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How free and fair have been these elections !

Since completion of the elections to the five state Assemblies on 10th May the Chief Election Commissioner Mr. M.S. Gill and the respective state governments are boastfully claiming that the elections have been completed most freely and fairly. Let us have an idea how free and fair the elections actually were to reflect 'people's verdict'.

West Bengal

Just after the conclusion of the voting in the state the Chief Election Commissioner Mr. Gill congratulated the Chief Election Officer in West Bengal, Mr. Sabyasachi Sen for his efficient and good governance of the election process and completing the election freely and fairly. In the night of 10th May, repoll in only 14 booths were ordered but a day later the Election Commission had to declare repoll in 90 booths as against demand for repoll in 3500 booths made by the contesting parties. Since as far back as 1972 our party has been constantly saying that rigging has been a part and parcel of the election process in these days and that it is done not only violently but also silently with the help of the police and administration. This time it is more glaring even. Readers can have just a glimpse of what actually had happened on the day of polling from the following excerpts from daily press :

"Time to Take Stock

Elections being reduced to a farce

... Every party in a position of relative strength has indulged in rigging, in observing the Manual of Election Law painstakingly put together by the Election Commission in the breach — in burning, looting, indulging in political cleansing of opponents from whole villages, in threatening poll personnel, in casting votes without identification, in manipulating even electronic voting machines and when this is difficult, breaking them or throwing them out of the window. Without exaggeration this is what passes for expression of the people's will... The Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, lays down procedures to be followed if a voter after proper identification, finds that someone else, obviously in fraud or by force, has already cast a vote that is not his to cast. The genuine voter thus denied has to follow procedures laid down for a *tendered ballot paper* under Rule 42, and hand it to the presiding officer who is enjoined to keep it in his custody; may add up to evidence justifying a repoll. The Chief Electoral Officer in Kolkata, Sabyasachi Sen publicly says that tender votes are

a nuisance and he will not allow them. The Election Commission might like to take notice. Further the Commission have given clear instructions that Central forces sent to the states going to the polls must be deployed. There are innumerable instances where they have been held at District Headquarter or at police thanas, whose staff belong to political unions by grace and favour of the state government and can no more act independently than fly. Police officers are known to have taken Central forces to wrong booths with malice aforethought..." comments *The Statesman*, 12 May in the Editorial.

"I An Indian

With proof of identity or without

... More than the rigging and booth-jamming, now almost par for the course, the striking feature of Thursday's election was that one could vote without proving one's identity. Of course the two main contestants forced electoral personnel to accept dubious voters' slips. That conditions were conducive for both CPI-M and Trinamul goons to make a mockery of a mandatory requirement only suggests that the commission's representatives had balked at performing an elementary duty. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. the Election Commission virtually stumbled from North to South 24 Parganas via most of the 22 constituencies of Kolkata. If proof of identity was called for, it was more an exception than the rule. Still more galling was the silence of the parties, not even a murmur of a protest to the Chief Election Commissioner. ... The voter has been insulted and the office of the CEC disgraced by its supposedly august envoys and plenipotentiaries in West Bengal. Mr M S Gill needs to get to the bottom of the mess — a full probe will almost certainly take the lid off a pretty kettle of fish. It might confirm reports that activists on both sides manned the booths while local EC and state officials played second fiddle.... With central police rendered inert with malice aforethought, the bumbling Calcutta/state police tried to do the bidding of political goons, mostly of the CPI-M to whom they owe their allegiance as a trade union, as though it was *puja pandal* duty. Never since 1972, has an election

**Despite Large Scale
Violence and Rigging
SUCI
Defying all Odds
Retains Seats at
Joynagar
(margin 15,700 votes)
and Kultali
(margin above 4000 votes)
in West Bengal**

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee Condemns Privatisation In Defence Sector

Strongly protesting against the decision of opening defence industries to private corporate sectors, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI issued the following statement to the press on 11th May, 2001 :

"The NDA Government led by BJP have decided to mortgage the country's security by opening defence industries to private corporate sectors with 26% FDI.

"This decision of opening this highly sensitive sector like defence to foreign capital is fraught with dangerous consequences because besides anything else, these foreign imperialist powers who are engaged in military espionage activities will have free access to our country's security.

"We demand the immediate rescinding of this decision."

been marked by such collective atrophy of the administration." (*Ibid*, editorial, May 13).

How did all these materialize?

A Report on Kultali

"We'll kill you and feed you to the tigers"

"Red party feels the red heat"

"It is alleged that terror unleashed by CPI-M cadres on the polling day knew no bounds.

The Statesman found some SUCI polling
(Contd. on page 5)

SAARC Regional Trade Union Seminar In Dhaka

At the call of the Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau of the WFTU a SAARC Regional Trade Union Seminar with "Problems of Migrant Workers" on the agenda was held on 5th April, 2001 in Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh. It was followed by an Asia-Pacific Regional General Council (WFTU) meeting on 6th — the items on the agenda having been — a) Co-ordination of Trade Union struggles taking place in Asia-Pacific countries against the ill-effects of Neo-liberal globalisation : unemployment, poverty, Trade Union Rights etc. and b) Publication of Monthly Bulletin - WFTU Flashes. In continuation a two-day National Conference (7th) of the Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra was convened and held on 7th & 8th April, 2001 in the same city where all the affiliates of the WFTU were invited. Comrade Sankar Saha, Secretary, All India Committee, UTUC-LS and Member, General Council, WFTU represented the United Trade Union Centre-Lenin Sarani, India in all the events, referred to above.

At the SAARC Seminar on 5th Comrade Saha submitted a paper in which he gave an estimate of the growing trend in the annual outflow of the Indian labour, mainly with reference to the Middle East, which just in a decade has quadrupled from 1.14 lakh in 1986 to 4.15 lakh in 1995. He referred to yet another stunning revelation exposed by the World Development Report of 1995 that at least 125 million hapless people, world over were forced to live a migrant life, having failed to secure even an humblest living in their own. The figure does not include the vast number of inter-state and intra-state migrations within the national boundary of India or any other country. In his brief address Comrade Saha recognized the imperatives of enacting laws and rules at national and/or international level and their strict observance in protecting these prostrated people of sub-human identity from the ruthless exploitation, slow dehumanisation and utter ruination. He at the same time, warned that the measures, can, by no means, eradicate the root cause of the problem. An honest effort to deal with the problem demands of us to find out the causes that deny millions to jobs/living in land of their birth. He asserted that the growing unemployment problem, owes its genesis to the exploitative capitalist economy which is seminally incapable of generating jobs enough to provide employment to everyone in the society — which, in turn, forces the swelling army of the unemployed, in their desperation, to take the plunge into the uncertain and seek a living in the land unknown. He further added that the policy of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation aided by WTO prescription whose central thrust is to drastically cut the workforce everywhere, has aggravated the problem further. Comrade Saha concluded with an appeal to all the members of the WFTU SAARC Region and those of the Asia-Pacific to build up Trade Union movement in their respective country as well as at regional level with such decisive direction that an economic system free from exploitation and capable of generating enough employment to ensure jobs for all becomes a reality. The concluding session of the SAARC Seminar was presided over by Comrade Abdulla Sarkar of Bangladesh Samajtantrik

Sramik Front.

On the 6th April, 2001 the meeting of WFTU General Council Members of Asia-Pacific Region with Comrade K. L. Mahendra, President, WFTU in chair, was held. Comrade Sankar Saha proposed to delete the coinage "against ill-effects of neo-liberal globalisation" in the agenda as it might lead to confusion that globalisation has both good and ill effects. The proposition was accepted with majority support.

In his paper submitted on the agenda Comrade Saha pulled down the mask woven around the so-called globalisation and laid bare its real appearance thus : "It must be understood that the present phase of capitalism which its chieftains and a section of intelligentsia and majority of the media controlled by the monopolists glorify as globalisation is not basically a new stage of development of history but has come about in continuation of development of capitalism - imperialism as a latest prescription to bail it out of its insoluble and constantly intensifying crisis threatened with collapsing devastation". In its present perspective globalisation is a grand design built into a definite frame-work by which the imperialists of the world headed by the US, have planned to destabilise and destroy systematically the economies of the developing, less-developed and under-developed countries and redivide the world market so created among themselves. The strategy applied to achieve it is two-pronged — collaboration and subjugation. The institutions engaged in executing the strategy are the notorious trio - IMF, WB and WTO. With reference to dozens of data Comrade Saha demonstrated how globalisation has devastated our industry and economy and ruined our people and more particularly the working people.

Coming to the question of building up effective co-ordination among the countries of Asia-Pacific Region fighting against the policy of 'Neo-liberal globalisation' and deriving benefit therefrom Comrade Saha stressed the necessity of exchanging the experiences with one another, gained from their respective struggle taking lessons to profit by that, identifying mistakes and lapses or acts of omission or commission in adopting and following a correct line, standing steadfastly beside one another in their common struggle deciding on a common plan of action for the entire region and lastly developing a sustained struggle based on ideological unity and solidarity.

He concluded with an appeal to the members of the General Council to launch a sustained and vigorous struggle tempered and steeled on ideological unity to defeat and demolish the pernicious policy as pledged in the 'Millennium Declaration', of the 14th Conference of WFTU.

As an instrument of exchanging information, sharing experience, bridging up communication gap, updating awareness about the direction and development of on-going movements in the region which, no doubt, will have an immense salutary effect on progressive consolidation of co-ordination the meeting resolved publication of a

monthly Bulletin titled — "WFTU — Flashes" with each copy to cost Rs.5/-.

Comrade Saha also attended the open session of Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra on 7th April and handed over a written address to the President of the Conference. He opened his speech with an emotional reference to so many things common to both the countries — namely a common past, common culture, common language, common rivers, common monsoon — in fact, the list is endearingly long, like of which, perhaps, no two other geographical neighbours, in the world, ever have. While these will continue to remain our constant reference points ever drawing us closer to each other Comrade Saha regretted that a strange twist of destiny has, today, landed the people, particularly the working people of both these sovereign states in almost the same economic quagmire. Working people of both these countries are subjected to ruthless exploitation in consequence of operation in full gear of the policy of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation launched by the big national capital in league with multinational capital overseen by IMF, World Bank and WTO. Under the current regime of Neo-liberal globalisation, governing the economy of both the countries, social security and welfare activities under the initiative of Govt. have been given a go-by with the result that commercialisation of education and health care has come to take their place making education and treatment a highly expensive affair beyond the reach of the ordinary people who constitute 90% of the population of both the countries. By the compound effect of continuous erosion of employment opportunity, downsizing existing strength, closing down both public and private sector enterprises, amputating Government Departments, divesting shares, selling public enterprises and introduction of VRS the unemployment problem on either side of the border has fast been reaching an explosive point. In their desperation to survive people including working people take recourse to means - most dirty and despicable, inconceivable in normal hours. There is no question of accepting it lying down and perish silently in the process. As affiliates of WFTU we share, he said, seats in common in SAARC and Asia-Pacific region. The challenges that confront us stemming from the policy and programmes of neo-liberal globalisation have placed us on the same battle ground to fight against similar grouping of enemies. Therefore, in view of the identity of causes of the two peoples, and in response to the call for close co-ordination among the trade-unions of the region to fight out the onslaught of neo-globalisation as given from the meeting of General Council (WFTU) Asia-Pacific Region only the day before Comrade Saha called upon the BTUK to direct their efforts towards that end so that the workers of the two countries rise in battle, shoulder to shoulder. In this context he sounded a note of fraternal caution that militant Trade Unionism based on ideology, prepared for ultimate struggle, has been disappearing in both countries. Unless the malady is taken care of, all battle will end up in futility. He concluded with warmest greetings to the members attending the Conference.

BJP's Sinister Design to Introduce 'Vedic Astrology', 'Vastu Shastra' and 'Purohitya' at University Level

The University Grants Commission (UGC), the highest policy-making and funding body for higher education in this country, has recently taken a move, at the bidding of the Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Murli Manohar Joshi of the BJP, for introduction of regular university-level courses in 'Vedic Astrology', 'Vastushastra' and 'Purohitya' or Karmakanda (that is, ceremonial rituals performed by the priests) in the Indian universities from the coming academic year. At least one section of the scientific community of the country has come out to protest against this move, calling it an 'attempt to legitimise pseudo-science and superstition', 'a giant leap backwards, undermining whatever scientific credibility our country may have so far achieved'.

This move comes in line with other such steps to the same end already taken by the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre. Beneath the uproar of squabbles and mud-slinging among the parliamentary parties, scams and scandals, mockery of elections to anyhow retain and regain power, the calculated bid to undermine reason, rationality, scientific temper and philosophical tolerance, and to foster in its place obscurantism, bigotry and a fundamentalist regimentation through pursuit of the Hindutva agenda often goes unnoticed. They are rewriting history from their virulently communal viewpoint, but in the name of countering the Western viewpoint with a so-called Indian viewpoint, brazenly resorting to forgery of historical evidence to suit their end. Projecting Sanskrit as the 'most highly acclaimed international language' and the 'mother' of all Indian languages, they have launched the offensive to make Sanskrit compulsory to learn from class VIII, if not from earlier, to class XII. Generous funds have been allocated for institutes pursuing objectives having to do with the traditional Hindu religious culture, whereas distinguished centres of study of natural sciences, social sciences, literature and modern Indian languages are deprived of necessary support. In taking these steps they are flouting standing rules, laid-down procedures and academic norms, doing it both stealthily and high-handedly. The decision on opening independent departments of Vedic Astrology and Purohitya itself was taken at a meeting of the UGC without proper discussions and bypassing the standing rules for the purpose. They have packed committees and advisory bodies with persons of proven RSS affiliation in order to guide committee decisions to what the RSS-BJP combine desires. In this pursuit, a self-confessed killer, K G Rastogi, who is an RSS swayamsewak, was made a member of the selection committee of the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT), and later he had been shifted as a departmental advisor to two other committees of the same NCERT when the proud self-confession printed in his autobiography came to public knowledge. A more recent example is how the jury for the National Film Awards this year had been packed with supporters of the RSS ideology to rig the process of rating films for award. These are a few examples to reveal the rabidly communal-ideological motive behind the programme of

saffronisation of education and culture which the RSS, through its political outfit, the BJP, is carrying out as a calculated step to implement its Hindutva agenda. It is a welcome feature that a section of the intelligentsia has been protesting against this RSS-sponsored design.

But this is a design every facet of which all the working people ought to be aware of, because of the grave danger it poses to the life and future of the masses of the people of this country. For the present, we shall be concerned with the latest of the attempt, that is, the RSS-BJP combine's move through the UGC to pass off superstition as science and push the people further into the dark of ignorance and fulfil its nefarious design.

In justification of its move the UGC has argued that Vedic Astrology lets one know the events happening in human life and universe on time-scale, helping to see the unforeseen. "The distinguished feature of this subject is that it makes us familiar with Time, its nature and feature and its effects on human life and other events and that way it helps us to manage and make optimal utilisation of time. ... (It) will also add a new dimension for research in the fields of Hindu-Mathematics, Vastushastra, Meteorological Studies, Agriculture Science, Space Science, etc.

It is a fact that since centuries a kind of faith in astrology, palmistry and the like has been widespread among the people. From where did the faith arise and spread among the people to influence their thinking into believing that happenings in life and society are controlled and shaped by supernatural forces exerted from outside by the heavenly bodies? Is astrology really a science? Does it represent truth regarding the events and courses of life and society, allowing man to foresee the future and take precaution to manage bad times when evils will disturb, and ensure good times when the desirables will come forth?

Astrology is understood as the study of the effect of the heavenly bodies, that is the celestial bodies like stars and planets, on human life. History of its origins testifies to the fact that many centuries ago astrology was closely connected with astronomy. Later they diverged into two different fields of altogether different characters, and should not be confused. Social sciences have revealed that all human studies, including the different fields of science, have each arisen under specific social-historical conditions, being prompted by a social need for production of the necessities of life. Early man knew, for instance, that the sunshine and rain that made the crops grow came from the sky, but did not know what these lights and rains were. Fish were more available during the full moon. The rainy season and winter called for shelter to be sought in advance. Watching the sun, moon, stars and planets, coming to know of the regularity of the night following the day, of the spring following the winter gave him the ability to know when to expect more or fruit to plant crops, say. They worshipped the heavenly bodies, believing they could foretell the will of these bodies if they watched the sky carefully. From their observations, alongside further and further development of society, they made important

astronomical discoveries, invented a few old forms of calendar, forecast eclipses of the sun and moon, and tides and ebbs.

Social history teaches, primitive man's thinking was materialistic. They had no conception of supra-matter entity, or the supernatural, neither was it possible under the then conditions of life and society. From their need they wanted to have controlling power over matter, to tame the forces of nature and the harmful power of matter. This was primitive man's magic, accompanied by chanting of mantras.

That black magic constituted man's first knowledge and effort to control matter. They danced, made gesticulations and chanted mantras before, say, a block of stone or a body of fire. They wanted to propitiate harmful forces which they had sometimes experienced in those matters. They thought the evil forces or good forces had their origin in matter. Their thought process did not and could not have the power to think of anything beyond matter. The thought of a supra-matter supernatural entity, of god as creator, appeared and could only appear at a time when society had become class divided with the appearance of stable property and a form of administrative system under a ruling circle to keep control over production and the functioning of the society at large at that stage. The living experience of the rule and the ruling circle in society led man to compare the orderly discipline of the then class divided society with the orderliness in day-and-night alternations, orderliness in seasonal successions, or in the annual motions of heavenly bodies, and from that awareness of orderliness in nature to conceive of a supermaster, god, as the supernatural entity and ruler of the universe. This marked a radical transformation not only in man's idea but in their thought process as well. This new element in thought process which imbibed the idea of a supra-matter, supernatural force or entity formed the basis of religion or the religious systems that followed. Under the influence of this idea, the celestial bodies, all made of matter, were sought to be projected as forces transcending matter and in this way a supernatural power was ascribed to the sun, moon, planets and stars. The idea and belief followed that this supernatural force or power controlled and shaped the events in man's life and their destiny. The form of explanation has been different in different religions, but in essence all remain same in that in all religions a supra-matter, supernatural, omnipotent entity has been conceived as the fundamental basis of everything — anything happening follows its will.

Under these social-historical conditions and at this stage of development of thoughts and ideas, what had begun from the need of the primitive society and primitive life as a relatively systematic study of planets and stars, enabling the primitive man to make predictions on the basis of a form of coordination and integration, howsoever rudimentary, that is, what had begun as the science of astronomy in its rudiments in the primitive society divided into two altogether divergent lines of study with society becoming

(Contd. on page 4)

Calculated Move to Undermine Rationality and Logical Bent of Mind to Foster Fundamentalism

(Contd. from page 3)

class divided — one line of pursuit remaining largely free from religious doctrine and precepts and gradually developing as a systematic study in a particular domain of the law-governed nature following the method of testing through verification, and the other, under the influence of the belief in a supernatural entity and the religious doctrine of untestable faith, developing into the pseudo-science of astrology, that is, a system of superstition and superstitious practices. It is to be understood that astrology split away from early astronomy from the need of the class position of the ruling circle following class division of society, and it was spread among the ruled classes from the same need of the rulers to maintain rule over society.

Gradually, in this way, faith in astrology percolated down to all levels of society. Under patronage of the aristocracy in the feudal society, influence of astrology grew further and astrologers sought to make its application wider. The class need of the rising bourgeoisie in the later stage of feudalism led to revolting against religious superstitions and dogmas, including the blind faith in astrology, and ushering in the age of reason and enlightenment during the renaissance movement in Europe. With the surge of the movement people were being more and more freed from all superstitions. In the era of decline of the bourgeois democratic revolution, superstitious beliefs are seen to be returning and gripping the public mind again today even in the technologically advanced western societies. The Indian renaissance and independence movement against the British imperialist rule had created the condition for fighting to elimination all feudal religious and social hangovers, including faith in astrology. The historical objective had not been attained, because of the compromising character of the leadership of the independence movement provided by the national reformist section of the Indian bourgeoisie, compromising with both feudalism and imperialism. So the host of feudal religious superstitious hangovers remain to influence every nook of the modern Indian society with its multi-religious, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual structural complex. In the present period, with the Indian bourgeois economic-political-social structure ridden with inalienable crisis and rotten to the core, the ruling class reckons it a class need to aid and abet all revivalist tendencies, fomenting obscurantism, bigotry and religious fundamentalism. Crisis-ridden capitalism is unable to solve any of the problems in people's life, it is engendering on the contrary anarchy, instability and a sense of insecurity, among the people. Insecurity is pushing them to seek shelter in blind faith, and astrology and the like are spreading the tentacles on their mind.

In this way, the RSS-BJP combine is pursuing its line of Hindu religious fundamentalism, fanning up revivalism and fostering obscurantism to keep the masses chained to the shackles of superstition and promote its Hindutva agenda. With this motive the BJP-headed HRD ministry has launched the offensive to introduce Vedic astrology, Vastushastra and Purohitya at the

university level education. They insist on astrology to be called a Vedic discipline in order to give it a sacred look of Hindu wisdom, and they name it 'Jyotirvijnan' to pass off a system of superstition as science, obviously keeping in mind the fact of unquestioning public acceptance of science because of its triumphant march in the modern era.

Joshi has argued that science is not about cause-and-effect relationship, but "about the convergence of the modern findings and the ancient discoveries of Vrigu", and that all this demands "the overpassing of the limitations of Reason, which has so far guided the developments of both rationalism and empiricism, of subjectivism and objectivism, rendering our knowledge inconclusive and therefore unreliable." (Inaugural Address, Indian Philosophical Congress, 2000) This is a deliberate attempt to distort the meaning of science and make people confuse science and a mixture of the technological aspect of science and spirituality. Science does not stand on reason alone, contrarily it seeks to test the nature of reason as well. Science emphasises, first and foremost, verifiability as the method of testing truth. This fundamental characteristic of the method of science, or science, sets it apart from all idealistic approaches, giving it the decisive power of representing truth, the whole and full truth. This is the anvil on which alone to test truth, the singular basis of testing reliability, and the ground for objectivity, that is, cognition of the existence of the world independently of human consciousness. From this basic approach science recognizes cause-and-effect relationship in every event or phenomenon, including the phenomenon of why Joshi, as the mouthpiece of the RSS-BJP combine in the sphere of education and culture, has trodden out to introduce Vedic Astrology or Purohitya in the universities. In pursuit of this method, science has discovered the natural laws and the inexorability of law-governedness of everything in the world, including how astrology did arise on the basis of a false premise and what for are these mischiefs in the brains of the RSS-BJP bosses which must not be confused with mere obsession and poorly digested ideas of an individual Joshi. The method of prediction and the predictive power as a distinguishing mark of science stem from cognition of the law-governedness and of cause-and-effect relationship in it. Astrology is false because as a system its basis is a faith which does not subject itself to verification for truth. Its premise is subjective, its prediction being made without recourse to any verified law.

In practice, the most forceful claim of the believers in astrology is that astrologic predictions, not those made by the half-baked practitioners, have often been proved right. Dispassionate ponder reveals that the claims of success are most often coloured by the tendency to believe in success. When Halley's comet was first sighted in 1066, astrologers had made predictions of a few events some of which, including the death of a king, did happen. Later it was found out that the comet returns every 75 years, but without causing troubles, astrolgers'

predictions notwithstanding. Astrologic predictions, when they appear to prove right, illustrate instances of accidental coincidences, that is, happenings concurring in time but without any cause-and-effect relationship between them.

The talk of introducing Purohitya in the space age is not only fantastic, it sounds an alarm of the danger it portends. Students of history and social sciences know that primitive man's mantras accompanying magic to appease the forces of matter were later transformed to means of worshipping gods and goddesses embodying supernatural forces. The magic and mantras used in primitive times as means to know and propitiate matter, whether these served the purpose or not, acquired a totally different character in later times, becoming an integral part of offerings to supra-matter entities in religious ceremonies. With all the developments in the society the mantras continue to be part of religious practices, and by introducing these ceremonial rituals under the name of Purohitya, the RSS-BJP want to take it to the grassroots in a bid to institutionalise it in the name of creating a window for handing jobs to people. In reality, the design is to give it a social institutional recognition in order to help spread superstition into every nook, every level. From the same motive they want institutional recognition for vastushastra which had originated in the ancient society as a systematic study of human dwelling. Later, under the influence of belief in supernatural forces, it turned into a system of superstition in regard to human households through invocation of blessings from good spirits to ward off evil spirits.

Taken in its total perspective the motive behind all these moves, which the RSS-BJP combine has been taking in the class interest of the ruling bourgeoisie is not far to seek. The people face countless problems in life, all arising in the end from the crisis-ridden capitalism, the bourgeois rulers and all their servitors, especially the RSS-BJP cohorts, want the discontented people not to seek the cause of all anarchy, instability and insecurity in society and life in real terms. They want the people to look for the cause in extra-social sources, in supernatural phenomena, which caused bad times in their life, in order that they would succumb and resign to fate.

For this they are totally against the secular concept in education and want to destroy whatever vestiges of secularism still remain in the framework of the existing education system in this country. In its place, they want to revive obscurantism and bigotry in full force with a mixture of technological bent and spirituality as their class weapon to pave the way for fascistic regimentation as the foundation for materialisation of their Hindutva agenda designed to protect, safeguard and advance the interest of the ruling bourgeoisie in its all-out crisis, the stumbling block on way to people's emancipation. These portents of danger call for building ideological-cultural-educational struggles against every move of the RSS-BJP combine, drawing into its fold the section of the intelligentsia which has come forward to protest against the design.

Free and fair elections !

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agents who claimed to have experienced it all at Moipith in the Kultali constituency. Here the sitting SUCI MLA, Mr Probodh Purkait, is pitted against Mr Ram Shankar Haldar of the CPI-M. The SUCI men were allegedly beaten up and one of them, Mr Samar Majumdar, has his arm in a cast. It was broken by armed CPI-M cadres. The Statesman tried to recreate — from the allegations of the SUCI men — what might have happened on 10 May and the preceding evening.

Location : Kishorimohanpur village in the Sunderban region.

9 May/6p.m. — Mr Samar Majumdar, Mr Nilanjan Bagchi, Mr Ajit Hore, Mr Pradip Das, Mr Asok Das, Mrs Madhabi Pandit and Mr Debabrata Ghosh reach South Bhubaneswari and are confronted by gun-toting youths who threaten them with dire consequences if they show up as polling agents the next day.

10 May/6 a.m. — The SUCI men try to proceed towards the booths. On their way to Kuamuri they are rounded up by CPI-M cadres. "You will be killed and your bodies fed to the tigers." They say. The men move on only to find their ways blocked with benches and uprooted trees. And on the benches sat cadres occasionally firing in the air.

10 May/midday — Polling goes on in booths number 204/205/206/207 at Kishorimohanpur village. Suddenly a man enters the booth and flings away the jute cover surrounding the EVM. "There is nothing secret about election in this part of the world. Only the CPI-M candidate gets votes here," he shouts waving a red flag.

"The presiding officer could not protest. The cadres started pressing the button at random. When we turned around, we felt the cold muzzle of a gun on our back," said an SUCI polling agent.

Around 2 p.m. (inside booth No. 204): Home Guards in civilian clothes and arm bands, "help" voters find the right button. A cadre "requests" the presiding officer to quietly take away the polling agents of other parties.

"They threatened to break the hands of all those who dared discovery," said Mr Debabrata Ghosh.

10 May/4p.m. - As soon as the SUCI polling agents came out of the booth, they were surrounded by armed cadres bent on "finishing them off for coming to the booth". They smashed the left hand of Mr Samr Majumdar. (The bones are now pinned together and he will have to be operated upon soon, according to the doctor's report). Mr Pradip Das and Mr Asok Das sustained injuries on their faces and had to be admitted to Joynagar Nursing Home."

(The Statesman, 13-5-2001)

In this connection Comrade Provash Ghosh, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the SUCI, demanded repoll in 17 booths of Kultali and 6 booths of Joynagar assembly constituency captured by the CPI(M) goons under gun-point, but in vain.

On May 11, newspapers flashed headlines such as —

"Parties have a free run in their strong holds

Violent polls leave 7 dead in West Bengal

Seven men died, several were injured and thousands just walked into polling booths and cast their votes without producing photo identity cards or any of the 21 documents listed by the Election Commission.

West Bengal went through the 13th Assembly polls amid reports of booth-jamming and rigging. Seventy-two per cent of the voters exercised their franchise today, about 10 percent less than the turnout in the last Assembly polls.

— The Statesman, 11th May

"Proxy voting order of the day"

"Dons rule booths at Garden Reach"

— The Times of India, 11.5.01

For the last two years the names Keshpur, Garbeta and Pingla are in the headlines of print-media as the killings fields of the CPI(M) and Trinamul Congress in West Bengal in their petty party parliamentary politics. In this election all eyes were set on these seats as to their fate in the hands of the two contesting parties. What happened there on the election day ?

"CPI(M) forced voters vote unilaterally in

Keshpur-Garbeta-Pingla

They Didn't let loose their control ! Completely unilateral polling without any trace of opponents took place"

— The Sambad Pratidin, 11.5.01

"Polling in Keshpur, Garbeta and Pingla under total seize of CPI(M)

... Today, even after making complete arrangement for violence and rigging, the CPI(M) leaders could not fully rely on their cadres. To check sabotage inside the booths scent was applied on the name of the Trinamul candidate and the button beside. Fingers of the persons concerned were smelled to verify whether any of them pressed that button. The CPI(M) men adopted the same tricks in Puin village of Tirbe Anchal of Arambagh constituency."

— The Bartaman, 11.5.01

It is to be noted that in Keshpur assembly constituency the CPI(M) candidate won by a margin of 1,08,152 votes. This shows, how freely and widely 'democratic right' of franchise was exercised !

Arambag subdivision is another strife-ridden area where the CPI(M) and the Trinamul Congress are engaged in bloody clashes for electoral gains. Here too the picture was similar.

"Cent per cent polling within 1 PM. — Observer stunned !

Through 'unbridled violence' the CPI(M) took their 'victory' guaranteed in the four assembly

seats of Arambag subdivision. At this stage the police and the general administration accompanied the CPI(M) in a 'befitting' manner."

— The Bartaman, 11.5.01

And how a section of the polling personnels helped in conducting the polls 'impartially' ?

"Presiding Officer made voters vote in favour of CPI(M) — and gheraoed

The Presiding Officer, who was entrusted with the responsibility of taking votes, was caught red-handed by the common people while he was making the voters vote for the ruling party. This sensational event occurred at Baratala Primary School, Booth No. 142 under Satgachia assembly constituency ..."

— The Bartaman, 11.5.01

This time identification of voters at the booths by credentials was made compulsory by the EC to check false voting, but in practice it was nothing but a fig-leaf.

"Presiding Officers accused of negligence

The state chief electoral officer Mr. Sabyasachi Sen, has received complaints that presiding officers of many booths ignored a very important aspects of their job — that of checking photo ID cards issued by the Election Commission or the 21 alternative documents by it.

But many voters not carrying an identification document cast their votes because of the presiding officers' negligence, as was evident to many voters as well as journalists covering yesterday's election."

— The Statesman, 11.5.01

"Let alone the photo identity card, none of the other documents for identity of the voters were checked at all in large number of booths caring least for the direction of the EC. Polling was completed 'freely' without any identification... thus the EC's purpose to check false voting with the help of identity card was proved a mockery at least in West Bengal."

— The Bartaman, 11.5.01

"Meteaburuz Girls' High School — just on coming out of the polling booth a eight year old girl appeared from under the veil ... she is happy enough to cast her second vote in the same booth. 'How old are you ?' 'Mother knows.' 'How many votes did you poll ?' 'Two.' 'Are you to vote any more ?' 'I don't know. If they wish I would cast vote again.' Her name, as she told, is Salma. I don't know if it is false. More astonishing is her confession 'My father is a CPI(M) man, uncle is Trinamul. Both have sent me to cast votes....'

Tiljala Balika Vidyalaya. The school gate was closed. ... at a little distance some people were grumbling. Some are with identity cards, 'We are not being allowed to vote. Police is preventing us to enter the booth. Forcible false voting is going on inside'. Some youth were inside the booth; they were casting votes alternately again and again....

Islamia School at Entally : 11 AM. The gate was closed after a scuffle in between the Trinamul and the CPI(M) men. Police stood inside. People outside raised a cry 'Forcible voting inside!' The door was opened after an hour. It was found that voting was going on freely inside the booth ! ...

The SDO of Barrackpore has informed, 'A
(Contd. on page 6)

Free and fair elections !

(Contd. from page 5)

group of youth in 3 to 4 cars have cast votes repeatedly in many booth. The police could not nab them."

— *The Ananda Bazar Patrika* 11.5.01.

Tamilnadu

"Chennai witnessed some violent incidents triggered by the Dalit leader John Pandian, contesting on the AIADMK symbol against the DMK's Parithi Ilamvazhuthi in Egmore constituency. Mr. Pandian and 35 supporters were taken into custody after they ransacked the poll office of Ilamvazhuthi, who is the deputy Speaker in the present Assembly, stabbed a DMK polling agent and hurled country bombs which fortunately did not explode. Mr. Ilamvazhuthi escaped through the backdoor, eyewitness accounts said. The police said some country bombs and long knives were recovered from Pandian's group. Three of their cars were also seized.

There were two other minor incidents of violence in Chennai in which one person sustained stab injuries and admitted to hospital, police said.

— *Asian Age* 11.5.01.

Assam

"Rigging charges mar polls

Guwahati : May 10 - The Assembly elections in Assam was marred by allegations and counter allegations of rigging by the AGP, the Congress and the CPI(M).

Mongaldoi : Rigging, to some extent took place at Batimulla LP school polling station of Kalaigaon constituency.

Tihu : The presiding officers of 84 Doloigaon LP school and 76 Namati Paraisali BM school under 62 Barama LAC have lodged a complaint with the higher authorities alleging that Cabinet Minister Rekharani Das Boro along with a group of her supporters snatched ballot papers. The papers missing had serial numbers 087051 to 087100.)

Badarpur : The BJP candidate for Katlicherra in Hailakandi, Batul Deb, was arrested today for trying to rig in the LAC. Ballot papers were snatched from seven seats in North Karimganj, one in Badarpur and six in Patherkandi. Repoll has been ordered in all these seats.

Gauripur : Situation is tense in Dhubri, Gauripur and Golokganj LACs following massive rigging by supporters of the AGP-BJP combine. There are also allegations that the Congress supporters in many areas were forced out by miscreants. The victims also alleged that the police authorities have refused to pay any heed to their complaints, adding that the AGP-BJP supporters have been carrying on rigging and also terrorising Cong supporters with SULFA and BLT men.

Chabua : There have been reports of massive rigging by AGP-BJP combine as well as the independent candidate in several areas.

Barpeta Road : Repoll has been ordered in three centres, viz, Takhlibil-Pather LP school under Sarbhog LAC, Itarbheta High School under Barpeta LAC and Kathalmurighat. HS school and Bhabanipur LAC following incidents of ballot snatching.

Hailakandi : In an unprecedented eruption of violence in the three LACs (Hailakandi, Katlichera and Algapur), a total of 74 booths have been recommended for repolling by the district returning officer and two candidates were arrested for booth capturing in today's polling.

An Independent candidate from Hailakandi LAC ... was arrested for trying to stamp ballot papers inside the rangadiu LP school polling booth. Meanwhile, the AGP-BJP joint candidate Pratul Chandra Deb in Karlichera LAC was arrested for beating up APBn personnel and trying to snatch ballot boxes along with his supporters at the Pabitra Mohan School booth..."

— *The Assam Tribune*, 11-5-01

Pondicherry

Reports

spoke of large number of people complaining about omission of their names in the voters list.

— *The Assam Tribune*, 11-5-01

Kerala

In Kerala our candidate in Punalur Cosntituency Comrade G Dhruvakumar, when he arrived to vote in booth No. 94, the concerned Presiding Officer told that his name was deleted from the electoral list as according to the supplementary list and hence he could not vote. This was challenged by Comrade Dhruvakumar. He raised the point that how a candidate whose nomination was duly accepted after thorough scrutiny will cease to exist as a voter afterwards. This clearly proves that even after acceptance and declaration of the names of candidates, there were underhand tampering in the voters list in violation of all democratic practices, making the entire election a farce. These irrefutable arguments made the officials panicky. They immediately contacted the District Collector and at his level frantic moves were made.

Former KPCC President and MLA Mr. T.O. Bava and his wife were deprived of voting right since their names were deleted as per the supplementary list. Mr. P Narayanan, freedom fighter, could not vote for the same reason. CPI(M) Polit Bureau member and sitting MP Mr. S Ramachandran Pillai's name was also cut off from the list and hence he could not vote.

Assam State Committee Condemns BJP's Slander Against SUCI Candidates

Comrade Kalyan Chowdhury, Secretary, Assam State Committee of the SUCI issued this letter to the President of Assam State Committee of the BJP on 13.5.2001 protesting against their slander campaign against our candidates in Assam in the recently held Assembly elections.

To,

Sri Rajen Gohain,
President, Bharatiya Janata Party,
Assam State Committee.

Dear Sri Gohain.

We are shocked to find that the names of some of our party candidates in the ensuing assembly elections all of whom are wellknown SUCI activists for a long time, namely 1. Comrade Jainal Abedin, ex-MLA (South Salmara), 2. Comrade Nazmul Haque, ex-MLA (Goalpara West), 3. Comrade Chandralekha Das (Goalpara East), 4. Comrade Suratzaman Mandal wrongly spelt as Nurzaman Mandal (Mankachar), 5. Comrade Prasanta Das (Dhubri), 6. Comrade Jitendra Chaliha (Kalaigaon) figured in the list of expelled BJP candidates as circulated to the Press by Sri Tapan Chowdhury, on behalf of the Assam State Committee of the BJP, portions of which were published on the 9th May, 2001 issue of the 'Dainik Assam' and the 'Agradut' and was telecast through Guwahati Doordarshan Kendra's evening news bulletin on the 8th May, 2001.

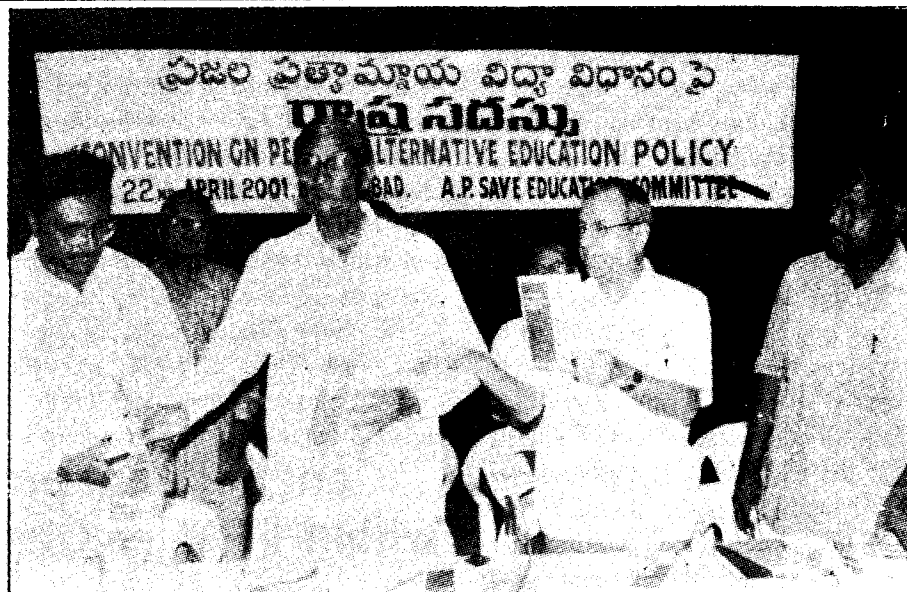
We find no language adequate enough to condemn this unethical shocking behaviour of your party. We strongly feel that this indecent and reprehensible act on your part has crossed all limits of civilised political behaviour, has trampled political norms and etiquette that govern relation amongst political parties. We, therefore, demand that you publicly appologise for having resorted to such heinous means, clear intention of which was to cause immense harm to our party just on the eve of election.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully

Kalyan Chowdhury

Secretary, Assam State Committee, SUCI



'Vision 2020' — people's alternative education policy, released at the Save Education Convention on 22nd April in Hyderabad. Participants were Prof. K. Chakradhara Rao of Osmania University, Prof. G. Haro Gopal, General Secretary, SEC, Dr. B. R. Manjunath, member, SEC, among others

May Day observed across the world

May 1 is the symbol of international solidarity of the worker. It is a landmark in the struggle for the cause of the workers, dating back to 1890, when, under the leadership of Engels, the international communist movement decided to observe May Day in all countries through demonstrations to continue the struggle initiated by the martyred workers of Hay Market, Chicago, for 8-hour working day. Today, under the so-called 'new world order' of globalization, giving rise to increasing unemployment, poverty and attacks on hard earned workers' rights throughout the world, May Day is becoming more and more a rallying point for progressive anti-capitalist and anti-globalization protests and demonstrations by the workers throughout the world.

In eastern Europe, where May Day parades were once great national celebrations of the victory of socialism, nostalgic demonstrators in countries like **Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Poland and Ukraine**, rallied to protest the miserable condition of life after the counter-revolution. In **Russia** hundreds of thousands of people in different cities across the country joined rallies and marches, and many carried red flags and portraits of Stalin, proclaiming: "We need another Stalin".

In many European countries, too, workers, trade unionists and anti-capitalist activists took to the streets, protesting the 'free market economy'. Sentiments of solidarity with immigrant workers and victims of NATO were also expressed, as for example in **The Netherlands**, in The Hague, where marchers carried banners reading: **NATO out of the Balkans. "Their struggle, our struggle, international solidarity!"** In **Germany** where a record 9000 police had been deployed in Berlin alone, as a court upheld a decision to ban a left-wing demonstration, but allowed neo-fascist procession, thousands of anti-capitalist protesters defied the ban waving banners reading: "Never again fascism" and "Together against the right-wing." In the ensuing clashes with the police who used water cannons, 600 demonstrators were reportedly arrested. In **Turkey** — very recently rocked by huge anti-IMF demonstration in countless cities — 20000 people marched in Istanbul protesting wage cut and asking the government to come to an understanding with leftist prisoners on hunger strike of whom 20 have died.

Palestinian, Israeli activists join for May Day, Nazareth: Many thousands of Arab and Jewish working people and working youths marched here April 28 under a forest of red flags.

A call for just and lasting peace with Palestinian brothers and sisters, and solidarity with their struggle for liberation from Israeli occupation and oppression, was expressed on many banners. On April 30, Israeli and Palestinian trade unionists held a common May Day demonstration. The contingents arrived, each from their side, at the Israeli border checkpoint near the A-Ram village, halfway between Jerusalem and the Palestinian city of Ramallah. Israeli police and border guards prevented the two groups from meeting, but they could not prevent them from calling solidarity greetings and peace slogans to each other. Another May Day demonstration, also organised by the Hadash front, was called for May 1.

In **Australia**, thousands of anti capitalist, anti-globalization activists and workers activists tried to shut down stock exchanges and business

districts in Sydney, Brisbane Perth and Melbourne, leading to scuffles with the police. Protestors chanted: 'Human need, not corporate greed'. With the call 'identify the enemy' anti-capitalist demonstrators, in Auckland, **New Zealand**, targeted the Chamber of Commerce with their protests and condemning, among others, increasing casualisation of labour.

In **South Korea** about 20,000 workers faced 15,000 riot police in Seoul to protest against government economic restructuring and a police crackdown on car workers in April. Workers renewed vows to launch a general strike next month over demands for a halt to economic restructuring, shortened work hours and the abolition of the National Security Law. They also called on the government to stop the suppression of the labour movement, and decrying the fact that it "pushes the workers and the people into the swamp of limitless competition by stressing the sharing of pain." While in **Taiwan** about 20,000 workers protested growing unemployment, in **Indonesia**, thousands marched in Jakarta demanding wage increase and that the IMF be dissolved. Similar sentiments were expressed in the **USA** where police for example arrested over 100 anti-capitalist protestors in Los Angeles who chanted: "Down with the police state." In **Colombia**, the workers launched May Day mobilizations with a call to set up a special commission to investigate the wave of assassinations of labour leaders, which this year alone has claimed 38 lives.

In **Cuba**, Fidel Castro led a protest march of hundreds of thousands to the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, to protest "Free Trade" Association of the Americas, which, he warned, **will inexorably lead to the annexation of Latin America and the Caribbean to the United States.** He warned that **we are up against an adversary that is powerful in everything except ethics and ideas, a superpower that has no messages or answers to the planet's overwhelming problems. The superpower to the north can devour us,** Fidel predicted, but will not be able to digest us — that the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean will arise in rebirth from their ashes. He said that it would nevertheless be much better if those peoples did not have to endure this.

May Day observed in India

On May Day, in **Calcutta** a large workers' rally converged at Shahid Minar Maidan. It was organized by UTUC-LS, CITU, AITUC, UTUC

(Bowbazar) and other Federations. Comrade Sankar Saha, Secretary, All India Committee, UTUC-Lenin Sarani moved the main resolution at the meeting which was accepted unanimously. May Day being observed in the backdrop of imminent Assembly elections, Comrade Saha in his speech highlighted that through election it is merely the government which changes, but the state, and so also the exploitative social system remain intact. He enjoined on the workers the need for building up united democratic movement conducive to the struggle for anti-capitalist socialist revolution, the only way to bring about emancipation. Other speakers included Comrades M. K. Pandhe CITU, Gurudas Dasgupta AITUC, Ashoke Ghosh UTUC (Bowbazar) and Shailen Dey, TUCC.

In **Bhopal** a meeting was held with full emotion and spirit in the morning by UTUC(LS) and AIDSO, where Comrade Barai (in charge SUCI, Bhopal) highlighted the historic significance of May Day for workers and students. And in the evening a big joint rally organized by UTUC(LS), CITU, AITUC, and some other workers and employees' unions, converged at Lal Chouk, New Market. Speakers of the three central trade unions placed their view points. Comrade J.C. Barai, General Secretary of BHEL Labour Union, UTUC (LS) while calling for unity stressed at the same time the need to remain vigilant against revisionism because of which ultimately capitalism was reestablished in USSR, and the necessity of identifying and isolating the revisionist forces in our country without which we cannot forge ahead in the anti-capitalist socialist revolutionary struggle.

In **Udaipur** a meeting was held on the occasion of May Day. Comrade Viren Lobo, the main speaker said that the Trade Union movement created as an instrument of struggle of the working class, has arrested the movement to economic demands. As a result in this all out crisis of moribund capitalism, workers rights, gathered over years of struggle, are being taken away one by one.

In the face of the inability of the ruling capitalist class to address the burning problems of people's life, they are resorting to degrading the moral standards of the people. On the occasion of May Day, the need of the hour is to uplift one's cultural and moral standard to fight this menace.

Large gathering also attended May Day observation at the forest Department and Khanji pir. Comrades Mahender Singh, Prakash Paliwal Motilal, Omprakash and Babulal Jain were the main speakers. Chakka Jams to highlight the condition of drought took place in numerous rural locations on that day.



Procession against sale of liquor in villages led by AIMSS and DYO on 2nd May at Nagpur

Red Salute Comrade Gayatri Dasgupta



Comrade Gayatri Dasgupta, member, West Bengal State Committee, SUCI and Vice-President, All India Mahila Sanskritik Sangathan (AIMSS), passed away on 11th May, 2001 at 6-20 p.m. at a Calcutta hospital, following a cardio-respiratory attack, after having suffered from many serious ailments and cardiac problem over quite many years. Just after the demise of Comrade Dasgupta, the Red Flag was flown at half mast at the state and district headquarters of the party and remained so till 13th May. All these three day comrades wore black badge.

Coming in close contact with Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, she joined the party around 1949. She belonged to those few women activists who joined the SUCI, in those early years, and carried its flag till her last breath.

Comrade Gayatri Dasgupta came to be imbued and inspired directly by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh through her association with the Culture Club of South Calcutta, where intense and all-embracing philosophical, epistemological and ideological debates, discussions,

polemic and struggle were then conducted regularly by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh himself. Thus Comrade Gayatri Dasgupta entered the vortex of revolutionary struggle and dedicated herself consciously and sincerely to the cause of revolution, class and the party. Her entire life bears that till her very end she consistently struggled to remain true to this noble ideal.

She served at party's student, trade union and women wings and also other forms at different times and over different periods, bearing increasingly greater responsibilities. She started as an activist of the Calcutta District party and later became a member of the Calcutta District Committee. She was the Assistant Secretary of the first committee of the All India DSO. She also discharged duties as the Secretary, West Bengal AIMSS. She played a distinct role in the trade union movement. Comrade Dasgupta led a collective life as a member of the District Commune in Calcutta. She contributed considerably into building the AIMSS in West Bengal.

By lifelong revolutionary activities Comrade Dasgupta earned certain distinctive characteristic features. No one has come in touch with her, who will ever forget her loving, affectionate nature and her radiant smiling face. She also showed meticulous concern and care especially for the younger comrades. But she could also flare up and be sharp when work was done without attention and diligence.

On 12th May at 4 p.m. Comrade Dasgupta's mortal remains were brought to the state party office so that comrades could pay their last respects to her.

On behalf of Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, the General Secretary of our party, Comrade Sukomal Dasgupta, member, Central Committee, placed wreath paying her revolutionary respect.

Comrade Anil Sen, member Central Committee, Comrade Provash Ghosh, member, Central Committee and Secretary West Bengal

State Committee, Comrade Manik Mukherjee, member West Bengal State Secretariat and Calcutta District Secretary placed wreath in reverence to Comrade Dasgupta. Comrades Chhaya Mukherjee, All India Secretary of AIMSS, Amar Roy on behalf of the *Proletarian Era*, central organ of the party, Comrade Salil Chakrabarty, member West Bengal State Committee, on behalf of *Ganadabi*, Bengali organ of the party, Comrade Swapan Bose, Office Secretary, West Bengal State Committee also placed wreath. Others who paid floral tribute were Comrades Swapan Chatterjee, All India Secretary, AIDS, Shankar Saha, Secretary, All India Committee of UTUC-LS and Secretary of West Bengal State Committee UTUC-LS. Many other mass organisations, different party units and individual comrades placed wreath to pay homage.

Her last journey started from the State Party Office, in a solemn procession. There were red banners and festoons all around. There were columns of comrades with SUCI banners in their hands. They were weary, fresh from the over-a-month long election-battle in different corners of the state, but firm and resolute in respectfully remembering their elderly comrade. The rally winded along the roads, silent and solemn, barring the refrain of the *Internationale* and the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and a continuous narration introducing Comrade Dasgupta and her life-struggle to the people around.

Late in the evening, the rally reached the Keoratala Crematorium in South Calcutta. The last moment arrived soon. The ground resounded with slogans, that rose above the occasional sobbing from the dearest of the departed soul, her comrades. Fumes thinned out into air, slogan died out : Comrade Gayatri Dasgupta left us for ever, leaving behind an indelible mark in the deepest corner of our heart.

Red Salute Comrade Gayatri Dasgupta.

Movement in Sagar and Chattisgarh

Sagar

Demonstration against drinking water crisis on 16th April, '01 the Sagar District Committee, SUCI held demonstration and deputation against drinking water crisis at Ayukt Nagar Nigam. The demonstrators demanded quick solution of the burning problems. A meeting was held addressed by Comrades Ramavatar Sharma, District Secretary, SUCI, Shibaprasad Patel, S.K.Sai, Manoj Chourasia, Ashoke, Sanjay Yadav, Ram Charan Gupta and Comrade Ramchandra Lambardar of the Marxist Party.

Chattisgarh

In the town of Durg at Kailash Nagar and Titurdih where there are slums of labourers and contract labourer, AIMSS and AIDS had been conducting movement along with the local inhabitants for drinking water, fifth free living condition, etc. Attention of the Congress-led Chhattisgarh government as well as the Municipality was drawn, but to no avail.

On 8th March, the International Women's Day, women, led by the AIMSS, held a

More Reports on Observance of 24th April

The 53rd anniversary of the foundation of the SUCI was observed with great enthusiasm at Sultanpur, UP on 24th April last. Comrades Dinesh Kant Dubey, Ramyash Mauryam both members of the state committee of the party, Bechan Ali, Secretary of the Pratapgarh district committee and Jagadish Chandra Asthane, Secretary, Jaunpur district committee addressed the meeting.

Surat

The Surat district committee of the SUCI

demonstration against the problems of the women community. A deputation was led to the Mayor.

On different burning issues the AIMSS and the AIDS conducted several group meetings at different localities. 20th April witnessed a fervent procession of women under the banner of AIMSS under the scorching sun, which held a blockade before the Municipality. In absence of the Mayor an officer accepted the deputation and he assured to resolve the problems within 15 days. Comrade Sandhya Roy, Organiser, AIMSS, in the meeting held there, warned if the problem was not solved movement would be intensified.

observed 53rd anniversary of the party with great enthusiasm by organising exhibition on Gujarat earthquake relief work photographs and video show programme in different places of local committee of the district unit. The programme continued for a week from 19th April to 26th April.

On 24th April a rally was held on Chowk Bazar near Gandhiputta and it was led by Comrade Rambharat Maurya, Surat district committee in charge.

On 26th April, the last meeting of the weekly programme was held in SUCI Surat district committee office.

Chennai

Meetings were held on April 24 in Chennai party office and in Madurai-Dindigul-Theni in Theni party office.

In South Arcot district, a public meeting was held at Villupuram on April 30. Comrade Anavarathan was the main speaker.

Udaipur

24th April was observed in Udaipur on 12th May last. Comrade Girijeswar Singh was the main speaker.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE