience in building up the party in the light of teachings of November Revolution.' Forty-eight parties from different nations of the world took part in the seminar, with Comrade Manik Mukherjee, Central Staff of our party, SUCI participating from India.

Comrade Manik Mukherjee then visited a few countries of Europe and held discussions with leaders of fraternal communist parties. On 9-10 May Comrade Mukherjee exchanged views with Comrade Hans Waun, leader, Communist Party of Deutschland, (Bolshevik) CPD(B). Comrade Mobinul Hyder Chowdhury, member of the Central Committee of Bangladesh Socialist Party was also present at this sitting. Comrade Ulrich Huar, also of CPD(B), Deutschland and the author of 'Stalin, the Great Military Scientist' was also present. Comrade Huar has now become an admirer of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat after having studied his works, and has himself translated into German the penetrating analytical essay of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh: 'An Open Letter to Khrushchev, On Steps taken by CPSU against Stalin', later published as a booklet by KDP (Bolshevik). He also expressed eagerness to translate all the three

volumes of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Selected Works. Comrade Manik Mukherjee on behalf of the SUCI Central Committee gave consent to this and handed over to him a CD of Comrade Ghosh's Works.

CPD(B) is currently making efforts to unite the different communist groups within Germany and develop an anti-imperialist forum. CPD(B) considers SUCI an important ally in the struggle against imperialism.

A bi-partite discussion took place in Germany itself between leaders of MLCP (North Kurdistan) and Comrade Manik Mukherjee. At the anti-imperialist convention held in Calcutta on 24 November 2005, Comrade Nisha of MLCP, Turk, had moved the resolution on the imperativeness to develop anti-imperialist forums not only in different countries but also on a regional basis. Subsequently MLCP (Turk) has organized regional conferences involving different Arab nations. In the bi-partite decision, it was resolved that MLCP (N. Kurdistan) and SUCI would unitedly develop anti-imperialist movement.

Comrade Mukherjee described in detail how sacrificing life and shedding blood the brave farmers of Nandigram (in West Bengal) have courageously built up a resistance movement against SEZ and on the role of the SUCI. Leaders of MLCP, declared that they would write about the Nandigram struggle in their newspapers and journals.

On 12 May Comrade Mukherjee



Comrade Manik Mukherjee discusses with Comrade Hans Waun; Comrade Mobinul Hyder Chowdhury seated extreme right

participated in a seminar organized by the MLCP at Paris, the agenda there being: International struggle against Imperialism and Zionism.

On 14-15 May, Comrade Mukherjee visited Athens where he had discussions on several issues with Comrade Grigori Konstantopaulos — member, Politbureau, and Comrade Manoli Archos — member, Central Committee, Communist Party of Greece. The two parties exchanged views on several questions related to international communist movement in the post-Second World War period. Communist Party of Greece holds the opinion that revisionism infiltrated the CPSU even before 20th Congress. Comrade Archos objected to their Party being termed as Maoist and said "This is the era of Leninism

and we are Leninists. Mao Zedong was himself a follower of Lenin".

In course of discussion on SUCI's assessment of different international events, Comrade Mukherjee showed that even after glorifying the progress and success of the international communist movement in the post-Second World War period, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh drew attention of all to the penetration of mechanical as against dialectical approach in the international communist movement as reflected in the incident of ousting Tito from the Cominform. It is by way of self-criticism that Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had pointed out these and other shortcomings of the communists. The approach and the analysis particularly appealed to the Communist Party of Greece.

Communalism, casteism thrive in absence of left-democratic alternative

Contd. from page 3

fiscal savagery from budget to budget. Rising prices due to spiralling inflation cause erosion of real wage. Hunger stalks the people. Many die of starvation. Thousands of peasants commit suicide. Homeless pavement dwellers crowd the cities. The unemployed scrounge for food, take to begging, are driven to stealing or other unethical means of livelihood or even of committing suicide. Tens of millions of children, robbed of their childhood, fag it out as child labourers for a pittance. Mothers sell out their children from dire want. Parents are forced to sell young daughters for immoral trafficking. Poverty forces young women to line up under cover of darkness to sell their bodies. Cries of the deprived, the distressed and the oppressed fill the air. The people are steeped in poverty, destitution, misery and squalor. All-out corruption engendered by decadent capitalism pervades every sphere of public life, with morality and ethics on the wane. This has made all bourgeois and petty-bourgeois politicians greedy and corrupt self-seekers. Politics has touched the lowest depth of morality. Even a thief, mafia don or a trafficker in women can become a MP with impunity. A host of draconian laws imperil civil liberty. The police can arrest anybody at will under false charges, can keep the arrested as prisoners unlawfully for indefinite period without trial or even without framing charges, can torture, maim and even kill the prisoners in the lock-up and can kill people at will by concocting stories about fake encounters. The monopoly-controlled media, in a conspiracy to destroy the moral backbone of the nation, day in and day out inject the people, particularly the youth, with vile and decadent bourgeois culture, sex and crime oriented. The people of UP, like the people in the rest of the country, are subjected to all such attacks, misery and savagery.

To ensure that the people cannot develop unity against capitalist exploitation and oppression and unitedly stand up against capitalism itself, their real enemy responsible for all the misery in their lives, the ruling capitalist class fosters communalism, parochialism, casteism and divisive tendencies of all sorts to keep the people divided and fighting among themselves, thus shielding the capitalist system from

mass wrath. The bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties, serving the ruling class, further this anti-people conspiracy by practising communalism, parochialism and casteism to improve their election prospect, thus safeguarding the exploitative capitalist system. This is generally true everywhere in India. As to UP, communalism and casteism of the worst type have been dominating parliamentary politics and elections in that state for decades.

Sinister design of ruling class to foist 2-party rule

Crisis-ridden capitalism, not to speak of mitigating the burning problems in people's life, can only aggravate them with passage of time. The people groaning under mounting exploitation, oppression and injustice get antagonized, grow restless, pine for a change and left to themselves, would seek to find a way out of the existing social order. To forestall this possibility, the ruling class devised the 2-party system. As per this scheme, when the rule of one chosen party or combination of the ruling class installed in government disaffects the people and makes them restless for a change, the ruling class, in order to pacify them, replaces it in government by another party or combination of its choosing through election, a manipulated and rigged one if so needed, to provide the people with an "alternative" within the exploitative capitalist system, helping the chosen party or combination by all means and projecting it before the people as the only alternative through orchestrated propaganda in the media. In this way, the ruling class misdirects the grievances and disaffection of the people into parliamentary channels, keeps the people away from the path of mass movement, keeps them arrested within the confines of parliamentary politics and pacified to stabilize the capitalist system artificially. The two-party system has been in operation for years at the Centre and in the states. At the Centre, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) supported by the CPI(M), CPI and their associates provide the two alternatives chosen by the ruling class for the purpose. Politically, UP has been one of the most unstable states of the country where no party could form a stable

government for the past 15 years. Through the present Assembly election, the ruling capitalist class was no doubt determined to stabilize the situation by putting into power a party of its choosing. And it has succeeded.

Absence of a left-democratic combination was disastrous for the people

This is how the reactionary, decadent bourgeois democracy would go on functioning. To put an end to this stifling situation and to break this vicious circle, the only way out for the people was the path of mass movement and the need of the hour was to forge a left and democratic combination as an instrument for building up democratic mass movements on the burning problems of life and to participate in this election with a view to getting as many candidates of the combination as possible elected to reflect the voice of mass movement inside the legislature. It is only through the process of mass movement that some relief can be provided to the people and their political right and power augmented. But even a beginning in this direction could not be made as the pseudo-Marxist parties like the CPI(M) and the CPI who have for long shunned the path of mass movement, were only interested in striking opportunistic poll alliance with this or that bourgeois party in the hope of winning one or two seats here and there. These pseudo-leftists led by CPI(M) have forsaken the people and are acting as an integral part of the bourgeois 2-party system. As the chosen alternative of the ruling class, they are in government in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura. Being in government, they serve the ruling class by implementing the anti-people globalization policies and crush any dissent or mass movement even more ferociously than any bourgeois party in power, the latest instances being the fascist combined attacks by police and CPI(M) cadres, the killings and beastly atrocities perpetrated by them upon the peasants protesting against forcible seizure of their land on behalf of the Tatas and the Salim Group respectively at Singur and Nandigram in West Bengal.

In the absence of a left and democratic combination, the people were thrown before the wolves, so to say. They were at the mercy of the parties who had no concern for the people, whose only concern was to

anyhow win the election so as to gain access to pelf and power from the governmental seat. They all made communalism, casteism their chief plank in electioneering. For several months, a wave, a frenzy of communalism and casteism swept over UP. Different sections of the toiling masses were incited against one another. The fight between the major contending parties or combinations was not over any principle as they were all committed to serve the ruling capitalist class through pursuing anti-people policies if elected.

