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Frenzied hired killers let loose on unarmed people in 'recapture' mission Nandigram witnesses yet one fascist barbarity by CPI(M)

Grand success of the general strike called by our party on 12 November last denoted how firm the people have been in their resolve to record a temperate outburst against the naked fascist attack of the CPI(M) on the protesting people of Nandigram from 6th November onwards. In a chilling re-run of the 14 March carnage, this time with much more fury and intensity that would make even Hitler-Mussolini-Bush and the ilk envious, bestial savagery and insane rage raved wild to snuff out hundreds of innocent lives and indulge in loot and marauding with a gusto. Making the police-

administration totally cipher, the CPI(M) leaders having shunned even the last trace of what is called human, left it to the several thousands of hired gunmen, hard core criminals and notorious anti-socials armed with sophisticated weaponry including AK-47 rifles mobilized from various parts of the state, neighbouring states even neighbouring Bangladesh to enact the episode of 'recapturing lost territory' by opening fire on unarmed peaceful demonstrators, smashing the skulls of their opponents into pieces, hacking hundreds of protesting peasants to death, inflicting grievous injuries to

many and then announce their victory over innocent downtrodden people with a rapturous roar. No one, not even the media was allowed lest there is any documented evidence of this bestial fury and murderous frenzy. Entry of ambulances and health workers was prevented as well lest the injured survived on medical aid. Medha Patkar, the renowned social activists, alongwith Comrade Debaprosad Sarkar, our leader in the state assembly, Prof. Tarun Sanyal, President of the Forum of artistes, cultural activists and intellectuals and other eminent persons and human rights

activists were stopped on the way by armed CPI(M) goons and manhandled. Medha was dragged by her hair and sari. Choicest slangs and invectives were hurled at them. The escorting police officers remained silent spectators. This orgy of violence has never been seen anywhere. Even in Modi's Gujarat, media or administration was not debarred from entry during post-Godhra pogrom. Thus immobilizing all police-administration, preventing entry of media or any other person, the CPI(M) gangsters ran amuck the territory for all these days to

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Leading artistes, cultural and social activists, intellectuals and professionals lead a more than two-hour long silent procession in Calcutta on November 14, in protest against the massacre perpetrated by armed CPI(M) goons at Nandigram, keeping police inactive to their advantage

CPI(M) tried to malign the struggle by airing fabricated stories

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achieve the mission. And now the CPI(M) chief minister boastfully justifies the planned massacre in media glare by declaring that the agitators "have been paid back by their own coin."

Civil Society protests

Civil society stood spell bound, terrorized and the whole nation shocked, stupefied. But soon the realization dawned on every sensible mind that this stupor is what to be got rid of. Must they come out in the streets, voice their opposition aloud to compel the death merchants stop this gory parade and peddling in bestial violence and crime. At these grave hours when buccaneering and physical annihilation of the opponents has engulfed the polity of the state, they must bring everything to a grinding halt. Overwhelming response to the general strike call signified the enraged mood of the public ebullient in a fighting spirit to repel the attacks mounted on humanity. The fervour was felt all around and no amount of coercion or slanderous campaign could dampen the spirit or dissuade them from lending active and moral support to the strike call. The state government and the CPI(M) stand completely alienated from the masses. Everywhere, there is vehement condemnation; hate and despise being showered on the CPI(M) leaders now on the dock for committing a worst crime on the humanity.

It was a people's strike. People decided, acted and ended on a winning note much to the discomfiture of the government. It has been an eye-opener for those who thought that the politics of capitulation has been unremittingly plaguing the whole scenario and resurgence of mighty democratic movement remained only a pious wish of a selected few. It was indeed like a gentle breeze wafting in when everything seemed teetering on the brink of disaster. It proved that all was not that bleak as it appeared outwardly. The fighting spirit was concealed in cordite, needed to be inflamed. The wave of protest movement that is sweeping across the state holds rein of the future.

Developments after 14 March carnage

After the black morning of 14 March when a few thousands of armed police and para-military

forces and shielded behind them, the CPI(M) goons, brandishing arms and arsenals used by the police and clad in police uniform but wearing chappals to give away their identity, were let loose in a dastardly operation transgressing all norms of civility and humanity to engineer one of the worst carnages the country had ever witnessed. The struggling peasants remained unbending, stood to their ground disdaining all medieval barbarity, economic blockade and other odds stacked against them by the CPI(M)-administration combine. The struggle the people of Nandigram has been waging shedding their blood and sacrificing their lives has been a great inspiration for the workers, peasants and common people as a whole round the country in their fight against ruthless capitalist exploitation. While this historic struggle has forced the big monopolists and industrialists to have sleepless nights, the saner conscientious people including the honest rank of the CPI(M) have stood by the side of the movement.

In face of such determined opposition and under pressure of surging public opinion, the CPI(M) government was forced to give up the proposal of establishing a chemical hub on an SEZ at Nandigram. But they did not yield to other legitimate demands of arresting and punishing the culprits of 14th March bedlam and butchery, stopping incessant firing from the criminal camps erected at Khejuri adjacent to Nandigram and granting adequate compensation to all the victims. Rather, the ten criminals who were caught red-handed by the CBI team were let off by the police. Thus it was clear that the CPI(M) leadership was in no mood to stop the bloodshed, restore peace or show scant regard for legitimacy. It's instead had been a diabolic plan to consign Nandigram to a horrible fate. Accordingly, grounds were prepared. While keeping the atmosphere surcharged with continuous threat, intimidation and relentless sniper attacks, a well-orchestrated propaganda was unleashed that thousands of CPI(M) supporters had been evicted from their home and hearth by the struggling peasants organized under the banner of Bhumi Uchhed Protirodh Committee (Committee for resisting eviction from land) or BUPC and they needed to be rehabilitated. It was also alleged

that there was no law and order in Nandigram. And above all, it sought to undermine the justification of the resistance struggle by floating an argument that since there had been no issue of land acquisition whatsoever in Nandigram since February 2007 following government announcement, protection of land was 'a spurious pretext to keep the whole area under siege and keep the legitimate representatives of the people away and deny entry of police-administration'. An impression was sought to be given as if there remained no further issue to be clinched, no action needed be taken against the culprits of 14 March incident and hence, the BUPC had no right to exist.

But with every passing day, the determination of the Nandigram people who from their experience knew how the CPI(M) leaders peddle in utter falsehood and gleefully indulge in doubletalk became stronger and the lies and calumnies laid bare. Rebutting the claim of thousands of CPI(M) supporters having been displaced and denied reentry, the BUPC said that barring 32 identified culprits who were involved in the savage rape and attack of 14 March, all others were welcome back. In fact the number of persons so displaced was around 200. Many of them also duly returned and resettled. Comrade Provash Ghosh, Central Committee member and State Secretary of SUCI had handed over the village-wise list of such displaced persons as well as the 32 identified culprits to the press and challenged the CPI(M) leaders to publish the details of the 'thousands of their supporters' stated to have been 'driven out' and resisted from coming back home. So there was hardly any taker of this cock and bull story. In fact, Nandigram was no forbidden or a territory or 'free zone' as motivatedly alleged by the CPI(M) and its government to give a twist to the reality and prepare ground for the contemplated armed aggression and let the criminals and rapists in to go berserk once again. Complete normalcy in Nandigram with no news of any theft, robbery or disruption in the functioning of offices, educational institutions, banks or other organizations bore testimony of utter incorrectness of the CPI(M)'s version of collapsing law and order. The easiest ploy to hoodwink the people was to take refuge in the bogey of development

and the CPI(M) leaders tried that also alleging non-functioning of panchayats. Public memory is proverbially short, but it's not so short that the people would so easily forget the diabolic design that the CPI(M) chief minister and his party colleagues conceived when they went on the sly to acquire land at Nandigram that eventually led to the bloodiest showdown in recent times. Moreover, it soon came to light that it was the CPI(M) and its associate CPI who deliberately made the panchayats under their control defunct so that absence of development activities could be harped upon as a part of the wholesome concoction to shield the reality and cover up their crimes and misdeeds. The CPI(M) leadership also tried to throw a spanner in the struggling unity of the Nandigram people by blatantly playing communal card. They brought the Imam (chief priest) of Delhi's Jama Masjid, briefed him at the state secretariat building as well as their state party headquarters and sent him to Nandigram as their emissary. But the struggling peasants particularly those belonging to the minority community gave a big rebuff to such a vile attempt and practically chased the Imam out.

Preparatory stage of 'recapture Nandigram' massacre

When all their attempts to regain control of Nandigram by foul means and trickeries of endless variants proved abortive and public opinion was distinctly going against them by leaps and bound, the CPI(M) leaders in desperation to get back the lost territory without any further delay before the panchayat polls had no other alternative but to bare their fascist fangs. They knew that a repeat operation in connivance with the police on the line of 14 March might prove to be catastrophic. So they decided to use hired killers to orchestrate the gory parade. For that, they did not mince matter to mimic the strategy George Bush adopted before occupying independent sovereign Iraq. As Bush had branded those refusing to endorse Pentagon's views and policies as enemy countries and gave open threat of armed invasion of their territories, so did the CPI(M) chief minister and his colleagues by openly dividing the Nandigram people between "our men and their men" with explicit hostility to the "their men" category.

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Gujarat on the eve of assembly election

Gujarat is going to face the Assembly election in December next. BJP, a bourgeois party playing on Hindu cards and led by the present Chief Minister Narendra Modi with all blessings from the Hindu-communal outfit RSS, forms a major contestant in spite of severe internal squabbles among its state leaders. Congress, another major bourgeois party in power of the union government, out of wit and hence out of action since the Modi-engineered anti-Muslim pogrom of 2002, tries to pose as BJP's major contestant, through making some adjustments with the dissidents of the ruling party and some other forces. The so-called left, CPI(M), true to its alliance with the Congress in the UPA at the Centre, raises, as usual, the plea of communalism and SUCI fights alone.

It may be recalled that Narendra Modi sailed through the last election in 2002 on the main plank of Hindutva, holding the election on the backdrop of a state-engineered anti-Muslim pogrom. This time, it is a clever fusion of Hindutva and 'development' with chauvinist frenzy injected into it, that is being used as the plank. For that, Modi has coined a three 'S' slogan in Gujarati, namely Salamati (security) - Samrudhdhhi (development) - Swabhimani (pride). We will be looking through this slogan soon. To begin with, let us submit that Modi has let loose a liberally fuelled campaign, rather advertisement machinery for the purpose of winning this election cutting across all norms of decency and even election code of conduct. Series of advertisements in leading newspapers, magazines, televisions, hoardings all over the State, a 24-hour channel 'Vande Gujarat' launched to highlight the so-called achievements of Modi-led government, are some of the means. Rallies, 'sammelans' and festivals are being held with lavish spending, along with gearing up of the entire administration particularly for those to be addressed by Modi. For the last six months Modi and his ministers and even central BJP leaders had been laying foundations for crematoriums or for public toilets already in use, inaugurating sewage systems and dhobi ghats, that too in tens of numbers of occasions in a day, draining out hundreds of crore of rupees of public money in the process. The state government has made a documentary entitled "India Tomorrow - The Gujarat Miracle" to project Modi as the sole person who fought the menace of terrorism in Gujarat and brought about development of the state.

The craze for publicity and extravaganza, of course associated with corruption and use of administration have earned Modi the title of a modern Nero. Believed to be the topmost fund-raiser for

BJP, ready to oblige and favour the business houses, industrialists, NRIs for a descent commission, Modi and his government have already been implicated a few times by the CAG. The funds allotted for the 2001 Earthquake or 2002 riot victims were unutilized or mis-utilized. As reported in media, including Gujarat Samachar, allegations of scams involving crores of rupees are there, be it with allotting of contracts of construction of class rooms for schools by the Larsen & Toubro, or removal of debris in earthquake areas or for collecting garbage in cities, or even with allotment for thousands of new toilets without any tender.

On the other hand, expenses on foreign tours of Modi rose to a staggering 16 crore rupees (see, Gujarat Today, 28 September 2007).

It is on this background of corruption and extravaganza, that the three-S campaign has to be judged. To examine how sound and honest the campaign is, let us first take up the point of Samrudhdhhi (development). The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation declared Narendra Modi as the number one CM in India, which compliment Modi never failed to make use of to his own benefit. And in this state of the 'number one CM' 33 Lakh families, holding about one third of the state population, are compelled to live below poverty line (Divyabhaskar, September 11, 2007). The state bears a debt totaling to about Rs. 79,000 crore, whereas per capita debt has reached Rs. 14,683. A mark of prosperity indeed!

Education and health are the two basic needs of the common people. Both are in shambles for them in the state of the 'number one CM' with commercialization, and privatization going in rapid strides, additionally with saffronization of education at all levels forcefully pressed upon by the saffron brigade of the Sangh Parivar. Incidents with the Fine Arts faculty of the M.S. University drew wide attention of

the country, exposing the level of saffronization in the M.S. University. The Vice-Chancellors of universities are selected on the basis of their belonging to the Sangh Parivar. Even for the Syndicate members as also professors of all ranks, the same criterion has become a prerequisite for recruitment or promotion.

Not only institutions for professional education especially Medical and Engineering, even those for general education are in the grip of shameless privatization. The government has stopped setting up of new educational institutions at school levels. Only those promoting self-finance courses are allowed to open (1247 such schools in 5 years). Universities are also pressurized to promote such courses at the cost of their regular ones. In consequence of this drive for Samrudhdhhi, the state of Gujarat now stands 13th in case of Primary Education in the country, 17th in girl education. Thousands of schools run without a toilet (5911), drinking water (855), any compound wall (2427) or electricity (921).

In the field of health, Samrudhdhhi has left the government hospitals in shambles without medicines or doctors and medical staff, while different kinds of fees are levied. Leptospirosis has assumed a menacing form; there were 325 cases with 74 deaths, highest being in rural Surat with 156 cases and 26 deaths (Gujarat Samachar, 18 September 2007). According to the department of Health and Family Welfare, 86% of the 352 PHCs and CHCs in the state are categorized in Grade D, while remaining 14% are in Grade C. About 80% children below 3 years are anemic in the state and 55% children in the state are not fully immunized. More than 40% children in urban areas are undernourished, of which at least 5% suffer from severe malnutrition. 55% women belonging to the age group of 15 to 49 years are anemic (Indian Express, 2 September 2007). 76.45 lakh people in villages have no latrines and 86.35 lakh people have no gutter facilities.

Industrial development, which Modi often boasts of, is another mark of Samrudhdhhi. This, in turn, is also characterized by unbridled privatization in the state. Public Sector Units are being sold or leased out to the favoured industrial houses like Advani, Reliance, Essar

etc. at minimal prices. Lands (over 5000 hectares in the last 5 years) are being leased out or allotted at very nominal rates to the corporate sectors, industrial houses and MNCs. In the same period, the Modi government has given the latter a relief of about 15,000 crore of rupees exempting them from the Sales tax and offering them relief in electricity, while power to the cultivation fields of common peasants still remains an illusion. It has decided to set up 38 SEZs in the state. However, the figures of MOUs are lopsided and the investment seem to be mostly concentrated in the already developed golden corridor from Surat to Ahmedabad.

On the other hand, unemployment is increasing in leaps and bounds. There is virtually no recruitment in government offices, with posts lying vacant and the existing employees compelled to make up for the work. Existing industries are closing down; in 2005 there were 30110 registered industries of which only 22155 are functioning. About 50 lakhs of workers work in most of the unorganized sectors, without any trade union or human rights, even to the extent of safety of their job and life. In the last few years at least 200 workers of quartz crushing factories have died of silicosis. The huge contingent of migrant workers possibly face the worst plight and insecurity. Industrialists, on the other hand, are allowed to violate all kinds of labour acts and laws.

So much for Samrudhdhhi, in brief. On the question of Salamati or security, the buoyant Modi government should first have to answer the accusation of Suresh Mehta, an erstwhile Chief Minister who, reportedly said: "Narendra Modi says that Gujarat is a very safe place for women, for children and for society. I want to contest this. I want to say that the place has become unsafe under his rule." Another former Chief Minister Keshubhai Patel has categorically said that there is a mini emergency in Gujarat under Narendra Modi. Facts corroborate their accusations, for instance by the menacingly rising rate (increased by 6% over the state from 2001 to 2006; in Surat by 27.8%, in Ahmedabad by 15.2) of crime of all sorts, including riots, murders, rapes and atrocities

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Real face of Gujarat does not tally with Modi's tall claim

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against women and children including kidnapping and trafficking. Even a BJP MP, was arrested on the charge of human trafficking. Female foeticide has become rampant ; suicide, even group suicide is on the rise, with 403 farmers committing suicide in the last 4 years. Modi's Gujarat has become notorious for fake encounters including the Soharabuddin case, which figure at 21 in the last 5 years and reveal the collusion between the Police and the government, particularly acting against the minority community. On the contrary to this picture of crime, the Modi government steps ahead to issue 9273 permits for alcohol outlets while the state was under the prohibition. Perhaps to end with the fallacy the government has relaxed the prohibition law on the plea of encouraging tourism and business tours and SEZ in spite of stiff oppositions in the state. Security also entails standing by the distressed people. Flood and water logging are perpetual problems that devastate the state. There is one high profile Disaster Management Authority too. While the latter has turned out to be a white elephant, the victims are left without compensation, whatever be the calamity, yearly flood or water logging or the devastating earthquake that took place 7 years back.

The remaining third aspect of the 3-s campaign is Swabhiman or pride. The shameful incident of the 2002 carnage of Gujarat was condemned by every right thinking man, barring the BJP and Sangh Parivar, who always stood behind Modi and his 'action and reaction' theory of post Godhra riots and never regretted about that 2002 carnage. Modi used it for whipping up a parochial frenzy in the people of that state. Even after these 5 years, the culprits of the carnage are moving around freely and the justice has not been meted out to the Muslim minority. They have not been rehabilitated, the victims still staying in 81 temporary-camps in 11 districts without any government aid. Rather, on the contrary, Modi and the BJP under his leadership are still distributing Trishuls (tridents) at regular intervals and small scale riots are taking place throughout the state. Even caste based clashes are assuming dangerous scale. All this, despite the fact, that in September

2003 the Supreme Court said that they had lost faith in the Gujarat government and in August 2004, it reopened 2100 cases out of a total of 4600.

In such a situation, the TV channel Aaj Tak has recently aired a revelation by a Tehelka investigation team which has thoroughly exposed the 'action reaction theory' of Modi to justify the pogrom and has strikingly held the charges of ethnic cleansing by the Modi government. It has been revealed that Narendra Modi gave three days free hand to VHP, Bajarang Dal to kill Muslims. Police men worked as the hit men for VHP and killed Muslims and supported all kinds of loot ,murder, rape and congratulated the leaders of the carnage and assured all kinds of security to the rioters. Mehsana's government lawyer Dilip Trivedi, who is also a VHP general secretary, says that all have to be 'managed'. 'Judges have to be bought and managed all over Gujarat, witnesses bought and everything needed is done to get the riot accused, acquitted' The Gujarat Samachar daily that once eulogized Modi, could not but conclude that "Godhra riot is the brain child of Modi." The BJP and RSS leadership have, however, not hesitated to stand by Modi terming the entire exercise as a ploy to malign Gujarat, Modi and BJP. The journalist of Aaj Tak is charged of forgery and cheating by the government advocate and an FIR has been filed against him.

The Modi government boastfully talked of their prestigious Narmada River project to create a parochial euphoria of helping people have water in the parched drought affected areas of the state. Ironically 70% of canal works the canal network required for its distribution is yet to be completed. Besides, the drought affected people now find that they have to pay to drink the Narmada water.

It is thus clear that Samrudhdhhi or development which Modi holds up as his mark in his election campaign, has nothing to with the common people. Modi's Gujarat has made the corporates, MNCs and monopolists prosper, while people are robbed of even the minimum basic requirements of life, education health, employment or even security. And Modi conceals this subservience to the

ruling class with the help of the rabid communal policy intermingled with an attempt to whip up parochial frenzy of his so-called Swabhiman or pride. What is the condition of Salamati or security in his rule, is evident from the words of his own party men. Keshubhai Patel, one such BJP leader, even went to the extent of branding Modi as Hitler. Elected to parliamentary forum, Modi, however, has taken every pain to avoid the assembly debates. There were minimum number of Assembly sessions. Even in them Modi's aggressive speeches were oriented rather towards disrupting the debate than promoting it. Obviously in such a condition, MLAs, too, had their free time bothering the least to attend even the skeletal assembly sessions. His highhanded, ruthless leadership which does not spare any opposition even within his party, has invited strong criticisms from even many senior leaders of BJP. But the difference is not based on principle. It is rather centred on the question of leadership, that is power, as they term it as Moditwa, and not Hindutwa. And here Modi still enjoys the advantage of having almost a total support from the ruling class, reflected in the attitude of national leadership of BJP or RSS, among the outfits of the ruling capitalists- monopolists in the state. This politics of Narendra Modi, which is a fusion of rabid communalism and Gujarati parochialism leading to blind, fanatic regimentation dished under the coating of so-called development and yet subserving the ruling class in the best possible way, is the typical fascist politics, which the ruling class requires to overcome the present juncture of their crisis-ridden rule. The capitalist system of India, a part and parcel of the world capitalist-imperialist system is tottering with acute economic recession and market crisis. It breeds continuously industrial recession, and consequent impoverishment of the masses, unemployment, which, in turn, generate ever increasing resentment among the common toiling people. It thus becomes incumbent upon the rulers to take to such politics that diverts people from identifying the root cause of their plight , namely the crisis-ridden capitalist system. Blindness, fanaticism are the effective means towards that end. Side by side, communalism and parochialism are those poisons that provide the seeds

of disunity among people, preventing them from standing united against the common enemy capitalism. And Modi seems to have excelled in dishing out this brand of politics. Thus the business houses, the Chambers of Commerce, CII and industrialists are very comfortable with Narendra Modi here in Gujarat as they are with the UPA Govt. at Centre or the CPI(M)-front Govt. in West Bengal. As a contestant in the parliamentary forum, Congress, another trusted party of the monopolists like the BJP, is trying to put up a fight with Modi's BJP. The fractionalized Congress party is in hope to come to power in the state banking on the incumbency factors among the voters. They assume that the internal contradiction within BJP and the people disenchanted with Modi will vote them to power . But in spite of all criticisms and opposition, Congress did not show up in any perceptible form against the Modi government during its present five year rule. They did not bother seriously to stand by the hapless victims of the Modi-engineered carnage and never fought sincerely for their rehabilitation and employment. Even during her visit to the state after the pogrom, Congress president Sonia Gandhi did not call upon the widow of veteran Congress leader Ehsaan Jafri who had been murdered by rampaging mobs. Now, on the eve of the election, it is playing both the Hindu and the Muslim cards. On one side, it is trying to woe the Sadhus and Sants and trying to play all kinds of soft Hindutva card, while on the other, is trying to pose as the sole saviour of the Muslims and other minorities like Christians. The party is now negotiating deals with BJP rebels, including many who had participated or encouraged the mobs in the carnage. Both Congress and BJP are in race to create the caste oriented vote bank. The BSP too is trying to bring the Dalits and upper caste Brahmins and score in this election after it's success in UP. In fact, the politics Modi follows in Gujarat has no difference with the politics of serving the capitalists-monopolists, the Congress follows at the Centre. And that takes the steam out of the barrel of Congress and other bourgeois parties.

Obviously, such politics of the major bourgeois parties have

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CPI(M) leaders find mentors in Bush and Modi

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Then Lakshman Sett, the notorious CPI(M) MP from Haldia who was assigned the job of masterminding the fiendish attack on Nandigram people openly declared in a public meeting in end October at a place adjacent to Nandigram that they were going to use brute force to recapture Nandigram where only the proposed chemical hub would be set up. Close on the heels, Brinda Karat, the CPI(M) polit bureau member said in Calcutta that the agitating peasants of Nandigram would be given a lesson by employing *Dum Dum dawai* which means to beat people brutally and kill them if it is required by engaging musclemen. Brinda Karat's prescription for quelling dissent was reinforced when Biman Basu, her polit bureau friend and state secretary had no hesitation in announcing that they were not going to hurl rasagollas (a round shaped sweet delicacy of Bengal) to the fighting Nandigram people. One would recall that immediately before the March 14 operation, Benoy Konar, another senior CPI(M) leader divulged before camera that their plan was to "encircle Nandigram from all sides and make life hell for the protesting people." Next, as Bush had raised the bogey of Iraq having weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the chief minister suddenly discovered that the Nandigram resistance was being spearheaded by Maoists. As Bush administration even published forged photographs of installation sites of WMD in Iraq to buttress his sinister agenda, so did CPI(M) chief minister by announcing names of Maoist leaders who reportedly had sneaked into Nandigram. Intention was very clear. Under the pretext of curbing terrorism and destroying WMD, Bush annexed Iraq by sheer use of brute military might flouting all international law and barest precepts of democracy. Similarly, basking under the plea of taking on Maoists, the CPI(M) chief minister would elicit approbation in deploying Central Reserve Police and other para-military forces at Nandigram. Also this 'Maoist' fabrication could be drawn upon conveniently in justifying recapture of Nandigram with armed goons by releasing stories of landmines and so forth.

Execution of fascist operation

In order that the struggling

people apprehending a large scale violence locating massive mobilization of armed criminals and musclemen on the Khejuri side, could be distracted from offering resistance with whatever they had, the local administration, under the directive of the CPI(M) government, convened a meeting on 5th November as if there was a political process on roll to bring back peace in Nandigram. Both CPI(M) leaders and representatives of BPUC participated in the meeting where most of the demands including stopping of firing from the Khejuri side, seizing of illegal arms in Khejuri and providing relief material to the displaced villagers, were accepted.

But all this impression of revival of conciliatory mechanism proved to big hoax when from 7th morning, trampling underfoot all the promises, the CPI(M) criminals began their murderous operation in full swing rendering administration completely inactive. All entry points to Nandigram were cut off to declare a war of attrition on the poor villagers refusing to part with their fertile land. Since then, there was no let up to this beastly savagery. Barrage of bullets pierced the bodies of the fighting peasants. Women lifted from their houses, tortured, raped and then either killed or abandoned in the field. With daggers drawn, the CPI(M) criminals ransacked the houses, set them ablaze and mercilessly beat up the old, children, patients and physically handicapped. Many of them have either succumbed to the injury or are gasping in death pain. Even when Nandigram was under such a ghastly attack by the hired killers of the CPI(M), with police remaining as a silent if not indulgent onlooker obviously under instructions from the administration that has practically turned into an appendage of the CPI(M), the state chief secretary announced that the state government would pay compensation worth Rs 2 lakhs to the families of those who died in the police firing on 14th March and also agreed to quite a few conditions laid down by BPUC leaders for establishing peace in the area. He said the proposal to leave out areas under Nandigram police station out of the jurisdiction of the Haldia Development Authority is still under consideration and indicated that action would be taken against the police officers found guilty in

the probe. But at the same breath, he reiterated: "We have information that some of the Maoists are in the area but we do not know the extent to which they are abetting or supporting the movement against the government."

In order to give a rebuff to the government vending the Maoist story of violence being perpetrated by dreaded armed terrorists, BPUC decided to organize peace processions of unarmed villagers on 10th November morning. Accordingly two big processions were taken out. Thousands of people including women and children joined the processions to give vent to their protest. Suddenly, the CPI(M)-sponsored gangsters who were on a killing mission swooped down on the peace processions like locusts, bullets rained on unarmed poor people from all sides. It is yet to be ascertained as to how many people have fallen to these bullets and how many more seriously injured. The CPI(M) hoodlums did not allow the dead bodies to be removed. Instead they dragged the bodies towards Khejuri side to silently hush them up. Even anyone intending to rescue the bullet-struck people was greeted with barrage of bullets. Those killed and injured include women as well. There is huge mismatch in the official version and the eye witnesses' accounts in so far as the number of casualties is concerned. Yet, the number of those killed would be in hundreds as per most conservative estimates. Around 2000 people were abducted to Khejuri and subjected to concentration camp-like torture. This has outraged the people throughout the state and sensing public mood our party gave a call of 24-hour general strike on Monday, the 12 November. Meanwhile, killing, loot, arson, torching houses, ransacking properties, mass rape went on without relent. At least 20,000 people were hounded out of their homes and many of them had to be given shelter at relief camps set up at Nandigram College. Others just congregated in the open space in front of Nandigram police station. The spectre of the horror and terror, the trauma still loom large on the faces of the victims, eye witnesses and the family members of those killed or tortured. This is how the CPI(M) leaders have completed their planned 'takeover' of Nandigram drenched in blood of

poor people and are boasting of having established peace under gunpoint.

With fists clamped in firm resolve, the brave peasants tried to resist the armed assault. May be in the face of this barbarity of unprecedented dimension they had to beat a temporary retreat but there has been no bending of morale of the fighting Nandigram people. Their bodies bruised but their spirits unbroken by bullets fired and investives hurled at them. Our local comrades and leaders have been playing an exemplary role in co-ordinating the resistance movement braving all threats and risking life. Comrade Nanda Patra and Bhabani Das, as one of the secretaries and convenors respectively of BPUC led from the front and emerged as living source of inspiration for all who are in a position to distinguish our politics vis a vis that of the others.

And then unfolded another chapter. Tapan Ghosh and Sukur Ali, two CPI(M) district level leaders wanted by the CBI in the 2001 Chhoto Angaria massacre (On January 4, 2001, six people were killed and the house of an opposition supporter torched at Chhoto Angaria in Midnapur district) and charged under Section 364 (abduction), 307 (attempt to murder), 326 (group assault), 201 (destruction of evidence) and 120 B (smuggling by misleading) of the IPC were intercepted by our comrades and some Trinamool Congress activists along with 11 other CPI(M) criminals when they were trying to smuggle out three injured BUPC activists in a government car with the intention to kill. Interestingly, in connivance with police, Sukur Ali and Tapan Ghosh, hitherto declared 'fugitives' by the police, tried to impersonate themselves as Saiful Ali Khan and Madan Kar respectively. But when the lawyers of the complainant showed the photographs of the duo published in newspapers, they had to admit their identity. The CPI(M) leaders in defence argued that the duo went to Digha, a nearby sea resort, for holidaying before Diwali. They also called the duo as "assets" and garlanded them before they were remanded in jail custody. It is also reported that many such anti-socials from areas neighbouring East and West Midnapur districts vanished immediately before

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Civil Society rises up against CPI(M) for committing horrendous genocide

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CPI(M) launched its assault for retake, of Nandigram. The homecoming has started only now and they all have one answer for their excuse: they were holidaying in Digha during Diwali. A district level leader of adjoining Hoogly district (where Singur is located) did not bat an eyelid when he admitted his men were "helping" their "ousted" people in Nandigram returning home. "If we had not come together, this recapture this would never have happened," said he. (*Times of India* 14-11-07) It does not require much intelligence to understand that it was the CPI(M) leaders who conducted the entire operation by mobilizing hired killers from outside and then tried to escape under direct patronage of the party top brass and administration.

It is also revealed that on 5th November, the central government expressed its inability to send reserve force to Nandigram. Immediately, under instructions from the highest level of police, the existing police camp at Tekhali, the main entry point to Nandigram from Khejuri side where the CPI(M) had mobilized armed criminals was withdrawn and all police bunkers dismantled. And it was only after that the beastly savagery raved wild. Finally, the CRP arrived on 12th November and after initial dilly dallies, the state government allowed them to go to Nandigram for flag march. The whole design then became clear. The well-orchestrated operation was conducted by a nexus of central government-CPI(M) central headquarters at Delhi — State government-CPI(M) state headquarters at Alimuddin Street, Calcutta. Planfully, deployment of CRP was delayed so as to enable the CPI(M) criminal brigade end the operation before the forces arrived. It may be added that as per recent Tehelka exposure, Narendra Modi too, in the post-Godhra pogrom, instructed the anti-socials belonging to his subservient Sangh Parivar to do whatever they wanted in three days after which police intervention would take place. So it was free for the criminals and hoodlums of Sangh Parivar on those three blood-curdled days. In a similar enactment, 'takeover Nandigram' by the hired killers of the CPI(M) was

completed in a span of six days in absence of either state or central armed forces. This is the face of fascism unfurling in the country today with all brutality and mendacity.

Front Partners, Home Secretary pointed fingers at CPI(M)

So glaring has been everything that the associates distanced themselves from the CPI(M). In a pithily-worded resolution RSP, Forward Bloc and the CPI, inter alia, said, "We are totally opposed to it. The CPI-M alone is responsible for this unfortunate turn of events....We don't support wanton violence as a means to find a solution in Nandigram". Adding to the CPI-M's woes, Kshiti Goswami, the state PWD minister and RSP leader, announced that he does not want to remain in the Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee Cabinet. "The CPI-M wants bloodshed to recapture its lost territory, trampling down democracy. I cannot accept a situation where innocent people are being subjugated through brutal use of force.... Peace in Nandigram has been forced upon the vanquished by the victor." he said.

The state home secretary (incidentally, the chief minister himself holds the home portfolio) too confirmed to the press on 8th that the firing started from the Khejuri side and that the "CPI-M had gained fresh ground in Nandigram... after fresh violence nearly 2,000 people have been displaced again, mostly belonging to BUPC," He also admitted that Nandigram had turned into a 'war zone' and there was no police in the areas captured by the CPI(M).

Text of Governor's statement on Nandigram

The situation had turned so grave and the CPI(M)-sponsored massacre assumed so alarming a proportion that even the Governor of West Bengal (Gopal Krishna Gandhi, great grandson of Mahatma Gandhi) was impelled to come out with a press statement on 9th November in which he, inter alia, indicted the CPI(M) and its government for spreading violence. In a strong criticism of the CPI-M, Governor observed in the statement: "The ardour of Deepavali (festival of lights) has been dampened in the

whole State by the events in Nandigram. Large numbers of armed persons from outside the district have, it is undeniable, forced themselves onto villages in Nandigram Block I and II for territorial assertion. No Government or society can allow a war zone to exist without immediate and effective action. But the manner in which the "recapture" of Nandigram villages is being attempted is totally unlawful and unacceptable....I find it equally unacceptable that while Nandigram has been ingressed with ease by armed people on the one hand, political and non-political persons trying to reach it have been violently obstructed. Some of them were bearing relief articles for the homeless. The treatment meted to Smt. Medha Patkar and other associates for hers last evening was against all norms of civilized political behaviour...Enough is enough. I have also asked the administration to remove unauthorized blocks at entry points to Nandigram." As usual, the CPI(M) leaders took umbrage at this and sniped at the Governor for, what they called, not an 'impartial' statement as, according to Biman Basu, CPI(M)'s state secretary, "governor has issued the statement without consulting CPI(M)". But the futility of argument was only but chuckle-worthy.

Maoist storyline of Nandigram exposed

But the foppery of the CPI(M) top leaders pursuing overlordism and brigandage with alacrity has fragility of its own. The deliberate fabrication and falsehood of the CPI(M) leaders are getting exposed every moment. As mentioned above, starting from Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, Biman Basu and Jyoti Basu to Prakash Karat everybody went on paraphrasing the tale of 'Maoist-sponsored violence in Nandigram' to justify their occupation of Nandigram with armed criminals. Even on 12th afternoon, Prakash Karat in his press briefing in Delhi narrated the tale with all requisite frills. But on 13th, the state home secretary dismissed presence of any Maoist force in Nandigram. This reconfirmed what we have been saying from the day the story was aired that this is a subterfuge to

unleash the violence. The same was with Bush who after occupying Iraq came out with the alibi that he was wrongly informed about Saddam possessing WMD. In Vietnam, the US imperialists justified their intervention on the grounds that they were protecting the dubious democracy of South Vietnam (a client state of US industrial-military complex). Likewise, the CPI(M) is out to vindicate its sending hired killers and armed mercenaries brought in from outside on the plea that it is combating a subversive alliance of BUPC and unspecified 'Maoists'. Bush had no retribution for the mass murder in Iraq nor did have his predecessors. So is Buddhadeb, unrepentant for the successive carnages organized at his direct patronage. Rather, he is now in Calcutta Film festival to revel unabashedly in, what an eminent intellectual has said, 'horrific joy' and showing insolence par excellence in holding brief for this planned massacre vending the theories of 'Maoist terrorism' or 'smooth passage for return of the CPI(M) homeless'. What a nefarious effort to crush and malign an epoch-making democratic movement of the oppressed toiling impoverished people.

State is in ferment

The conscientious people of the state are furious over such an orchestrated carnage and plunder. In fact there is hate and despise all around. Those few within the CPI(M) rank who have not yet been entirely disgorged of human essence has been showing dissent to their party line. A host of celebrities, renowned artists, educationists, writers, poets, film and theatre personalities, scientists, teachers, jurists, journalists, law and medical practitioners, cultural activists and thinking people from all walks of life have come out in protest of such a savage bestiality and expressing solidarity with struggling peasants by surrendering coveted awards bestowed on them by the state government, resigning from the various government-run bodies and academies, declining to join any government-sponsored programme or function, walking down the streets of Kolkata and district towns, raising funds for the kin of the victims of this carnage and

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Bihar observes Bandh called by SUCI on Reshma Katun incident

In protest against the rape and killing of Reshma Khatun and ghastly attack on the journalists who had gone to report the incident, both by the mafia don turned JDU legislator Anant Singh and his cohorts, SUCI called a Bihar Bandh on November 2, last. People responded spontaneously to register their indignation by making the bandh successful, in the capital city Patna, as well as in Muzaffarpur, Munghyr, Bhagalpur and other districts. At Patna police heckled and arrested SUCI workers leading squads campaigning for the Bandh. Comrade Shiv Shankar, the Bihar State Secretary, in his brief

statement, said that the incident brought out the fact that in the same manner as it had been during the 15 years of RJD rule, the Nitish-led government is taking to governance with the help of a nexus of police-political leaders-criminals, the outcome of which is amply evident in the incident. He added that people cannot expect any end to such rapes, killings and kidnapping with the corrupt parliamentary bourgeois parties in power. It requires an intensive mass movement on the edifice of higher culture and ethics to bring any relief from the present situation.



SUCI workers campaigning at Patna for Bihar Bandh on November 2, in protest of rape and killing of Reshma Khatun

Seminar on the Problems and Prospects of the Hydro-Electric Projects in Sikkim

On 20th July 2007, at the initiative of AIDS0, Sikkim State Organising Committee a meeting regarding construction of large number of Hydel Power projects in Sikkim ignoring possibility of ecological disasters like devastating flash floods, widespread land slides endangering the life and livelihood of the local residents, particularly the vanishing tribe Lepcha was organized in which student representatives of three government colleges of Sikkim and many students and common people took part and from there a public committee, "People's Action Committee on Hydroelectric Projects in Sikkim" was formed with Com. Ramesh Sharma, the Secretary, State Organizing Committee of AIDS0, as the Secretary of it.

Under the auspices of this People's Action Committee a

Seminar was organized on "Problems and Prospects of Hydro-Electric Projects in Sikkim" on 7th October 2007 at Limboo Bhawan, Gangtok. Comrade Hemant Dawarhi, President Sikkim State Organising Committee of AIDS0 presided over the Seminar and Dawa Lepcha, member of the Action Committee, Prof Soumitro Banerjee, IIT Kharagpur, Secretary, Breakthrough Science Society, Prof Damodar Maity, IIT Kharagpur, Dr. Debiprasad Boot, Centre for Himalayan Studies, North Bengal University, Prof. R. P Upadhyay, Principal, Sikkim Government Law College, Gangtok, Mr. B. L. Nirola, researcher on the environment impact of the Teesta V project and Comrade Sourav Mukherjee, member of Secretariat, All India Committee of AIDS0 were the speakers in the Seminar.

Oncoming Gujarat Election

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nothing to do with the interest of common people. It was then necessary for the left, democratic and secular parties, forces and citizens of the state to forge unity of whatever strength they have in the state, on a common programme of launching democratic movement on people's burning problems of life and fight the election as a part of that movement. Only such a united platform could have provided an alternative to the people's voice and an instrument of struggle to press upon peoples' demands and concern to be considered as issues of the election. But CPI(M)- CPI's alliance with Congress led UPA and their indifference towards this endeavor acted as an obstacle to form such people's platform. Rather, in the name of fighting communalism, they promoted and defended Congress in this state to combat BJP rule and to resist the come back of BJP. In fact, their shameless, ruthless and fascistic suppression of democratic movements, as is reflected in barbarous incidents like those of Nandigram, Singur or attacks on intellectuals in Calcutta protesting their acts, only to give effect to their

politics of total subservience to the ruling capitalists-monopolists, indicate clearly that they are no longer a force to act for people's interest. Their actions only create confusion in the mind of democratic and secular minded forces and the people, and stand as an obstacle to crystallizing the people's platform which our party has been trying tirelessly.

Under these circumstances the election is going to be held in the state. Pre-poll violence is increasing day by day Even the minimum democratic atmosphere in the state for electioneering is proving absent for the parties like SUCI. Whereas the major parties are flaying all the code of conducts of EC and indulging in free-flowing of funds and associated means, public collection at Baroda for raising fighting funds, on which only SUCI thrives, was banned by Police terming it as the violation of the code of conduct. In any case and under the circumstances SUCI has decided to contest the election and support left, democratic, secular, progressive candidates tested on the edifice of people's movement and reflecting high moral and cultural standard.

Join Grand Anti-Imperialist Rally with participants from various countries of Asia, Africa, Europe, US and Latin America On 27 November in Calcutta

Make Anti-Imperialist International Conference on 28- 29 November at Mahajati Sadan, Calcutta a grand success

SUCI Candidates in Gujarat Election

Assembly constituencies	Candidate
Ellisbridge (Ahmedabad)	Comrade Bhavik Raja
Sayaji Gunj (Vadodara)	Comrade Tapan Dasgupta
Chouraqs (Surat)	Comrade Satyendra Singh

Nandigram — a generic symbol of protest

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thousands of hapless people still suffering. Many of them have boycotted Calcutta Film festival now on in the city in the presence of the killer chief minister. In fact, police tortured and lathicharged many veteran intellectuals and artists when they were holding peaceful demonstration on 11th November in front of the festival venue. This added fuel to the fire and many more intellectuals hitherto uninitiated joined the protest. Members of government-sponsored Natya Academy (Theatre Academy) have announced boycott of ensuing drama festival. At our initiative, 12th and 13th November were observed as All-India protest day and Nandigram martyrs' day respectively.

A historic grand rally was taken out by these intellectuals, artistes and all sections of well-meaning people on 14th. It was a silent rally but the message was loud and clear. It was a procession Calcutta had never seen before. Celebrated filmmakers, writers, painters, actors and singers joined busy

professionals, students, youths, and common men from all walks of life in this massive rally. Lines from "We shall overcome", a staple of left movement rent the air. "We have not deviated from leftist ideology. It is the government which has turned fascist", said Bibhas Chakraborty, an eminent theater personality and a key figure in the movement of the intellectuals and artists.

Resist this fascist insanity

This insanity must stop. Nandigram people must get justice. Those responsible for perpetrating such murderous assault must be meted out exemplary punishment. CPI(M) leaders must have to be taken to task for such a mass murder under fraudulent pretext and deactivating the administration. The civil society has risen up to the occasion. Bestirred and spurred to break open the shackles, unchain themselves from decade long inertia, toiling people have now taken to the streets in demand for justice and upped the ante against the crime on the humanity by those masquerading

as Marxists but nurturing lust for power and bigger parliamentary ambition through faithful subservience of ruling capitalism. Like Vietnam or Iraq, Nandigram today is not a geographic locale but a generic symbol, an all-encompassing rallying point of protest against the oppression of the poor and have-nots by the powerful rulers. When large dose of brinkmanship takes the country to the brink, mayhem degenerates into even more bloody anarchy, the common citizen cranes his back and strains his eyes in a futile effort

to pierce the haze that perceptibly hangs on the screen, deep-rooted frustration swats at everything in sight, the sprouting of this new hope can only illumine the path. People at large must break silence, refrain from acquiescing in the moves and take up cudgel to forestall criminalized politics by rallying behind the genuine revolutionary politics based on higher ethics and culture. Only then the lyric penned in memory of the martyrs or in salutation of the brave fighters of Nandigram would be true rendition of the song of life.



All India Nandigram Protest Day observed in states on 12 November (Clockwise from top) Delhi, Assam, Orissa, Kerala and Haryana



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