

Remember Great Chinese Revolution

Learn from its Lessons

— Nihar Mukherjee

The Central Committee of our party enjoins upon the entire party rank and file and the toiling people of the country to commemorate, with full dignity and solemnity, the 50th anniversary of the victory of China's New Democratic Revolution in 1949, led by the Communist Party of China under Chairman Mao. In the annals of history of proletarian revolution it stands next to the great November Revolution of Russia, because of the immense odds it had to face. In a vast but backward semi-feudal semi-colonial country with its huge population languishing not only from the cruel exploitation of foreign imperialist powers in league with native comprador bourgeoisie and feudal landlords but also from continuous floods, famines, epidemics, diseases and hunger — it was indeed a stupendous feat to accomplish this revolution. And without the leadership of a great communist leader like Comrade Mao Zedong, the able pupil of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, it would have been impossible.

As Comrade Lenin, by leading world's first proletarian socialist revolution in Russia to victory, showed the path for the proletariat's rise as the leader in not only the Socialist but also the Democratic revolutions in this era, so also Comrade Mao Zedong firmly grasped the Leninist concept of the indispensability of a correct theory, a correct party and a correct policy of united front and brilliantly applied them in the soil of China.

None other but Comrade Mao Zedong truly and profoundly grasped Lenin's well-known words that 'concrete analysis of the concrete situation is the living soul of Marxism'. None other but Comrade Mao Zedong with his profound experience and knowledge about Chinese society, succeeded in investigating and correctly analysing the relationship of classes in the then China. It was only Comrade Mao who discovered and emphasised upon the peculiar and characteristic features and tasks of the Chinese revolution: struggle for agrarian reforms for giving land to the



peasants; indispensability of armed peasants' struggle creating revolutionary rural base areas for sustaining these agrarian struggles in face of armed onslaughts by the big landlords and warlords backed by imperialist powers; expanding revolutionary rural base areas for encircling the cities which were strongholds of reaction. Most important of all, the historically decisive role of the poor peasantry without closest alliance with which the small and weak industrial proletariat could not decisively influence China's political life nor accomplish revolution. Above all, Comrade Mao showed with his analysis, and later proved in concrete practice, that in the concrete conditions of semi-feudal semi-colonial China where the industrial proletariat was yet numerically

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Free and Fair Elections !

Six people were killed in A.P. in the first phase of polling, four of them in police firing. At least two dozen people were injured there in poll related violence. (Source: *The Times of India*, 6.9.99)

One NCP municipal commissioner was killed and a BJP minister of Maharashtra was arrested for the same on 11.9.99 in connection with poll related violence (Source: *The Ananda Bazar Patrika*)

47 persons were killed in poll related violence in Bihar and Jammu and Kashmir in the 3rd phase of polling. Several persons were injured. In Kashmir military used force on villagers to cast votes and opened fire causing death to several people. (Source: *The Sunday Times, the Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 19.9.99)

Five people were killed, at least 20 injured and two ministers of Bihar were arrested in the second phase of polling in Bihar on 25.9.99. The presiding officer at Ekangarsarai booth of Nalanda was shot at and seriously wounded. There were reports of ballot snatching and attempts to capture booth as said by Mr Gill, the

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SUCI Protests Law Commission Report

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, strongly reacting to Law Commission's recommendation said in course of a statement on 21st September, 1999:

The recommendation of the Law Commission in its 170th Report to the Union Government appeared in *The Times of India*, Calcutta edition today, that the independent candidates should be 'barred' from contesting elections, is nothing but flagrant violation of the Peoples' Representation Act and unquestionably infringes on the fundamental rights of the citizens.

The Commission's recommendation that the combinations of independents or forces should be given 'party status' will in reality, encourage unprincipled, opportunistic alliances as observed in the recent times that can never make a stable basis for a full term government.

It will only hasten the process of gagging the voice of democracy though reduced to skeleton.

We urge the democratic minded people to raise their voice in protest against such ignominious attempt.

Barbaric Atrocity on Nun decried

Strongly condemning the recent incident in Chhapra, Bihar of stripping a nun and forcing her to drink urine, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, said in course of a statement on 24 September, 1999:

"We call upon all to cry shame to the beastly act at Chhapra on last Monday, of stripping a nun and forcing urine down her throat which has outraged entire country and pointed finger to the real culprits behind — the Sangh Parivar inciting Hindu fanaticism against the religious minorities.

"While demanding immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to the guilty, we cannot but roundly condemn the Bihar Governor's and Chief Minister's shocking unconcern to act even in such a case of savagery, and appeal to all sections of the people to be on constant vigil, unitedly."

Proletarian Era

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

Remember Great Chinese Revolution

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insignificant and insufficient, the “revolutionary poor peasantry” would serve as the main reserve of cadres of not only agrarian struggles – but also of the Party of the proletariat.

In applying with such creativity the Leninist concept of a proletarian party in backward China, Comrade Mao Zedong upheld Lenin’s teaching that ‘socialist consciousness comes from without’ and completely dispelled the dogmatic notions of China’s “muddleheaded” and “bookish” Marxists that building a proletarian party in China with cadres from “peasant class origin” was an impossibility.

He himself elaborated Lenin’s concept with remarkable clarity and lucidity by saying that members of a proletarian party may have “other class origins” but take “the stand of the proletariat” and thus become “a member of the proletariat”.

The Chinese revolution would not have been if Comrade Mao had not waged, since the very birth of the CPC in 1921, a relentless inner-party ideological struggle on all these vital questions against the ‘right’ and ‘left’ deviationist central leadership — being thrice expelled from the central committee for this. Indeed, if the ‘left adventurist’ policy of 1927 of the central leadership had not brought upon the entire party a bloody White Terror and nearly destroyed it killing thousands of communists, wiping out all city party organisations and forcing the party to rely on creating and expanding rural strongholds — vindicating Mao’s line thereby — then China’s revolution would not have triumphed in glory but perished in blood.

It is in course of waging this painstaking and uncompromising inner-party ideological struggle that Comrade Mao Zedong firmly grasped and taught to us the great lesson that “the correctness or otherwise of the base political line determines everything”. This correct base political line derived from that ‘revolutionary theory’ which Lenin stressed upon and which, in China, Comrade Mao alone acquired and expressed, in the best way, in course of building up the CPC as the genuine party of the Chinese proletariat. Elaborating Lenin’s teaching that ‘without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement’, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the worthy disciple of Lenin and Mao, said that by this Lenin meant not merely the strategy of revolution but a complete epistemological category covering all aspects of human knowledge and practice including even the minutest details of personal conduct and private life. This revolutionary theory needs to be concretised in every country in the then concrete international and national situation in order to guide revolution. He emerges as the leader of the revolution who, following the correct process of struggle, contributes the most to the development of this theory and thus appears as its best exponent. Comrade Mao Zedong appeared as the living symbol of the Chinese revolution in course of developing this revolutionary theory by critically and thoroughly analysing the experience of not only the ancient heritage of China, the religious ideologies of Buddha, Confucius and Lao Tse but also the different trends of bourgeois humanist ideology which were then gripping the Chinese intelligentsia, as also the various dogmatist and reformist distortions of communist ideology itself.

Thus, he alone correctly evaluated the immense role played in modern Chinese history by the towering figure of Chinese nationalism, Dr Sun Yat-Sen. But at the same time, he demarcated the historic limits of bourgeois nationalism and showed to the Chinese people the historic need of passing over to the noble ideology of communism. With the development of this comprehensive theoretical thought Comrade Mao Zedong also appeared as the thinker and leader of the revolution capable of guiding the entire party ideologically, politically, organisationally, morally and even militarily. In 1935 he was elected Chairman of the party in the historic Tsunyi conference and remained so till his demise. From Tsunyi the course of Chinese revolution took a decisive turn from defeat towards victory. The unparalleled monument of this change of direction is known to the entire world as the historic and legendary Long March — covering a route of over 12,000 km in a single year, from the southern to the northern end of China, which Mao himself described as “a manifesto”, “a propaganda force” and “the first of its kind in the annals of history”. It aroused the slumbering nation from apathy and inertia. Responding to the call of the CPC for forging the Anti-Japanese National United Front against Japanese invasion and occupation of China, tens of thousands of worker and peasant youth, students, women and intellectuals trekked from all over China to the inaccessible mountains of Yenan, the CPC headquarter then, to join CPC and die for the cause of liberating China. This immense mass force compelled even the arch anti-communist ‘nationalist’ Kuomintang of Chiang Kai-Shek to ultimately join in 1937, against its own wish, the Anti-Japanese UF. This united front struggle was so astutely handled by Comrade Mao over eight long years till 1945, that it united and rallied the entire Chinese people behind the UF and the CPC, utterly defeated Japanese aggressors, completely exposed and exhausted the Kuomintang and fully prepared the ground by 1945 for the final victory of the New Democratic Revolution. By brilliantly applying in this united front struggle the Leninist outlook — of uniting with all that can be united against the common enemy, and of ideologically exposing and isolating the compromising forces within unity for advancing the struggle to its logical conclusion — the CPC led by Comrade Mao proved, in deed, that there are no greater ‘patriots’ today than the communists. In 1949, the great Chinese New Democratic Revolution broke out; in 1956 the Socialist economic transformation was accomplished and the Socialist Chinese society born. In this way, Comrade Mao Zedong led China’s New Democratic Revolution through many zigzags, trials, tribulations, sufferings and sacrifice of life of thousands of communists to its logical conclusion — of a Socialist China — in a way which still stands unsurpassed.

It yet remains to respectfully recall the historic “class struggle in the ideological sphere” which he released through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1965 to protect from revisionist degeneration the gains of the revolutions of 1949 and of 1956. In an unprecedented form in the entire history of communist movement — of involving not only the party cadres but the entire people in a complex and intense ideological and political struggle — Comrade Mao roused all sections of the masses, in every part of China, and in every

sphere of activity, against ‘capitalist roaders’ within the party and against the danger of revisionist infiltration into the domain of ideology and culture of Chinese socialist society. We recall with just pride that when nearly all the world’s communist parties denounced this great struggle, since they were under revisionist spell themselves, our most beloved leader and teacher Comrade Shibdas Ghosh fully recognised its tremendous revolutionary significance and hailed it as ‘magnificent’. How farsighted was Comrade Mao when he warned: China also may go revisionist if you neglect class struggle and work in the ideological sphere.

In the present background of restoration of capitalism in all the former socialist countries of Europe and the disarray within the world communist movement, we remember with reverence Comrade Mao Zedong’s lifelong courageous and unflinching fight for safeguarding the revolutionary kernel of Marxism-Leninism against all sorts of bourgeois and particularly revisionist falsification, distortion, deviation and vulgarisation. We Marxist-Leninists are not swayed by reverses, however great and unprecedented. We have the full courage of conviction that the present will give way to the future. Following the inexorable law of history, the noble banner of communism will prevail in the end just as the Great Chinese Revolution attained its glorious victory, steering clear of all obstacles, fifty years ago.

**Long Live Great Chinese Revolution !
Long live Proletarian Internationalism !
Red Salute to Comrade Mao Zedong !**

Mao Zedong remembered

Sagar, MP

The Sagar District Unit of the party organised a memorial meeting in Jadav colony. The assembly was addressed by the District Secretary Comrade Ram Avtar Singh who emphasized the importance of the teachings of this great leader of international communist movement in the post-Lenin period.

Muzaffarpur, Bihar

In the Muzaffarpur party office the portrait of Mao Zedong was decorated with red flag and garlands. A meeting opened with the offering of floral tribute by Comrade Shivsankar, District Secretary and member of the State Committee, it was presided over by Comrade Arun Kr Singh and addressed by Comrade Rabin Samajpati, both members of the State Committee.

Bhopal

On 16.9.99 the Bhopal District Unit of SUCI observed the occasion by garlanding the portrait of the great leader, Mao Zedong. Then in inspiring discussions Comrades J.C. Barai, Incharge of Bhopal District, SUCI and Comrade Asit Mohanty focussed on the life, struggle and greatness of the leader of the communists.

Orissa

Homage to Comrade Mao Zedong was paid in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and different districts of Orissa on 9th September last on the occasion of his memorial day. On this occasion portrait of Mao Zedong was garlanded, red flag was hoisted at the party offices. Joint reading was held from works of Mao Zedong. Comrade Sitesh Das Gupta, Central Committee member of our party initiated the programme in Bhubaneswar.

Exit Poll — A Device to Polarise Public Opinion

Does exit poll conform to democratic norms? Is the exit poll, which the TV, radio, newspapers are using widely, made on objective, scientific basis? The beneficiary but none else claims it to be scientific. For this reason BBC had to stop such surveys under public pressure. A parliamentary constituency is a vast area. At different parts of it different situations exist. Seven assembly constituencies constitute one parliament constituency. A candidate might get defeated in one or more of the 7 segments and even then win. Actually this is what happens. So, prophecy by means of exit poll on the basis of opinions of only some voters from some selected places is something like a lottery. Exit poll is only assumption and nothing else. Still centring round it a storm of propaganda is being brewed. It is not that news agencies or private TV channels are making such propaganda just in business interest. Even exit poll being no objective news at all, government controlled radio and Doordarshan are using it regularly in their Hindi and English news bulletin.

This shows that it is very well-planned. The question is, what is the purpose behind it?

It has three purposes. First, artificially involve, people in election. Secondly, pushing public opinion to polarisation by planned propaganda. Thirdly, moulding public opinion in this process and thus bringing to power a particular party or combination. All these moves trample democratic norms.

In the past consecutive elections, the capitalist

class has experienced people's diminished interest. People have lost faith in big parliamentary parties. Infights among combinations are pulling down governments, yearly votes are only adding to the sufferings of the people. All these are causing aversion to election. But elections are necessary to show people that democracy is not a myth, a government is necessary to look after the corporate houses, the real owner of the country.

One party or combination among many, who all are serving the owning class, should be brought to power, posing as if people did it. So they artificially create an election fever.

As people do not want frequent elections, so an air is created that a particular party or a combination is going to win the elections, so that the public opinion can be mobilised in favour of that party or that combination. Our party has shown that the capitalist class of our country is trying to foist a two-party parliamentary system on this country. That means, the people are compelled by trickery to choose between the chosen parties of the capitalists. So it is necessary to create polarisation in favour of a particular party or a combination in a particular election.

If such a polarisation can be attained, two purposes can be achieved by the capitalist class. Firstly, the parties which are fighting for the people's cause and which are as such loved by the people can be temporarily put into oblivion, at least from the area of elections. Secondly, the victory of those who are branded as anti-people can be made acceptable in a natural way.

It is observed that when the character of the bourgeois parties was not so nakedly exposed despite their pro-capitalist policies and the big left parties were not so much discredited 30 or 40 years back, it was, at that period, not necessary to create artificial stimulation in elections by the wine of exit poll. But that condition exists no more today. People are pushed to the wall by the ruthless exploitation and oppression of the capitalist rule. Naturally, newer and newer techniques and methods are being used to confuse the people. In the creation of public opinion, the radios, TVs, newspapers play a big role and the capitalist class is utilising them in their interest.

Goebbel, the propaganda minister of Nazi Germany has become notorious in history for his dictum, "truth is nothing but persistent propaganda". The successors of Goebbel have turned the propaganda machinery into a formidable weapon by using the latest technology and by psychological method.

The capitalist class is using this method in election. Rigging in elections is not now limited only to booth capturing and stamping of ballot papers. Media too is now a weapon of administrative rigging. Exit poll too is a kind of rigging technique.

Exit poll creates a hypnotic spell among people through powerful machinery of media, and the people are made to vote against their own interest. So, exit poll is totally undemocratic and this should be immediately stopped.

Role of black money in elections

A vernacular daily, *Bartaman* reported the findings of an eminent economist, Dr. Arun Kumar of Centre for Economic Studies & Planning of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi in its issue of September 13, '99.

Dr. Kumar holds: "Voting has no relation with people's representation. Different groups of vested interests use the elections as a means to gain power."

Dr. Kumar's detailed study on the source of black money and its use has been published in a book by the Penguin Publishing House.

According to Dr. Kumar's study, the total of the expenditures for propaganda and other expenses of candidates amount to a total of more than Rs.4000 crore in 1998. The expenditures on elections constitute 0.25 p.c. of GDP of the country. Interviewing 14 candidates from different parts of the country Dr. Kumar has come to know that it requires one crore thirty lakh rupees for an important candidate on an average. Barring propaganda expenses, money used to purchase opposition candidates, to induce to set up dummy or weak candidates in opposition, to bribe newspaper owners and local reporters adds up to a huge total.

Dr. Kumar apart from the field of elections has studied the influence of black money on various other fields on behalf of the Central Board of Direct Taxes in the 80's which came under the title "Black Economy in India".

As to the cause of different schemes under planning failing to meet total success, he indicates the influence of black money. His long-range study has focussed on the weekly ('*hafta*') bribes

to police, intrusion of corruptions in profession like teaching and in various others to point out the germinating places of black money. He came to the conclusion that during 1990-91, 35 per cent of national economy is under the shadow of black money. He showed other than the 'legal' or the ones like 'Howla' or smuggling in gold, there are plenty of sources for origin of black money. Many earn black money by means of bribes, inflating of election expenses, capitation fees in educational institutions etc.

Dr. Kumar has struck a note of caution: "Black money spares none. Those who profit by exchange of black money hamper their interest also. They are guilty of criminalisation of society and become the victims of it ultimately. Black money is like Frankenstein that kills its creator. He couldn't provide however any positive answer as to how the society was to be freed from the influence of black money. He is not all optimistic about saving the society from all encompassing

impact of evil influence of black money. He scoffs at the idea of containing the overbearing influence of black money by a governmental measure. He straightway opposes the proposal of bearing the cost of elections by the government. In his opinion, the owners of black money have not only involved themselves in politics but what is more it is they who control politics. It is their constant efforts to see that those who are honest are kept away from politics.

He has put faith only in the people. He is of the firm opinion that only a surge in people's movement can restore sanity in politics. At the concluding part of his book he says that though different movements in various parts of the country are surfacing, those have not yet become the determining factor. The leaders of these movements should unite. He is of the opinion that in order to establish real democracy in the country united movements should be developed. [*Free translation of the news-item*]

Movement by AIDS0 in Bhopal

Recently the Madhya Pradesh government has increased fees in all technical institutes. Protesting against the fee hike, the AIDS0 Bhopal Unit has handed over a memorandum to the Principal of ITI college in the presence of AIDS0 State Secretary Comrade Ramawtar Sharma after mobilising students' opinion through discussions and signature campaigns. Speaking about commercialisation, privatisation and more particular, communalisation of education, Comrade Ashit Mohanty, AIDS0 leader told the

students gathered there, that the floodgate of commercialisation and privatisation of education was opened by the National Policy of Education '86 introduced by the Rajiv Gandhi government. This policy reduced the government funding of education and encouraged the business groups to consider the field of education as fertile field for investment. The BJP government has also adopted the same attitude. He said, our fight should be against privatisation, commercialisation and communalisation of education.

Free and Fair Elections !

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Election Commissioner: Two ministers of Mrs Rabri Devi Cabinet were arrested. Mr Shyambihari Prasad, the minister for state for cooperation was arrested from a booth in Motihari from where his sister-in-law, Mrs Rama Devi is seeking reelection. Mr Sheoshankar Yadav, minister of state for agriculture was arrested in Siwan after four rifles were found in his Tata Sumo.

The Statesman of 11.9.99 commented in the editorial: "Bihar's opposition parties are justified in having serious apprehensions over the parliamentary poll following the discovery of about 1,400 duplicate ballot boxes. Booth capturing, forced (chhappa) voting, looting of ballots from booths with the connivance of a section of officials have been part of Bihar's poll scene. Duplicate ballot boxes add another dimension to the farce, apart from the already black record of Bihar's politicians and bureaucrats. What is surprising is the attempt by the Election Commission to play down the menace... Does one have to remind the Commission that about 500 such boxes were recovered from Siwan alone from where the RJD's "terror" Mohammed Shahabuddin is contesting this time too? An accused in numerous crimes, including murder, Shahabuddin has been winning Siwan seat by terror and loot."

The Bihar Governor, Mr Justice Lal has recommended that officials of "dubious credibility" be removed from election duty during the second and third phases of polling in the state. The Governor has sought the removal from poll duty of all police and civil officials of a "dubious and doubtful character whose conduct during the first phase of poll yesterday left much to be desired", a Raj Bhavan spokesman told reporters.

In his letter the Governor said he had "time and again" apprised the Chief Secretary and Chief Electoral Officer of his "serious concerns" about holding free and fair elections in the State.

"I had also suggested to them to hold a detailed enquiry into recovery of alleged fake ballot boxes

and make adequate security arrangements. ...The Election Commission, however, considered my suggestions as infringement of its authority when it was not so!" (Source: - *The Statesman*, 20.9.99)

Mr George Fernandes made a grave charge that the Bihar and W. Bengal governments had connived to print excess ballot papers at a Calcutta press. The Election Commission's knee jerk reaction is worth noting. The EC claimed that Mr Fernandes was trying to derail the electoral process and said that they had followed up Mr Fernandes's complaint by seeking a copy of the DIB report from Union Home Secretary who told the EC that the DIB had informed him, he had supplied no such report to the minister. The DIB is supposed to send his report direct to the PM and not to any minister. So the question of sending a report by the DIB to the Defence Minister does not arise. But has he not sent any such report to the PM?

The Congress and the CPI(M) both said Mr Vajpayee's silence on his Cabinet colleague's remarks showed him up as a colluder. (Mr Fernandes repeated his allegation that had brought on the Commission's attack: that IB Chief Mr Shyamal Datta had confirmed the Bihar and West Bengal governments had connived to print excess ballot papers at Calcutta's Saraswati Press)

Again during the hearing of a petition by Janata Dal (U) on the question of printing of excess ballot papers, the counsel for petitioner produced records for Nawada which voted on 18th September, showing that at some booths of Rajanti, Hisua and Wasaligung the number of ballot cast exceeded the number of voters. Mr Shahi also referred to the Election Commission observers' reports from Hajipur saying the ballot printed for the constituency were not in keeping with poll panel specification.

It is observed from newspaper report that the EC and the JD (U) leaders later on settled the matter. Some people are smelling some underhand deal between the EC and the JD(U) leaders so that the excess ballots are fairly shared. (Source: *The Statesman* 22.9.99 and 23.9.99)

Letter to Election Commission

Postpone Election in West Bengal

26th September, 1999

Dr M. S. Gill

The Chief Election Commissioner
New Delhi

Dear Sir,

Hope you are well aware of the fact that the entire West Bengal excepting only two districts are now under the complete grip of severe natural calamities. Village after village is washed out in Murshidabad, Malda and Nadia districts; most of the rivers are in full spate crossing the maximum limit of red alert and huge quantity of excess water released from DVC, Mayurakshi, Kangsabati, Tenughat and other dams has caused devastating flood in many districts; millions of people are marooned and homeless; large areas of agricultural fields are inundated; transport and communication systems of town and villages are mostly damaged; even Calcutta has been waterlogged for several days; daily wage earners are starving without jobs; the calamity has already claimed many lives and likely to take

more. Flood situation is surely to be followed by epidemic, as happened earlier.

Taking lessons from the past, we feel that the state administration is incapable of tackling this grim situation. And if the administration is further burdened with election conduction, it will fail on both the fronts. Furthermore, hundreds of polling stations are already waterlogged and inaccessible. If sudden alternative arrangements are made ignoring the problem of distance and other difficulties, it will merely enhance the hardship of the voters, which will lead to poor turn out of genuine voters resulting in massive rigging.

It is evidently clear that under this abnormal situation, holding of normal election is not possible. So, we suggest to defer the date of the election in West Bengal till normalcy is restored. Otherwise, people's suffering will be compounded and the election exercise will be reduced to a mockery in this state.

Surely, you should agree, after all, responding to humane call is more important than satisfying

SUCI demands flood control and drainage of stagnant water and rescue of marooned people in West Bengal

In the following press statement issued on 25th September, 1999 Comrade Provash Ghosh, Secretary, West Bengal State Committee and member of the Central Committee, SUCI, strongly criticising the utter inaction of the Central government run by BJP-combine, including Trinamul, and the cruel negligence and petty party sectarianism of the CPI(M)-led State government and failure to take prompt action for redressing the sufferings of the people afflicted by the natural calamity, said:

"In spite of the incessant heavy rain people's sufferings couldn't have been so acute, if the ruling parties in the state and at the Centre had spent some money for repairing the canals and embankment of rivers, and take proper action for desiltation of rivers and dams, to make them deeper, and to ensure proper drainage. But instead they are squandering crores of rupees for winning the elections to taste governmental power.

It is a shame that when the ruling parties of the Central and the state governments should have acted unitedly to stand by the side of the people to protect them from calamity, they are engaged in inhuman act of using this calamity for the people in the interest of elections.

In the situation we demand of the central and the state government:

1. Marooned people are to be rescued and drainage of accumulated water is to be made on war footing.

2. Food is to be distributed free of cost to the displaced people and the poor having no income.

3. Adequate compensation to the distressed peasants and adequate help for construction of building to those who have been rendered homeless.

In the present situation the workers of our party have rushed for relief work everywhere with our limited resources; but it is indeed insufficient to the actual need. So I appeal to the people to extend their helping hand to our effort in this hour of crisis.

the power-greedy politicians. It is to be noted, meanwhile, the leaders of the ruling parties both at the Centre and the state along with their associates are engaged in a nasty game of outbidding each other in capitalising the natural calamities at the hustings.

It is the crying need of the hour that both the governments at the Centre and in the state must jointly initiate relief and rehabilitation works on war-footing. It is also incumbent on all political parties at fray to stop all political bickering and engage themselves in relief work.

Under the circumstances, we hope you will defer the election schedule in West Bengal without further delay.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-Provash Ghosh
West Bengal State Committee
SUCI

Letter of Ramsey Clark to all member-countries of UN Security Council

[The Letter of Ramsey Clark, the former US Attorney General is reproduced here.

— Ed. P. Era]
August 27, 1999

Dear Ambassador,

The United Nations, as it now functions, cannot continue to exist as an institution of honor and hope if it fails to act immediately to lift all economic sanctions from Iraq and prohibit the United States from nearly daily murderous aerial assaults on its defenseless people. The Security Council through nine years of economic sanctions forced on it by the United States, has caused the greatest human disaster in this last decade of a century of self inflicted human disasters. More than 1,500,000 people have been killed: overwhelmingly infants, children, elderly persons, pregnant and nursing women, the chronically ill and emergency medical cases. The whole population of Iraq has been afflicted.

Every UN agency dealing with health, food, and children has confirmed the effect of the sanctions on the people of Iraq and reported to the UN and the world regularly on this human catastrophe since 1990. As of August 1991 UNICEF reported at least 47,500 deaths of children under age 5 as a result of the sanctions. Hundreds of governmental and private organizations and many more individuals from all over the world have documented the horror caused by these sanctions.

Only a person bereft of any concern for truth, without compassion and possessing a character incapable of shame would claim that Saddam Hussein, or any other agent, is responsible for what the Security Council sanctions have wrought.

Even if some intervening causes have contributed to this human tragedy in Iraq, the UN would be criminally responsible for failing to rush needed food and medicine to a dying people its acts placed in harms way. Anyone who would justify sanctions killing hundreds of people daily over a period of nine years based on a fear that Iraq might develop weapons of mass destruction someday is dangerously murderous and puts the whole world at risk by its cowardice. The U.S. has initiated three-fourths of all economic sanctions and blockades since World War II. It can claim any country is developing and planning to use weapons of mass destruction.

Iraq was proven utterly defenseless in 1991 at its time of maximum military power during the heaviest 42 day aerial bombardment in history the equivalent of —7½ Hiroshimas, on its own soil. It has been completely defenseless to U.S. air assaults ever since. It never used weapons of mass destruction while it was being destroyed. Any such uses it might have made in the past were few, minor compared to casualties in the war they were engaged in and insignificant compared to the mass destruction of civilian life by other countries, most notably the U.S. The U.S. assumes the power to destroy selected sites, or whole populations by lawlessly arguing it must kill today to avoid some highly improbable injury at some undetermined distant time in the future. The United States itself possesses most, and by far the most powerful, weapons of mass destruction on earth with incomparably superior

numbers and delivery systems while continuing to spend more on military might than the rest of the Security Council combined. The U.S. used depleted uranium — 900 tons remains in Iraqs environment — fuel air explosives, cluster bombs and other prohibited weapons against Iraq and alone in the world has used atomic bombs against defenseless cities. It argues for the reign of brute force and preventive destruction of whole populations.

The enforcement of the Security Council sanctions against Iraq is genocide :

Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such.

(b) Causing serious bodily, or mental harm to members of the group ;

(c) Deliberately inflicting on a group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part ;

Art.II, Convention on the Prevention and

US Diktat at UN

The US-led NATO's intervention in Kosovo without even formal UN authorisation showed that the US imperialists now need no cover to intervene in the internal affairs of any sovereign country. The fig leaf of the UN authorisation will no more be necessary and this is boldly announced at the very UN by President Bill Clinton on Sept. 22 last. Mr Clinton told the United Nations that nations should have the right to launch military action outside of UN auspices. Mr Clinton endorsed the UN Secretary General, Mr Kofi Annan's warning that countries cannot assume that their national sovereignty will protect them from international intervention to stop alleged human rights abuses. But he differed from Mr Annan's aim that such intervention be conducted under UN auspices, saying that UN authority was not always needed. Mr Clinton said, "In the real world, principles often collide and tough choices must be made." Nevertheless, the USA cannot act in every conflict, he said, hinting thereby that other imperialist countries must step in the region of their influence with US approval. This is the grand design of the imperialists headed by the US to keep the entire world market under their control. To build up mighty worldwide anti-imperialist movement against this design of the imperialists is the only way for the people of the world to come out of the iron grip of the imperialist world order.

Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Now, in the last year of the millennium, the United Nations has permitted the United States to wage war at its will abandoning its mandate to end the scourge of war and failing to do its duty to prevent war with barely a whimper. The UN let the U.S led NATO into committing criminal aerial and missile assaults on a defenseless Yugoslavia in violation of the UN Charter, the North Atlantic Treaty and international humanitarian law. U.S. pilots and aircraft committed 90% of all the aerial assaults on Yugoslavia. The

consequences are thousands of deaths throughout Serbia including Kosovo, and in Montenegro. There were repeated direct attacks on facilities essential to life throughout the region, on civilians, civilian facilities and targets containing dangerous forces and substances, all in violation of the Geneva Conventions. NATO leaders have conceded the obvious — these assaults did not protect a single life in Kosovo. Permitting NATO to let this assault be conducted in its name risks destroying the peace keeping role and capacity of the United Nations and arraiging the former colonial and the neo-colonial powers of West Europe and North America against the rest of the world with no country able to defend itself.

The precedent in Yugoslavia of direct foreign intervention in an internal conflict subjects every nation with internal disputes to intervention from abroad. The U.S. has internal conflicts with its indigenous peoples, who have been nearly liquidated as separate cultures; with Black, Latino, Arab, and Asian people; many alleged terrorist groups; and others. Owing to its vast military, police and prison power, the U.S. does not presently risk attacks by foreign governments, but its foreign policy creates intense hatred which naturally tends to cause random violence against it.

The failure of the United Nations to prevent NATO aggression and itself act to achieve peace in the region undermines the very purpose for which the UN was created.

Finally, the UN has failed to even admonish the U.S. for its nearly daily aerial attacks on Iraq beginning last December and continuing until now. These attacks have killed hundreds of people. The excuses given for the attacks, as with other issues addressed in this and earlier letters, are both false and pathetic. The U.S. intrudes in the air space of Iraq many times every day to harass, entice a reaction and afflict attrition on Iraq, its defenses and the lives and nerves of its people. It claims its aircraft, which are illegally in Iraqi airspace, have been assaulted whenever it chooses. Whether true or not, it then assaults Iraq with multiple sorties killing someone with nearly every strike. As with its thousands of attacks on Yugoslavia, the U.S. has not suffered a single casualty.

The UN is inviting a world ordered by the diplomacy of cruise missiles and economic strangulation, governance by deadly high tech military assaults which are indefensible, and foreign imposed hunger and pestilence. The Superpower scofflaw responsible for both crimes is the same deadbeat that refuses to pay its UN dues, directs the creation of ad hoc UN criminal tribunals not authorized by UN Charter to pursue its chosen enemies and refuses to participate in an International Criminal Tribunal created by treaty approved by 120 nations for fear that it might be held accountable under the rule of law.

The sanctions that are killing the people of Iraq and U.S. aerial assaults must be prohibited immediately and emergency relief and amends provided to those who have survived.

Sincerely,

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Ramsey Clark

In '80s and '90s

STATE TERRORISM AS IN PUNJAB

This is the second instalment of the excerpts from the INTERIM REPORT made by COMMITTEE FOR COORDINATION ON DISAPPEARANCES IN PUNJAB on enforced disappearances, arbitrary executions and secret cremation. — Ed. P. Era

Relatives do not know what happened to dead bodies

Case No.9 : Boor Singh was a seventy years old farmer who had become completely blind. He was married with five grown up sons, the youngest being twenty year old Arjan Singh, who the police suspected of maintaining terrorist connections. The family lived at village Sehnsra Kalan, under Jhander police station in Ajnala subdivision of Amritsar district. As the police had been routinely raiding the farm house, also harassing all the members of the family because of their suspicions on Arjan, they began to live elsewhere.

On 5 March 92, Arjan Singh was arrested from the community kitchen attached to Anandpur Sahib Gurudwar while he was eating food by a group of officers led by SHO Wassan Singh of Jhander Police Station. The next day, Arjan was shown killed in a supposed armed encounter that was orchestrated near village Sehnsra Khurd. The body was not handed over to the family. The cremation itself was traced to Amritsar cremation ground and the family collected the ashes.

This was not the end of the story. 27 August. 1992 night, a large group of policemen raided the farmhouse when Boor Singh was there alone. The police opened heavy fire on the farm house and later took the blind man into custody. The next day, members of the family with the village elders went to Police Station Khatrai Kalan. However, no official there listened to them. They went on to meet the IG Bhatti and begged him to get their totally blind and innocent father released. Instead of help, the police conducted one more raid to demolish the house and also to confiscate all household belongings. Boor Singh could not be located and there has been no news about his fate.

Outside Amritsar

Case No.3 : Twenty-one years old Amandip Singh was a student at Guru Nanak College in Batala. His father Balraj Singh is a teacher in the government primary school at Laddamanda and lives in Madre village under Batala subdivision of Gurdaspur district. In December 1990, Balraj Singh was mugged on his way to the school by a group of young Sikh boys, presumably militants, who snatched his motorcycle (Registration Plate Number: PIA 135). Some days later, the Border Security Force recovered the stolen motorcycle, and deposited it at Dhariwal police station. Amandeep was taken into illegal custody and his father was asked to prove that he had purchased the motorcycle, and that it had actually been robbed. Amandeep was released from the illegal custody after eight days when Balraj Singh satisfied the authorities that he was the genuine owner and that he had been mugged. But the SHO Makhan Singh of Dhariwal police station demanded fifty thousand rupees to return the motorcycle. Balraj Singh had purchased it for

eighteen thousand. Makhan Singh said that he was not demanding the value of the motorcycle but the price for his son's life. Balraj Singh met the SSP S.K. Goyal who refused to interfere. Balraj Singh did not pay the money, but asked the SHO to keep the motorcycle. 18 March 1991 morning, Amandeep and Jasbir Singh, a fellow student from his own village, left for their college in Batala in a Punjab roadways bus No.PBN 1119. On the way, SHO Makahn Singh and ASP Gurnel Singh stopped the bus and arrested them. Many natives of village Madre, including Master Shiv Singh and Kashmir Singh, were travelling in the same bus and witnessed the arrests. Both were taken to their village Madre where the officers searched Jasbir's house.

Balraj Singh was at this time supervising an examination of a class in his school. Master Shiv Singh came to tell him about Amandeep's arrest, and he immediately went back to his village where the police was still searching Jasbir's house. Amandeep, Jasbir and a third boy, in the police custody, were standing outside. They had been blindfolded and handcuffed. Balraj Singh asked SHO Makhan Singh why he had arrested his son. The SHO told him to find out from the ASP who declared that the arrests had been made on instructions from SSP Goyal. After the search, the police took all the three boys to Dhariwal police station. Master Balraj Singh and Jasbir's father Gurbaksh Singh, and their relatives, also went there.

At 4 pm in the afternoon, SSP Goyal came to Dhariwal police station when Balraj Singh managed to speak to him. The SSP said that the boys would be interrogated. Balraj Singh was still standing outside the police station when a Suzuki Gypsi with the license plate number PAK 7978 drove in. One DSP called Basi, previously in-charge of the BIKO interrogation center and then posted in Pathankot district, got out of the vehicle. After some time, he came out along with Amandeep, forced him into the vehicle and drove away.

Early next morning, Balraj Singh went to the office of SSP Goyal who, however, was not available. Balraj Singh managed to speak to him late in the evening at his residence. The SSP said that the interrogation was not over and that he should see him the following day. It was 20 March 1991, *Punjab Kesari*, a Hindi newspaper, reported two separate incidents of supposed encounters in which five 'militants' had been killed. The first incident had occurred at Sakoda village in Gurdaspur district when some 'militants' reportedly attacked a joint patrol of the BSF and the Punjab police, who fired back in self defense and killed three militants identified as Jagbir Singh, Hardev Singh and Satnam Singh. Jagbir had been arrested along with Amandeep. The other two were also from the neighbouring villages.

The second was reported to have taken place

in Pathankot district. The newspaper story said that some militants attacked the police team to rescue Kamaljit Singh, who was being taken to village Lamiri to recover weapons. Kamaljit and one identified militant were killed when the police fired back in self defense. The newspaper reporting the incidents was based on a press briefing the SSP had held on 19 March. The same evening the SSP had told Balraj Singh that Amandeep's interrogation was in progress.

Balraj Singh suspected that the unidentified militant reported to have been killed in the second incident might be Amandeep. But SSP Goyal had told him that the interrogation was continuing. Immediately, he went to the SSP and asked him about his's interrogation. Goyal remained silent. Balraj asked him why he was not speaking. Then he said "go to Dhariwal police station. I will come there." Balraj reached there and SSP Goyal also arrived. For some time he remained in conference with SHO Makhan Singh. After a while, Makhan Singh came out and told Balraj Singh that he had never arrested Amandeep. Balraj Singh became agitated and started shouting and moving towards the SHO, who threatened to shoot if he did not stop. Balraj Singh said he would not stop unless he told him what happened to his son. Makahn Singh then said that Amandeep was with the SP(Operations), and that he should go to him to find out. SSP Goyal did not come out. After waiting at the police station for some time, Balraj Singh went back home. He had already sent telegrams about Amandeep's illegal arrest to the Governor, the High Court, the DGP, the Deputy Commissioner and other higher officials. Later, he also sent registered letters to them. The SP (operations) refused to meet him. Balraj Singh did not know what to do.

On 27 March, a Punjabi paper Jagbani identified the second person killed in the 18 March incident at Pathankot as Amandeep Singh of Madra village. Once again, SSP Goyal had briefed the press to clarify the identity. By then the police had already carried out the cremation. Balraj Singh went to Pathankot and met the father of Kamaljit Singh, the supposed militant Amandeep had reportedly tried to rescue from the police custody. Kamaljit Singh's father, a priest of the local Gurudwara, told him that he had attended the cremations and had also collected the ashes of the second person, reported unidentified, who had been killed along with his son. The old man was unable to give a coherent description of the body.

Policemen who themselves became victims

Case No. 10 : Thirty-three year old Paramjit Singh, a constable with the Punjab police, was from an orthodox Sikh family that lived in village Bahmani Wala under Patti subdivision of Amritsar district. Paramjit was married to Sukhwant Kaur, with two young children, and also looked after his old parents. Paramjit's elder brother Heera Singh is a soldier in the Indian army.

Having joined the police force in 1982,
(Contd on page 7)

Relief work and movement for the flood victims in Bihar

Devastating flood has become an annual routine calamity for the state of Bihar. Like the previous year, this year also a vast area of north and central Bihar has been inundated, causing havoc and taking toll of hundreds of human lives. Crops worth crores of rupees and thousands of cattles have been washed away by the swollen rivers and setting thus an another example of disaster, following criminal negligence on the part of the governments both Central and in the state, who did not care to take preventive measures in time for flood control and save the life and property of the people. Thousands are now staying with their children in a helpless condition under the open sky and waiting for the handful relief being distributed occasional by the administration. All the political parties and the different departments of the administration are now busy with the ensuing Lok Sabha elections and have no time to take a look at the plight of the hapless flood victims.

In this situation, our party, SUCI, in spite of being very much engaged in the election campaign in the 3 Lok Sabha seats we are contesting in

Bihar, has taken initiative in the relief work and in preparing movement for the proper distribution of relief materials and against the criminal negligence and callous attitude of the government. On 6th Sept. last, under the auspices of the Minapur Block Committee of SUCI, a protest demonstration was held in front of the District Collector, Muzaffarpur and a 4-point charter of demands was submitted to him. The demands were as follows :

1. Relief be provided to the flood victims immediately.
2. Adequate compensations be given to the next of kin to the persons who died due to flood.
3. Adequate arrangements to be made for the treatment of the flood victims.
4. Adequate medicine and fodder to be provided soon for the cattles.

The delegation team included Comrades Kashinath Salim, Ramnaresh Roy, Rambahadur Roy, Dinesh Roy, Ahmed Sain, Devnandan Kumar, Moti Rahman.

Massive Demonstration at Baipariguda Block

Orissa, Jeypore, 7.9.99 : Protesting against the cancellation of 98-BPL (Below Poverty Line) List a massive demonstration was held at Baipariguda Block by SUCI on 6 September. Four thousand tribal people from 10 panchayats rushed to the Block Office demanding to implement the new 98 BPL List. After parading the thoroughfares of the town when the strong procession reached the Block Office gate the armed forces obstructed the way. There a public meeting was held in which speakers condemned the out and out anti-Adivasi and anti-poor policies of the government headed by a tribal chief minister.

After the meeting a delegation met the BDO with a demand paper and the people forced the officer to answer them. Compelled by huge pressure the BDO came out and assured the gathering to take steps in this regard. The organizers warned the government that they would organize a militant movement if the demand was not met in a month. It was led by Comrades S N Bisoi, C D Majhi, C G Dali and G K Mali.

Flood in West Bengal

SUCI's proposal of forming all-party committees at grass roots level turned down

An all party meeting under the presidentship of the Chief Minister, West Bengal in presence of the Chief Secretary and different departmental secretaries and top level police officers, on the present flood situation in the state was held at the Writers Buildings, Calcutta on 27th September. In the meeting it was pointed out by our party representative that the party had requested the Chief Election Commissioner to postpone the election in the state in view of the abnormal situation due to flood. The party apprehended the elections would prove to be a farce if it was held before the situation normalise.

On behalf of our party it was also reminded in the meeting that the party had requested the Chief Minister in writing on 16th of July to convene an all party meeting to discuss how any probable flood situation could be met during the monsoon, but the CM did not even reply. While expressing thanks to him for convening the all party meeting that day our party demanded that relief, rescue and rehabilitation of the flood victims must be carried out on war footing and to oversee that it was actually done so, all-party committees at the grass roots level should be formed. It also demanded that petty sectarianism in relief work must be stopped.

But the 'Left Front' government turned down both the proposals of postponing the election and of forming all-party committees at the grass roots level.

Comrades Manik Mukherjee, member of the West Bengal State Secretariat and Swapan Bose, member of the State Committee, were present in the meeting.

State Terrorism as in Punjab

(Contd. from page 2)

Paramjit was first posted in Gurdaspur district. Some time later, he was transferred to Kapurthala. His family was continuously worried about his wellbeing as Punjab witnessed the escalation of conflict between the Sikh militants and the State agencies.

Police personnel and their family members were becoming targets of militant attacks. Paramjit's own family members received many threats from the militants insisting that unless he quit the police force, they would eliminate them. Once his sixty-five year old father Narinder Singh was badly beaten up by militant agents, who let him off with the instruction to seriously discuss the matter over with his son. This was in the middle of 1989.

The incident emotionally disturbed Paramjit who came home on casual leave, but did not return to his duty. Scared and confused about the course of action that was correct for him to take, he also did not send a resignation. Paramjit ignored the letters from the department to account for himself and to report on duty.

For livelihood, Paramjit began to ply a taxi, which he purchased after mortgaging one and a half acres of family agricultural land. Once in early 1990, Paramjit was taken into custody by the Kapurthala police. His interrogators were apparently satisfied that he had quit the police force to spare his family members from the humiliation, violence and threats of elimination. No criminal case was registered against him, and Paramjit was allowed to go back to his work as a taxi operator.

On 2 June 1993, a group of fifteen or sixteen police officers led by one Sub Inspector, raided Paramjit's house while he was washing his Maruti van just outside. Some policemen got hold of Paramjit and started manhandling him. His wife Sukhwant Kaur and father Narinder Singh rushed out to intervene. But they were pushed away and Paramjit was forced into their Allwyn Nissan

vehicle. The policemen demanded the keys of the maruti van, but Paramjit's wife said that she did not have them. The policemen did not care to search for the keys, but attached the van to the backside of their large vehicle and towed it away.

Darshan Singh of Bahmani Wala village, who was visiting the family, recognized Sub Inspector Rashpal Singh of Tarn Taran police. The Sub-Inspector was from his in-laws village of Sakhira. Paramjit's parents met SI Darshan Singh who demanded a bribe of Rs. 50,000 to get their son out of the trouble. They were still trying to raise the bribe money when a policeman informed them that Paramjit was being held at Kairon police post. Narinder Singh and brother Heera, who had taken leave from the army on learning about his brother's abduction, went to Kairon police post where ASI Naurang Singh allowed them to meet Paramjit. He was in a very bad shape from the custodial torture. Paramjit said that his interrogators did not believe his statements of innocence, and asked for confessions. He also suggested that they should bribe the Sub-Inspector if he was able to spare his life for money. They should move fast if he was to live. Parmajit exhorted. Narinder and Heera went back to the Kairon police post on 12th and 13th of June. But they could not meet Paramjit.

On 15 June 93, *Ajit* newspaper reported that a militant named Paramjit Singh of Bahmani Wala village had been killed in an armed encounter with the Punjab police. Although the newspaper had identified Paramit by his name and village, the police did not return the dead body to the family, which does not even know how, when, where and by whom it got cremated.

Parmajit's widow Sukhwant Kaur, who now lives with her parents in Jaura village in Patti subdivision of Maritsar district, reports that her mother-in-law has from the trauma of this incident become mentally imbalanced.

Atrocities on Minorities

In the last one and a half years, with BJP-led government at the Centre, there has been a spurt in atrocities, committed against the minorities, as a wave of communal hate campaign by Sangh Parivar constituents, including the BJP, RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal and others has swept the country. From the evidence of such incidents made available to the National Commission for Minorities and to a fact-finding team of the United Christians for Human Rights/CBCI, a report has been compiled by the latter till January, 1999.

By the middle of June 1998, an unprecedented anti-Christian hate campaign in Gujarat having started, there were at least three major incidents — the exhumation of a body at Kapadwan, the burning of 400 Bibles at Rajkot and a spurt of violence in South Gujarat, including Surat and in particular the Dangs, a hilly tribal area. There, in sharp violence, as many as 10 churches of various sizes were burnt/demolished, between June and November 98. These incidents were dismissed by the police-administration as minor involving mere "wood and mud structures". Besides, when poor, unarmed Christian tribals were subjected to intimidation and violence by large mobs — very well informed about the location of churches/ places of worship and homes of Christian families — the police not only refused to register complaints by the victims but went out of its way to ensure that there were counter complaints by the aggressors and leaders of the mobs, in an effort to give these the appearance of communal clashes and a 'parity' between the Christians and the aggressors both in number of cases and number of protests. Thus, by the end of the year 43 Christians were arrested while the number of Hindus arrested was 54.

The report castigated in particular the role of the Collector, Deputy Superintendent and Superintendent of Police who were deeply involved in giving permission to the aggressive Hindu Jagran Manch (consisting of members of the BJP, RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal, Vanvasi Kalyan and others) to hold a provocative rally on Christmas Day in Ahwa town, Dangs district. The Collector who himself attended the rally, where he was garlanded, had dismissed four memoranda by the local Christian community to warn of the Manch's designs, and allowed the rally, though he was fully aware of the preparations that had been made by the Manch to precipitate violence. He was aware of the Manch and others distributing virulent statements and literature, of distributing trishuls and holding deeksha ceremonies at which they made inflammatory statements against Christians. As a result, between 26 December and January 1, 99, 16 churches/prayer halls were burnt/demolished/destroyed and 8 churches damaged/attacked throughout the district, 3 schools/institutions destroyed/attacked and a number of shops and houses damaged/looted. In 11 incidents where Christian people were attacked/beaten up/injured, including 15 tribal women who were stoned by a mob in Ahwa town. Besides there were a host of minor incidents which have not been mentioned in the report. In Surat and Ahmedabad district too, there were a number of incidents where Christmas celebrations were attacked,

churches burnt, a shop destroyed and houses stoned.

Below we cite a few incidents from the catalogue of crimes committed against the minorities during 1998 and January 99, in different states.

1998

March 19, Jammu and Kashmir : Four Muslims are beaten to death in Karara near Doda by RSS workers in reprisal for the killing of an RSS worker two days earlier by a different group of Muslims for allegedly molesting a local girl.

April 11, Gujarat : Alleged VHP-Bajrang Dal activists armed with hockey sticks, cricket bats and rods, attack a Christian group observing Passion Week in Palanpur.

June 23, Gujarat : After two Muslim youth clope with Hindu girls from Randhikpur village, VHP and Bajrang Dal squads force over 400 Muslim villagers to level their homes in an act of collective reprisal. The administration and the police stand by and watch as independent fact-finding teams and journalists visiting Randhikpur are attacked.

July 18, Gujarat : The Shantiniketan High School in Zankhav near Surat, run by the Christian missionaries, is vandalised. The playground is ploughed with a tractor. (Violence follows false reports in the Gujarati language press that the school's adivasi students are forcibly converted, whereas only 152 of the school's 750 students are Christians.)

August 15, Gujarat : Communal riots break out in Sanjeli against the background of the BJP-VHP's effort to communalise inter-community weddings. The home of a Christian priest, Joe Vas, is attacked. (Riots follow a Dharam Sabha organised in the town three days earlier, where BJP-VHP leaders made speeches inciting adivasis against Muslims. Independent investigators found that in this case the root cause of the riot was the local panchayat's refusal to honour court orders granting a Muslim fishing rights in a local pond.)

August 15, Uttar Pradesh : Bajrang Dal and VHP cadre attack church activists in Robertganj.

August 25, West Bengal : Bikash Das, a church worker, (Property Committee Chairman, Calcutta Boys School—a missionary school — Ed. P. Era) is allegedly assaulted by a Trinamul Congress leader.

September 25, Madhya Pradesh : Nuns are raped at a Christian convent in Jhabua. Although specific culpability for the incident remains unclear, it came in the wake of the VHP-BJP's anti-Christian campaign.

September 26, Uttar Pradesh : Activists of the Hindu Jagran Manch, the Bajrang Dal and the Rana Tharu Parishad break into the Union Church at Amaun near Khatima in Udham Singh Nagar district and install a Siva idol.

October 1, Rajasthan : School books are found to have been rewritten to suit the Hindu Right's agenda. Articles by RSS chief Rajendra Singh, his deputy K S Sudershan, Panchjanya editor Tarun Vijay and the Swadeshi Jagran Manch's Jalam Singh Rawlot found to appear in Class 9 textbooks.

October 27, Uttar Pradesh : The BJP-dominated Municipal Corporation of Ayodhya passes a resolution banning burials within the city limits. Ayodhya has a large Muslim population and is the site of several graveyards.

October 30, Gujarat : Bajrang Dal-VHP members armed with belts, chains and lathis attack delegates at the National Christian Conference in Baroda.

November 3, Gujarat : VHP members attack groups seeking to end anti-women exorcism rituals at the Kaliyaji temple in Shamlaji.

November 11, Gujarat : Hindu fundamentalists force residents of Daghunia a village near the Satpura road in Dangs to enter hot springs for ritual purification. The village sarpanch also issues orders barring adivasi Christians from drawing water from the community well, grazing their livestock on community land and gaining employment in government projects.

November 24, Karnataka : Forty armed Hindu activists, allegedly affiliated to the RSS, attack a Christian service at Kulai near Mangalore.

December 3, Karnataka : Police action terminates a rath yatra organised by VHP activists with the public support of Karwar's BJP MP Ananthakumar Hegde to storm the Sufi shrine of Hazarat Abdul Azeez Macci at Chikmagalur. The VHP and the BJP claim that the shrine is in fact a Hindu temple, which they wish to call Datta Peetha.

December 11, Maharashtra : Shiv Sena corporators in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation move a motion to make the singing of Vande Mataram mandatory in Greater Mumbai's schools.

December 24, Maharashtra : Christmas celebrations in Mumbai's Bandra suburb are disrupted by Bajrang Dal activists.

1999

January 6, New Delhi : Shiv Sena activists dig up the pitch at Ferozeshah Kotla cricket stadium to prevent an India-Pakistan match from being played there. The Sena also threatens to disrupt a New Delhi-Lahore bus service.

January 18, Tamil Nadu : The Shiv Sena unit in Chennai threatens to disrupt "at any cost" the first India-Pakistan cricket Test scheduled to be held in the city.

January 19, Maharashtra : Political activists and journalists protesting against the Shiv Sena's attack on the BCCI office are arrested, but no action is taken against the group that indulged in violence. The police refuse the file First Information Reports from protesters who allege brutality.

January 20, Mumbai : Shiv Sena leader Uddhav Thackeray announces that Kashmiri Muslim traders will not be allowed to set up shop in Goa.

January 23, Orissa : Graham Stewart Staines and his two sons Philip, 9, and Timothy, 6, are burnt to death at Manoharpur village.

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