So, the economic and political issues of vital concern to the people, never come to the forefront. During the election campaign, the contending parties indulged in a mock fight of mutual mud-slinging and sought to win the election anyhow by taking the communal or casteist line backed up by money and muscle power to have a share of the booty. Since all the politicians stood discredited in the public eye, this was sought to be compensated by the contenders by drafting in the services of film stars in their election campaigns. In this way, the serious business of election assumed the frivolous character of a tamasha. Then three major contenders in this election were the SP, the BJP and the BSP. Let us discuss a little about their antecedents and conduct during the election campaign.

Past record of the SP & its election campaign

This election was brought about as the SP-led government in power headed by Mulayam Singh Yadav had lost its majority. The 4-year SP rule in the state was marked by the luxurious life style of SP leaders and functionaries including the party general secretary Amar Singh at the cost of the people and their hobnobbing with industrialists like Anil Ambani and Surboto Roy and film stars like Jayaprada and the Bachhans. The Uttar Pradesh Development Council was made use of to strike corrupt deals to benefit the industrialist cronies. There were instances of corruption and scams galore. Beni Prasad Verma, once a close associate of Mulayam Singh Yadav and the actor Raj Babbar, an MP of the SP, parted company with Mulayam before the election and formed political outfits of their own. From first-hand knowledge, they accused that the 4-year SP rule had

Contd. on page 5

Mass movement only way to break out of vicious circle

Contd. from page 4

been corruption-ridden and pro-rich. Even as the election results were awaited, there were income tax raids on offices of some industrialist friends of Amar Singh and the Supreme Court stayed the Mulayam Singh government's decision to give mining rights of UP State Mineral Development Corporation virtually free of cost to a private company. There was no development work worth the name during the 4-year tenure of the SP government that ruled the state before the present Assembly poll. There was no rule of law in the state and criminal activities went on apace not only unchecked but sponsored by the government. The crime graph rose alarmingly, the kidnappings and ghastly child murders in Meerut and Nithari being just some instances. The SP can boast of patronising a host of mafia dons who have been its supporters and even leaders, including such notorious figures, dreaded by the people, like Raja Bhैया and Amarmani Tripathi. Tripathi, a former SP minister of the state, the prime accused in the Madhumita Shukla murder case, was in the Dehra Dun jail at the time of election but he contested the election from Luxmipur on a SP ticket! Even while he was in jail, a case was registered against 8 of his supporters on May 7 on charges of assaulting people at an election meeting at Luxmipur addressed by the slain Madhumita's sister.

The SP made election promises that if re-elected to power, it would speed up development work in the state. The promise sounded hollow in view of its actual performance during its governance and cut no ice with the people who were exasperated at the non-performance of the SP government, the total breakdown of law and order and the spurt of criminal activities fostered by it. In the face of this, actor Amitabh Bacchhan's brazen-faced TV propaganda in support of the SP was of little use. Moreover, SP's traditional OBC vote base was eroded as a large section of it comprising rural land-owning middle castes were annoyed at the pampering of the crony capitalists by the SP leaders.

Rabid Hindu communalism fails to see BJP through

Let us take the BJP. It is not any different from the SP as far as vices like corruption and criminalization of politics are concerned. It is true

that as that party has been out of power in the state for some years, it cannot be credited with any recent corrupt deals and scams. But the earlier BJP regimes headed by Rajnath Singh and Kalyan Singh were as corrupt as any. They, too, granted concessions and top priority to the projects of favourite industrialists like Subroto Roy. As to the criminalization of politics, the notorious criminal politicians such as Raja Bhैया and Amarmani Tripathi who later on came into the folds of Mulayam's SP, were earlier a part of the BJP regimes from 1991 to 2002.

We have shown in earlier articles how the BJP has come to be fully dominated by the RSS. So, in this election, the BJP, although torn with internal strifes, once again made aggressive Hindutva its main plank during the election campaign in the hope of swaying the votes in its favour by effecting a polarization on communal lines. For this purpose, it circulated an inflammatory anti-Muslim CD to fan up rabid Hindu communalism. Along with this, it employed the trickery of putting up a number of Muslim candidates to attract Muslim votes. When the CD affair came to light, it did BJP no good. The prospect of attracting any Muslim votes evaporated. Again, to attract the OBC voters, it announced Kalyan Singh, an OBC, to be its chief minister designate should it come out successful at the hustings. But the BJP's traditional upper caste Hindu support base was eroded as many upper caste Hindus considered that if they were to be ruled by an OBC like Kalyan Singh, they might as well be ruled by the dalit Mayawati. That the BSP fielded a large number of upper caste Hindu candidates did not improve matters for the BJP as this attracted upper caste Hindu votes away from it and towards the BSP.

All-out casteism of Mayawati's BSP holds sway

Now about the BSP. During the previous stints of Mayawati-led government, the only perceptible "development work" consisted of putting up statues of Ambedkar and remaining of streets, and within the short times at their disposal, those governments showed that they were second to none in corruption. The Supreme Court indicted Mayawati in 2003 in a case on charge of organizing the notorious Rs. 175 crore Taj Corridor scam and she was

forced to resign from chief ministership. And in organized criminalization of politics, the BSP has been second to no other party in the state.

In this election, Mayawati leading the BSP, effected an extension of communal and casteist politics giving it a new dimension outwitting her political opponents, BJP and SP. She fielded many Muslim candidates in order to attract the Muslim voters away from Mulayam Singh's SP towards the BSP. She nominated a large number of non-Yadav OBCs as BSP candidates in order to weaken Mulayam Singh Yadav's OBC vote-bank. But her deadliest stroke was her all-out bid to garner the votes of Savarna (so-called upper caste) Hindus in favour of the BSP. Not only did she field a large number of Savarna Hindu candidates, but she courted the upper Hindu castes by discarding the BSP's anti-Manuvadi stance of the 1990s and the call to beat up Brahmins, Vaishyas and Kshatriyas, as per the then slogan, "Tilak, tarazu aur talwar, inko maro jute chaar". Instead, the BSP coined this time the chant evocative to all upper caste Hindus: "Haathi nahi, Ganesh hai, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh hai." This was nothing but the practice of what has now come to be known as soft Hindutva. By this, she succeeded in shifting the support of large sections of the Savarna Hindus, particularly the poorer ones, from the BJP to the BSP. And of course, the BSP managed to hold its dalit vote-bank intact. All this, backed up by money and muscle power and with the projection of the monopoly controlled media in its favour, helped the BSP to carry the day with ease. It is notable that the media projected all through that the main contest was between the BSP and the SP and the BSP was going to win handsomely, thus working to ensure stability as per the design of the ruling class to install a two-party system. It is an eye-opener how the monopoly-controlled media built up an inflated image of Mayawati, one who had to resign as the chief minister for her involvement in one of the worst scams.

About the Election Commission

A word to two about the role of the Election Commission (EC). During the election campaign, and also after the election, the monopoly-controlled media have been chanting that there never was

a freer and fairer election than this. But what the people of UP witnessed was the free use of money and muscle power by the contenders to influence the election results. The contending parties fielded numerous candidates with criminal record. In the final lap of the seven-phased election, as many as 162 of the total 934 contestants were those who were facing criminal charges. The ruling SP put up 32 such tainted candidates, followed by the BSP's 20, BJP-Apna Dal combine's 19, and the Congress Party's 16 (Report in The Statesman, May 6, 2007). Communalism and casteism were freely whipped up during the election campaign. The BJ circulated a dangerously inflammatory anti-Muslim CD. But the EC did not take any step against these although it has sufficient power to disqualify parties and candidates for violation of the model code of conduct. The pious statements and assertions made in the model code of conduct remained on paper. This shows that the EC, despite all its righteous professions, cannot but act as an organ of the ruling class that it is.

Task of the people

The Mayawati government has been installed on May 13 with fanfare in the monopoly-controlled media that this marks the end of SP's misrule, restoration of the rule of law and the beginning of an honest, clean governance of the state of UP. Those who are gullible enough to believe this, are in for a rude shock. No less than 10 ministers of the Mayawati cabinet have either corruption charges against them or are listed as criminals in police record. One of them, Anand Singh Yadav, was in jail till the day before he was sworn in! Anand faces 12 criminal cases including those of murder and rioting (The Statesman, May 14, 2007 and Times of India, May 15, 2007). It is also noteworthy that as soon as the Mayawati government assumed power, attempts were afoot to tilt the Taj Corridor Case in her favour. On May 15, the CBI failed to file the state governor's sanction on prosecution of Ms. Matawati and 5 others in the case as had been scheduled earlier. And then came the parley between Ms Sonia Gandhi and Ms Mayawati when the latter reportedly assured the Congress of BSP's support in the coming Presidential election. So, is it any

Contd. on page 8

With job opportunities on the wane, lure of Reservation is criminally offensive

Contd. from page 2

fissiparous tendencies. Demands for regional autonomy or bifurcation of existing states are being raised on a high pitch. Today it is Rajasthan. Tomorrow it would be Bihar, Assam, Maharashtra, Gujarat or Tamilnadu. Any time anywhere, with the slightest of instigation, a major conflagration can break out. With the bourgeois politicians playing their dirty game, our motherland is practically lying on the crater of a volcano.

It is true that deprived of the basic needs of life and continuously assailed by savage attack on every sphere of life, there is mounting discontent and resentment among the toiling people irrespective of caste, creed, ethnicity or religion. There is every legitimate reason for this accumulated grievance to burst forth in all vehemence and tempestuousness. What is needed is that the toiling millions rise above all sectarian considerations, cement their unity and launch fierce organized democratic mass movement against the power that be on the burning problems of life. Instead of that, most of the outbursts of people's wrath and anger are not surging forth as legitimate democratic movements based on genuine democratic demands of the people but are turning out to be scuffles if not gory encounters between two groups or communities centring round caste, religion, language or ethnicity. There is even loss of many lives in such agitations because of state terrorism, brutal police action or fratricidal blood-bath. But are the people getting any relief out of these fratricidal blood spilling, caste or communal clashes? Is even an iota of their hardship mitigated or is there an exacerbation of their misery? Or only there is increased precipitation of bad blood among various sections of people to make the desired solidarity of the toiling masses the worst casualty? The current agitation of the Gujjars like all other past or current fights between people versus people over reservation, religion, ethnicity or language is no exception to that. People With daggers drawn at each other, they are achieving nothing but playing as pawns in the hands of opportunist politicians.

This increasing divide among the Indian people who once so valiantly fought against the British

imperialist rule rising above all caste, creed or religion to emerge as a unified nation, as well as rapid proliferation of all kinds of divisive thoughts, is causing serious concern among the well-meaning thinking people and rightly so. Particularly they are visibly worried at the way the much hyped and fanned up reservation provisions are playing havoc in this regard. The Gujjars-Meena skirmish has once again brought the issue to the fore and the deception over reservation is slowly getting exposed to the saner section of the people.

The ploy of Reservation

We had shown earlier in the pages of Proletarian Era that as a result of the caste system that originated in the days of Aryan rule in our country, casteist oppression became more accentuated and the Brahminical tyranny, under the patronage of the feudal lords, assumed unthinkable dimension. The British rulers also, in order to sustain their colonial rule by following 'divide and rule' policy, wanted the caste system to be sustained and well entrenched. So-called lower caste people were subjugated through worst form of social discrimination, denial of all scope for development, social ostracism and invocation and incredible proliferation of senseless rituals, superstitions, and barbarous social customs like untouchability. But as the Indian bourgeoisie providing leadership to the national liberation movement in the moribund decadent stage of capitalism, was, unlike the Western bourgeoisie during the advent of capitalism as a progressive force, unable to weed out feudal elements from the socio-culture spheres and abolish other social aberrations like the atrocious caste system through an uncompromising struggle, calamitous preaching of caste-vanity and caste-hatred could not be done away with. So at the time of gaining political independence from the British rulers, there was legitimate accumulated grievance in the minds of these utterly disadvantaged *dalit* people and there was public pressure on the authors of the Constitution to frame some remedial measures. Thus a special provision of reservation for the SCs and STs in job and education found place in the

Constitution.

But as we know, in a class-divided society like ours, in the context of conflicting class interests between the exploiter and exploited, the ruling bourgeoisie and the proletariat, it is futile to expect equal opportunity for development of all individuals, equal opportunity of education to the children of all strata, people's welfare and social progress by way of economic development through unhindered industrialization and providence of job to all. So instead of bringing any gradual improvement in the economic or social condition of the countrymen at large, the dalits included, there has been accelerated deterioration in each and every walk of their life in post-independence capitalist India. Only, in accordance with the law of capitalism, the rich became richer and the poor poorer irrespective of caste, creed or religion. While the Congress and the other bourgeois parties who rode to power did nothing to uplift the *dalit* people to the mainstream of the society, rid them of the social ostracism and humiliating life condition and in the process phase out the very need of reservation, there has been no let up in their pretentious concern for the dalits. Obviously, the benefits envisaged in the reservation policy did not accrue to the vast multitude of the dalit people. Rather, as expected in an oppressive capitalist regime, a small fraction, hardly 3%, of the dalits usurped all opportunities and benefits and emerged as a 'creamy layer', a tiny group of affluent 'elite' enjoying all privileges and clout as part of the handful of dominating rich in the society, being totally callous and indifferent to the rapid degeneration of the livelihood of the lower caste populace. Thus they have practically become an appendage to the ruling bourgeoisie. This emergence of a creamy layer within the dalits has once again attracted pointed attention to the fact that under capitalism, class division is becoming sharper every moment; the yawning gap between the haves and have-nots is making social stratification more pronounced and vivid. In a crafty move, the ruling class carved out a privileged group from the most oppressed section of the masses to be pliable to its class interest and projected as proof of prosperity (!)

of the dalit populace.

We had also shown that in the capitalist system, the capitalists invest capital in mills, factories or agriculture to produce commodities to be sold in the market to earn maximum profit. They book this profit, the difference between the money invested and the price of sale, by appropriating the surplus value created by the labour power of the workers and peasants. Since the working people at large are thus denied their legitimate dues, their purchasing power dwindles. So even if they have need for some commodity or an item of daily use, they cannot afford to buy it. This causes shrinkage of the market and the capitalists, unable to book profit through sale of produced goods, stop production. So the industries get closed, people are thrown out of job. In absence of market, new industries also do not come up. More the days roll by, more plummets the purchasing power of the common people to further aggravate the market crisis of capitalism. That is why crisis ridden capitalism cannot force open the path of unfettered industrialization today. Even if it sets up one or two industries here and there, large number of existing factories and establishments get closed down in quick succession. Moreover, the industries so set up are capital-intensive technology-driven highly sophisticated in nature needing a handful of skilled hands to operate. So it is futile to expect these industries to provide large scale employment. Even the existing establishments are so modernized with technical support as to shed bulk of its manpower. Hence, there is continuous downsizing in the running units through VRS, forced retirement etc., moratorium on fresh recruitment, extinguishing of vacancies. As a result, whatever little employment opportunity was there in the past has also frittered away to bring job potential to virtually nil. It is, therefore, bunkum, derision par excellence to talk of any job opportunity being created in either the existing establishments or those few coming up here and there within this capitalist set up.

Like the job scenario, the picture in the realm of education is also equally grim. With cost of

Contd. on page 7

Unmask forces that lock people in internecine clashes

Contd. from page 6

education going up by leaps and bound, progressive curtailment of higher education, commercialization of education with government gradually withdrawing from the field and leaving the arena to the profit-seeking private owners for limitless loot and plunder, education is no more accessible to the common people but is becoming exclusive preserve of the rich and affluent. With galloping escalation of education expenses, even the section of middle class who could earlier somehow manage to get its wards cross portals of formal education is finding the cost too prohibitive, if not beyond affordable limit, today. And there is no guarantee that after managing to secure a formal academic degree even at post-graduate level, one would get a job. The soaring number of educated unemployment is a glaring testimony to that.

Thus it is clear that when there is no scope whatsoever for any kind of gainful employment nor is formal education within the reach and means of the general people, the ruling class and its political managers are making a hullabaloo over reservation and vending dream of employment and education through quota system and in the process surreptitiously precipitating mutual disaffection and mistrust among the various segments, straining the chord of unity and amity among the toiling millions, pitting one against the other. It would not take much intelligence to find that this much-banded concern of the dream-merchants for the downtrodden segments of the society is not even skin-deep. While the people are instigated to stain their hands with the blood of their brethren equally pestered and deprived under capitalism, the power-hungry politicians irrespective of their caste or religious acquaintance go on enjoying power, amassing fabulous wealth and swelling in self aggrandizement vivid examples of which are not in short supply.

Capitalism is breeding all evils

What is getting concealed in the process is the fact that the appalling misery, destitution and deprivation tearing apart the life of the common people no matter which caste they belong or which religion they profess or which language they

speak, is spawning from the exploitative capitalist rule. As is inevitable in capitalism, now enmeshed in insoluble market crisis endemic of the system and stinking in its decadent moribund phase, the handful of rich is becoming richer and the myriads of poor are plunging in yet more abject poverty and ruination. It is ruthless exploitation of capitalism through spiralling price-line, fiscal savagery, erosion of real income and ever-squeezing employment opportunity that is continuously pauperizing the common people, dooming them to a sub-human life condition. On the other hand, to muzzle the voice of protest and scuttle sprouting of any genuine people's struggle for emancipation, one after another civil and democratic rights are taken away, spanner is thrown in the solidarity of the people through incessant fomenting of divisive mentalities and under a façade of parliamentary democracy, all-out administrative fascism is being clamped to completely regiment the political process. And to emasculate the people from within and retrograde the mental process, a floodgate of polluted degenerated imperialist culture of sex-violence-fashion-rock n' roll has been opened up. Side by side, there is continuous inciting, wherever so deemed necessary, to all sorts of obscurantist and backward thoughts, religious blindness, superstitious beliefs and fanaticism. This is the all-out attack of crisis-ridden gasping stinking capitalism on the economic-political-social-cultural spheres that is strangulating the common people. It is only by overthrowing capitalism by revolution that one can get rid of this suffocation and ruination. But till that time, it is necessary to develop democratic mass movement conducive to anti-capitalist revolution.

So the need of the hour is to cement the unity of the entire toiling people and organize them on the platform of a massive democratic movement on the burning problems of life. It is only by building and intensifying this much needed democratic movement that people could expect some relief from the increasing suffocation in every walk of their life. At the same time, in the cultural milieu of this movement of the common people for a common cause, many of the aberrations and pollutions in the realm of thought

and persuasions would be eradicated to new healthy vibrant social life everyone is so earnestly craving for.

Unfortunately because of the policy of capitulation of the self-styled Marxists like the CPI (M), CPI, the biggest casualty has been crystallization of this countrywide united democratic mass movement. To satiate their last for power by appeasing the ruling bourgeoisie which is now extra cautious to nip in the bud any possibility of genuine people's movement surging forth, these pseudo-lefts have not only shunned the path of movement even to the extent they treaded earlier from parliamentary angle but have now been crushing such movements with all cruelty in the states they are in the government. CPI (M) leaders are now found to be openly sermonizing against class struggle and become strong advocates of class collaboration. Seizing the opportunity to the hilt, the bourgeois parties are playing ducks and drakes with the people by whipping up all sorts of casteism-fanaticism-separatism and pitting one against the other by waving banner of reservation for making petty sectarian gains. And with such noxious corrupt thoughts prevailing so dominantly, it is becoming extremely difficult, as mentioned earlier, to generate the desired current of democratic movement involving all sections of the people.

This is the context in which the sinister attempt on the part of the ruling class and its servitors to widen the rift among various sections of the oppressed people by dangling the carrot of reservation and set one against other is gaining ground. In the circumstances, both the *dalit* and non-*dalit* masses have to understand what is the course of action they must undertake with due responsibility to thwart the vile attempt of the ruling class and free them from the tentacles of the corrupt thought being injected in them by it to buttress its ulterior motive of 'divide and rule'.

Build up democratic movement under correct leadership

Time has come to finally expose the devilish forces who by dangling carrot of reservation shedding blood of the poor people, duping the oppressed and suppressed, diverting them towards wrong ends,

embroiling them in fratricidal bloodbath. Historic moment has arrived to unmask these arch enemies of the people before both *dalit* and non-*dalit* masses. By isolating these mischief-makers, one after another democratic movement involving all sections of the people on the burning problems of life has to be built up and intensified throughout the country. The need of the hour particularly is to develop a united movement of both *dalits* and non-*dalits* in demand for education to all and adequate scope of job through set up of labour-intensive industries in the public sector as was done after independence under public pressure. The unity of the *dalit* and non-*dalit* people has to be preserved like the apple of the eye. While developing these legitimate democratic movements on the edifice of higher ethics and culture, maximum emphasis has to be given on taking appropriate step to eradicate all the legitimate grievances of the *dalit* people particularly in regard to their backwardness in education and imperativeness to bring about qualitative change in their social position.

We once again reiterate that by turning away from the reality and remaining oblivious of the historically adjured task, one would only exhaust oneself in a mirage hunt. Our fervent appeal to all is to come forward and as members of the oppressed million build up just genuine movement of the people under correct leadership. It is true that because of the treacherous role of the CPI(M), CPI, development of such united conscious struggle is proving to be difficult. But when the pseudo-Marxists have surrendered to the ruling class and joined the forces of reaction to scuttle people's movement, an alternative current of genuine left-democratic movement is being released under the leadership of the SUCI. Wherever this movement involving all sections of the toiling people and on the edifice of higher ethics and culture could surge forth with desired celerity, the concerned government could be forced under pressure of movement to yield to some of the demands raised. It is urged upon all to come out of all shackles, discard all shades of provocation and join this current of genuine left-democratic movement to take forward their struggle for emancipation.

Nandigram — the pilgrimage of mass movement

Contd. from page 1

and sisters. Shoulder to shoulder with men, they fought heroically against the attackers, the police and the CPI(M) criminals. They have been gang-raped, so that they bend down disgraced and ashamed, so that their morale is lost. They were raped so that nowhere in the country women dare come forward in any mass movement against injustice, against any attack. So, if they stoop down, if you look at them with disrespect, it will only help the fascist design of the barbarous state government. Will you do that? Those women are absolutely unsinned; they are unstinted heroes, fighters. They deserve respect from any and everybody worth being called a human being. I am sure, had Rammohan, Vidyasagar, Deshabandhu Chittaranjan, Saratchandra been alive, with all affection and regards, they would have taken them to their bosom, would have wiped off their tears. Those who cannot place them to the altar of high esteem, they are not worthy of taking names of these great men. As a student of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of proletarian revolutionary movement of the present days, I can only add had we been their father, husband or children, we would have been proud of that. Comrade Ghosh also recollected that in the post-revolution China under Mao-Zedong, the Chinese used to take any visitor to their country to a number of historical monuments, including one which they used to call a sacred place. There lived with distinguished honour, a few women,

aged above fifty who, as fighters of the liberation struggle, were gang-raped and tortured by the Japanese imperialist army. Citing this as an instance of how communists should view such victims, Comrade Ghosh also drew attention to a well-read Bengali story in the book, *Louhakat* (The Iron-door) which entails narration of a former prisoner. It was the tale of a fierce dacoit dreaded even by the British police who reigned over a number of districts of East Bengal (now Bangladesh). That ferocious Badar Munshi ultimately surrendered himself out of shame and self-reproach. After a successful operation at a marriage ceremony, when everybody was leaving with the booty, Badar was halted by the cries of a girl, only to find that one of his gang had raped the newly-wed bride. Even a heartless criminal of his sort, did not hesitate to kill his man instantaneously, himself stunned at the event and struck with reproach. He could not tolerate any disrespect to women and was ready to pay for it at the cost of himself. As against such striking instance of conscience and reproach in a criminal, the so-called communist rulers of CPI(M), with cloaks of polish, culture and education are busy in tampering with hospital records with a view to covering up, even wiping out all evidences of mass rape. They only prove themselves to be even more degraded than the worst criminals.

Explaining the significance of the peasant resistance movement of Nandigram, Comrade Provas

Ghosh also said that this struggle has inspired the workers, peasants and general people as a whole all over India to fight against capitalist exploitation and repression. He emphasized that the Bhumi Uchchedh Protirodh Committee is an instrument of struggle which has emerged in course of the movement and to carry it forward. People of Nandigram must have known that the Chief Minister has said that since no land will be taken from Nandigram, people here need not keep the committee in existence. Mind that, it is a deep conspiracy. They want this committee be dissolved; your unity will then be disrupted; there would not be any movement any more; it is then they will pounce upon you and will give effect to their design. So people of Nandigram must protect the committee. Remember, it is at the call of this committee that you have fought such a gallant battle; it is at its call that so many martyrs have shed their blood, have laid their life. Should you destroy the unity of such a committee? Comrade Ghosh drew attention of Nandigram people to the fact that all through the ongoing movement, our cadres have tirelessly worked. But never have we used our party banners and flags. It was only after all these months that a meeting has been organized under our party banners. We are earnest about preserving the unity of the Committee; we want people's committee right at the grass root level. No decision of any party should be thrust upon this committee; there should be no understanding with CPI(M) at the back of the committee, or without it. Comrade Ghosh further requested people of Nandigram, that even in the forthcoming Panchyat election, they should fight under the banner of the Committee, and not under the banner of any party. If there is any dispute among the political parties on selecting candidates, honest, fighting independent candidates must be selected in stead. Unity must be preserved after all, because the Committee will have to undertake struggles to fight out so many problems, so many attacks that will emerge in future. He called upon the people also to realize that it was the capitalism, that lay at the root of all these evil-doing, of all the plight of poor

people. Hence, it was imperative that all the mass movements must ultimately be directed towards intensifying the anti-capitalist anti-imperialist movements; Nandigram people must take pledge to intensify that struggle from their own soil with a long tradition of historic battles, including the present one.

At the end of the meeting the money and relief materials collected by SUCI over the few months were distributed to the martyrs' families of Nandigram by the Central and State Committee leaders present at the meeting.

The meeting began with the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great proletarian leader, and ended with the Internationale.

UP Assembly Election

Contd from page 5

wonder that the CBI submitted before the designated court on June 5 that the state governor had refused to give sanction to prosecute Ms Mayawati in the Rs. 175 crore scam case? There is no doubt that in no time, the true face of the Mayawati government, its pro-rich, pro-capitalist and anti-poor character will be starkly revealed as it goes on implementing the anti-people policies of the ruling class, ruthlessly crushing all voices of dissent and protest. So the people of UP should not pin any hope on this government but remember that mass movement remains the burning necessity, not only for establishing the minimum democratic norms, decorum and decency in public life and society or for providing some relief to the people to the extent possible within the capitalist framework, but also as preparatory to achieving the goal of anti-capitalist socialist revolution which alone can solve the fundamental problems in people's life. So, the people of UP will have to move along a new path from now onwards. They will have to take up the task of building powerful mass movements one after another under the leadership of true left and democratic forces. The SUCI has been again and again earnestly calling upon the people for this.



Comrade Provas Ghosh addressing at Nandigram on 30 May 2007

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE