

# Proletarian Era

Volume 30 No. 4  
October 18, 1996

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

Rs. 2.00  
Air surcharge : 5 P.

## Bangalore Convention Protests Beauty Pageant

# World Beauty Contest Condemned

In a tireless effort the All India Mahila Samskruthika Sanghatane (AIMMS) has been mobilizing public opinion and giving voice to the vehement opposition of conscious people against the proposed World Beauty Contest to be held in Bangalore in November. In a protest movement it proclaimed : " Such beauty contests deserve our strongest condemnation and opposition since they focus the physical beauty of women and glorify it, negating woman's actual role in history and social movement. Woman who can be equal to man in every sphere of life if given an opportunity is just reduced to an object of enjoyment. By measuring and weighing her body, the contest crosses all norms of human decency. It breeds among young girls the concept that furtherance of physical beauty is the aim and purpose of life, develops inferiority among the less fortunate and contributes to tendencies of lecherous lust in men and consequent atrocities on women. No advancing society and progressing civilization can ever tolerate such abhorrent exercises.

Can any decent man who cherishes beautiful relations with women as sister, daughter, mother or colleague ever agree with such demeaning and vulgarising of the importance of women? Can women ever accept

such positions which hurt their dignity and self respect? Even those who participate in such contests should understand it." Refuting the fallacious comparison between great art and beauty contests they hold: "Great art and vulgarity are poles apart...Is not art measured by the impact that it creates on society and the taste of the creator? Is this beauty contest in any way going to create great sense of values and aesthetics in society? Or will it contribute to perversions and decadence as many western countries can easily testify to?" Pointing to the role of such beauty contests of creating markets for the various sponsoring MNCs, in particular the garments and cosmetics industry, on the one hand and on the other the imperialist policy of flooding people with perverted cultural programmes and habits to make them weak and impotent to resist exploitation and injustice, they proclaimed: "we shall show that Bangalore, true to its tradition, is cosmopolitan and broad in outlook, always welcoming all that is good and noble from all parts of the world but stoutly rejecting and defeating decadence and perversion. We shall put Bangalore on the world map as a beautiful city of intelligent and cultured people who saw through the designs of MNCs, all exploiters and their hirelings...Bangalore shall be the first

city which said 'No' to a 'beauty pageant', an euphemism for degradation of womanhood. Here the dignity of womanhood and the voice of human decency shall be loudly asserted and then the rest of the world will follow suit." With this call the AIMSS organized a

(Contd. on page 4)

## Execution of Najibullah Condemned

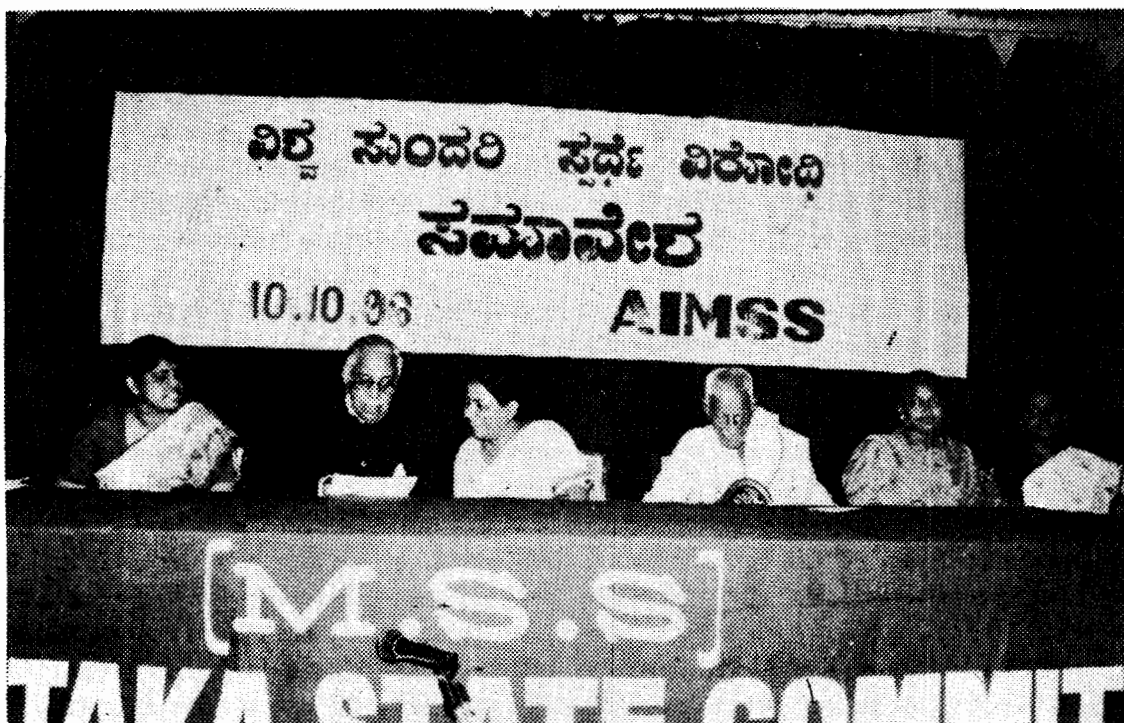
Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, issued on October 10, 1996 the following statement on dastardly incident in Afghanistan :

"No word is strong enough to condemn the most barbaric act of abduction from the UN compound in Kabul and execution of the former Afghan President Mohammed Najibullah and his brother and hanging from a lamppost their bodies by armed men on 27th September last.

It has come to light that the notorious Taliban militia has perpetrated this brutality being directly backed and fomented by Pakistan and in tacit connivance, if not with direct patronage, of US imperialism. Such an atrocious act has been embarked upon taking advantage of the absence of the socialist camp.

After the fall of Kabul in the hands of Taliban regime what is going on there is the rape of morality, butchery of democracy and sweep of medieval fundamentalism.

All democratic minded people and organizations should raise their strongest voice of protest against the reactionary diktat of *Shariat* to place the entire womenfolk behind the purdah which is fraught with dangerous social, political repercussions and goes against the basic spirit, norms, principles and values of democracy and humanism."



Convention organised by AIMSS, Bangalore against proposed Beauty Pageant. Seated on the dais are (from left) Dr. Sudha Kamath, Justice M. N. Venkatachalaiah, Dr. Jayalakshmi, Justice Nittoor Srinivasa Rao, Smt. Banu Mustaq and Comrade K. Uma. (More pictures on page 4)

# A Review of Afghan Situation

The civil war in Afghanistan has taken a new turn after taking over of Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan by the Taliban fundamentalist forces on September 27, last. The first task of the Taliban forces after capturing Kabul was to drag Mr Najibullah, the former President and his brother out of their house in a UN complex, execute them and hang them from the lamppost outside the presidential palace. Mr Najibullah's two associates also met with the same fate on the next date. Apart from perpetrating such a crime by violating international law the Taliban issued a *fatwa* asking women to stay at home and have their body totally covered. Their subsequent actions in asking all men to grow beards, compelling menfolk to offer *namaz* at the nearest mosque five times a day, beating up women who are not covered from head to toe and closing girls' schools demonstrate the mediaeval and utterly despotic character of the Taliban forces. The Taliban declared that it wanted to govern according to the laws and codes of the Koran. The imposition of such stringent and mediaeval measures, specially on the women folk, is aimed at giving a total shock treatment to the entire population. The Taliban is not so naive as not to realize that it will not be possible to rule the country all through with such stringent measures on women constituting 50 per cent of the population, who tasted modernity, though briefly, in the recent past. Subsequently, Taliban has to some extent relented and made some concessions here and there. But this is only a proof of the utterly shrewd reactionary character of the Taliban.

Although the UN special Envoy to Afghanistan, Mr Norbert Holl, deplored the summary execution of Mr Najibullah and condemned the violation of immunity extended to the UN premises, but the fact remains when the Taliban forces are directly aided and abetted by the US imperialists, the mightiest imperialist power of the world, the arbiter in the "unipolar world" and the self proclaimed protector of world democracy, in league with Pakistan, they perpetrated such a heinous crime by violating all international rules and norms with impunity.

*Jane's Defence Weekly* reported, "Pakistan's direct support, planning, command and control have been critical to the Taliban's success in overrunning Kabul". This defence magazine said, "What we have seen is a remarkable level of sophistication of command and control over a range of fast moving fronts and it simply defies belief that Afghan mullahs could be capable of this sort of planning organisation and execution". *The Times* magazine also corroborated this by reporting, "The morale, strength and the resources of the Taliban are the product of massive outside support, mainly from Pakistan and partly from the USA." Reports of use of chemical weapons by the Taliban militia are also flushed in the newspapers. When the US imperialists pose themselves as champion of peace at the CTBT talks to hoodwink the world people in general and the US people in particular before the US presidential elections, this use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan exposes the real face of the US imperialists once again.

It is to be noted that the Taliban forces took

over Kabul practically without any resistance as the recognized government run by Mr Burhanuddin Rabbani, the President and Mr Hekmetyar, the Prime Minister, had moved the headquarters from Kabul and concentrated their forces at the Pajshir Valley while General Rashid Dastum, the northern warlord controlling the northern provinces has been massing troops along the highway to Central Asia. The Taliban militia clashed with the forces of the government and General Dostum and suffered initial set back. The Taliban militia has till now control over two third area of Afghanistan, and so the ground situation is still very fluid. President Rabbani, the recognized head of the state has issued an appeal to other countries of the world not to act in haste to recognize the Taliban regime in Kabul.

But as expected neighbouring Pakistan signalled the first recognition of the new regime announcing despatch of officials for talks in Kabul. And despite barbaric crime and out and out fundamentalist character of the Taliban, the US imperialists are openly toeing a very soft line on the Taliban. The world at large has noticed the recent hostile US attack against Iraq which ordered movement of military within an area which the entire world recognizes as the legitimate territory of Iraq, on the plea of protecting human rights. The US imperialists are acting as international policemen to oversee the implementation of the UN sanctions on Iraq, Iran, Libya and Cuba. They cry hoarse against fundamentalism and even don't hesitate to use force against it when their imperialist interest is hampered. All these actions of theirs are prompted by their sole aim of protecting their economic interest.

The situation in Afghanistan has been turbulent for decades because of imperialist machinations and it has taken a new turn now. The geopolitical importance of Afghanistan is one of the reasons behind this turbulence. On the north of the country are the Central Asian states of the former Soviet Union, on the west is Iran, on the east is China and on the south is Pakistan. Afghanistan's location is important in respect of trade with the Central Asian countries. The transport route through Afghanistan and Pakistan or oil and gas pipelines through these countries, and access to the Indian ocean are of vital importance to the US imperialists in the competition with Iran and Russia in respect to the control of the mineral rich markets of the Central Asian countries. It is because of this business interest and also to maintain and further strengthen the US stranglehold over the Middle East that the US imperialists backed the fundamentalist Taliban to take over Kabul. Mr Nicholas Burns, the US State Department spokesman said, "We would like to have US diplomats contact the Taliban." Mr Burns confirmed that the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, Mrs Robin Raphael, had met Taliban representatives on several occasions. So it is clear that the US imperialists have been taking advantage of the situation in Afghanistan and this country is going to be used as a pawn in the gameplan of the US imperialists.

The attitude of the government of India

toward the recent development in Afghanistan is also unprincipled. While Iran, Russia, France and several other countries condemned the execution of Mr Najibullah, India maintained a studied silence. India is making an assessment of the still unfolding situation in Afghanistan. It is not clear till now whether the Taliban militia will be able to establish its complete hegemony over entire Afghanistan by giving defeat to the government forces and the forces controlled by General Rashid Dostum. If the Taliban militia succeeds in doing so, India is keeping its option open in building bridges with the Taliban. India had a quite good rapport with the government led by Mr Rabbani, and so in case of set back of the Taliban militia, India will continue to maintain that rapport.

The possibility of peace in Afghanistan is remote. As already stated the Taliban has been backed by Pakistan and the US imperialists. On the other hand the government led by Mr Rabbani declared that it would not stop fighting. General Dastum has also joined hand with Mr. Rabbani. Iran and Russia are supporting the Rabbani government. The US imperialists are hellbent to isolate Iran. It is because of all these complexities and particularly of the imperialist rivalry over the control of the market of the Central Asian countries that the Afghan conflict may spill over and assume an international character.

It may however be remembered that different Mujhadeen factions fighting one another in Afghanistan are all led by fundamentalist forces, difference in degree notwithstanding. In the backdrop of the setback of the communist movement the fundamentalist forces are rearing their ugly heads everywhere to crush the progressive and democratic movement of the people. It is known to all that the bourgeoisie once fought against religious bigotry and mediaevalism and established scientific outlook and scientific bent of mind in the heyday of renaissance. But being faced with crisis the bourgeoisie in the later period have been reviving the rotten mediaeval ideas in their own class interest. The bourgeoisie are today making use of fundamentalism as a ready weapon to crush people's movement. The Taliban plea of governing the country on the basis of the laws and codes of the Koran is only a ruse to confuse the simple folk having genuine sentiment for religion. It may be noted that the Taliban very much supports the use of modern technology for industrialization or for augmenting production which will help in looting and plundering the people. But only in the realm of ideology they oppose scientific thinking and advocate obscurantism and mediaevalism. In our country the BJP, the Hindu fundamentalist force has also been advocating that the kitchen is the proper place for the women. But while the BJP's claim of being principled and honest does not hold water, the Taliban in Afghanistan has still now been able to confuse the people about its discipline and honesty. But news has already been appearing in the press that is shattering this image of the Taliban. It is reported that the Taliban is engaged in lucrative trade in heroin,

(Contd. on page 8)

## West Bengal DYO, Organises School of Politics

A School of politics was held at Rabindra Bhawan, Purulia town, West Bengal on 4 and 5 September under the auspices of the DYO State Committee. It was conducted by Comrade Manik Mukherjee, member, West Bengal State Secretariat, SUCI. From 16 districts of West Bengal 1373 young people took part in this school of politics.

An exhibition of quotations from the works of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, and of photographs of police torture in the anti-busfare hike movement in West Bengal were held at Rabindra Bhawan.

The school of politics started with the garlanding of the portrait of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. In the first two sessions Comrade Manik Mukherjee discussed penetratingly the development of society and civilization, the emergence of Marxism and the great teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

In the third session problems on culture and morality were discussed.

The concluding session began with the discussion on taking initiative to build up sustained youth movement from the grassroots level on burning problems.

Finally the recorded speech of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, delivered in the Youth Conference held in 1975, was played. The voice of the great leader, his profound ethical approach, his teachings to defy death to lead an honourable life by dedicating oneself to the cause of revolution, roused everybody present there.

The school ended with the song on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.



School of Politics organised by DYO West Bengal at Purulia

## Baula Valley Mines' Workers' Meeting

About 6000 workers of mines managed by IMFA, FACOR, OMC in Baula region have formed Baula Upatyaka Mines Workers' Union on 15th August under the leadership of the UTUC-LS. On last 25th August, when the workers wanted to hold a meeting in this connection, the police administration of Keonjhar district did not give permission for the same. After a lot of argument they gave permission for the meeting at Anandpur which is 35km away from the mines area. The mines' workers took it as a challenge and reached Anandpur on foot, by cycles and trucks. Then they started a procession from Chhenapadi Chhak which passed through the main thoroughfares of the town amidst heavy rain. More than one hundred police officers and armed police were deployed. Over five thousand workers were present despite heavy rain. Comrade Mayadhar Mayak, Secretary, UTUC-LS was the main speaker. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Balaram Sahu, Vice President of the Union.

The UTUC-LS and Sukinda Upatyaka Mines Workers' Union affiliated to it have opposed renewal of leasehold of chromite mines in the Sukinda valley, recently withdrawn from the TISCO, in favour of private houses and demanded its allotment to Orissa Mining Corporation (OMC).

In a statement it has been observed that Tisco over the years earned thousands of crores of rupees by exploiting its leasehold of chromite mines which contains 80% of the country's and also Asia's chrome ore reserves. In the last

decade the company, through rapid mechanisation, retrenched 10,000 workers. In its eagerness to earn maximum profit it had over the years adopted wrong and unscientific mining operations which seriously affected environment, thereby affecting the health and sources of livelihood of the common people. Moreover, TISCO manoeuvred to acquire the state owned Brahmanipal charge chrome factory at throwaway price.

Recently the Supreme Court upheld the Sharma Committee recommendation to reduce the leasehold of the TISCO from 1261 hectares to 406 hectares. Private houses like IMFA, FACOR, the Mittals and the Jindals are now busy planning to divide the remaining 855 hectares among themselves. Many other industrialists of the country and abroad are also eyeing the chrome deposit of Sukinda. Though the central government is empowered to grant lease, the recommendation of the state government is necessary and important.

The Geological Survey of India estimated that the earlier TISCO leasehold of 1261 hectares contains 150 million tonnes of chromite which at current price can fetch Rs.1,20,000 crores after all expenses. TISCO even after the reduction of its leasehold will earn a fabulous Rs.40,000 crores from its area. The remaining Rs.80,000 crores is sought to be divided among the big chrome users and traders of India.

The Survey has questioned the common people of Orissa would get from such deals and from the mineral wealth of the state. The union has demanded that the leasehold of mines

withdrawn from TISCO be given to the OMC which in turn must assure to introduce labour intensive chrome factories.

The Union called upon the common people of Orissa to search for the cause of their abject poverty even as they sit over rich mineral wealth.

The statement on this issue has been released by Comrade Mayadhar Nayak, General Secretary, Sukinda Upatyaka Mines Workers' Union.

## Orissa State Committee to hold massive demonstration for drought relief

The Orissa State Committee of the SUCI in its meeting held on 16.9.96 at Bhubaneswar under the presidentship of Comrade Tapas Dutta, State Secretary, after reviewing the widespread draught situation, which has already engulfed the entire state, and the utter callous and criminal attitude of the State government in combating this havoc, has decided to launch immediately a vigorous people's movement to compel the government to undertake appropriate steps on war footing to save the drought affected people of the state. Protest demonstrations before blocks, tehsil offices and district headquarters have already been organized throughout the state and a state level massive protest rally will be held before the State Secretariat, Bhubaneswar on 16th October, 1996.

Some other burning issues like shifting of proposed steel plant by TATA's to some other place, steep price-rise, etc. have also been included in the demands.

# Convention against Beauty Pageant

(Contd from page 1)

convention at the Indian Institute of Engineers in Bangalore on 10.10.96, which created a great impact and gave new momentum to this protest movement. At the convention a galaxy of prominent personalities told the government not to cynically disregard public opinion opposing the beauty pageant. Mr Justice M. N. Venkatachalaiah, who has been chosen Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission, cautioned that "the dignity of India should not be surrendered to the culture of globalization", and appealed to intellectuals and other sections of the masses of the society to raise their voice against indignity to women. Mr Justice Venkatachalaiah said this while inaugurating the convention. Eminent personalities like former Chief Justice of Karnataka Mr Nittoor Srinivasa Rao, Ms Banu Mushtaq, advocate and renowned writer, Mr K.V. Subbanna, Magsaysay Award winner and renowned theatre personality, Dr Sudha Kamath, Plastic Surgeon, Ms K. Uma, State President, AIDS, Dr B.R. Manjunath, President, AIDYO, Ms Hemlata Mahishi and others attended the convention.

Justice Venkatachalaiah said: when it comes to ethical issues like beauty pageant, the government should act with circumspection and not cynically disrespect public opinion. He felt the government was not taking public opinion seriously. It is a very dangerous trend. The Indian culture is duty and obligation based. "We realize western countries as developed but we don't know what they are developing into", he explained. He agreed the society should be open but "an open society need not be a permissive one". Passive response to disintegration of values would not help matters, he added. The tendency to give in to multinationals and ignoring Indian values must be curbed.

Mr Justice Nittoor Srinivasa Rao, who was the chief guest on the occasion, expressed his total agreement with all the issues raised by the AIMSS. "Not only in terms of Indian value system but also in terms of human values as citizens of the world this beauty contest is unacceptable to all. Whatever the reason put

forth by the organizers, it basically holds women's physical beauty as the main attraction and therefore has to be opposed. ... why only young women are paraded on the ramp? Why not older women", he asked. He extended full support to the protesters and agreed to different points of views aired during the convention.

Ms Banu Mushtaq, who was one of the speakers, said that all religions, politics and judiciary in our country were based on patriarchal value system. "This beauty contest which disregards women's dignity and glorifies her physical beauty will have to be rejected", she said. "The government which banned the Bethale Seve (a practice of nude worship) is now permitting obscene parading of women in the name of beauty contest — this can't be accepted. The government has no right to help organise such contest. I wish congenial atmosphere would be created which would help women grow as a confident personality involved in activities of intellectual growth," she concluded.

Dr H.G. Jayalakshmi, State Secretary, Karnataka State AIMSS, who presided over the convention, said, "Not only will we oppose it, we will resist it. Due to opposition and protests the venue of the Swim Suit Round of the Beauty Contest has already been shifted to Seychelles. This is an initial victory. To all those who question us as to why we are fighting against this contest, when there are so many other problems, our only answer is this — any society with a high cultural standard is a growing society, if a society loses its moral, ethical standard, it will die. Therefore, the need for this socio-cultural movement which will ultimately help us fight out all other evils in society."

Dr Sudha Kamath, President, AIMSS, Karnataka, Comrade K. Uma, President, AIDS, Dr B.R. Manjunath, President, AIDYO and Ms Hemalata Mahishi also spoke on the occasion. Several organisations too have sent messages supporting the convention, condemning the beauty contest.



Justice M. N. Venkatachalaiah inaugurating the Convention.

Several eminent personalities, who could not attend the convention in person, sent their messages condemning the beauty contest. They are Prof A. N. Murthy Rao, litterateur, nonagenarian poet PuThina, Justice E.S. Venkataramaiah, former Chief Justice of Supreme Court, Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, former Judge of Supreme Court of India, K.V. Subbanna, noted dramatist, Channaveera Kanavi, renowned poet and the president of ensuing Kannada Sahithya Sammelana, Sm Sarah Aboobakar, well-known writer and Prof J.R. Lakshman Rao, Sr. science writer.

A resolution condemning the beauty pageant and calling on the President of India, seeking his intervention to stop the contest from taking place on Indian soil, was unanimously adopted at the convention.

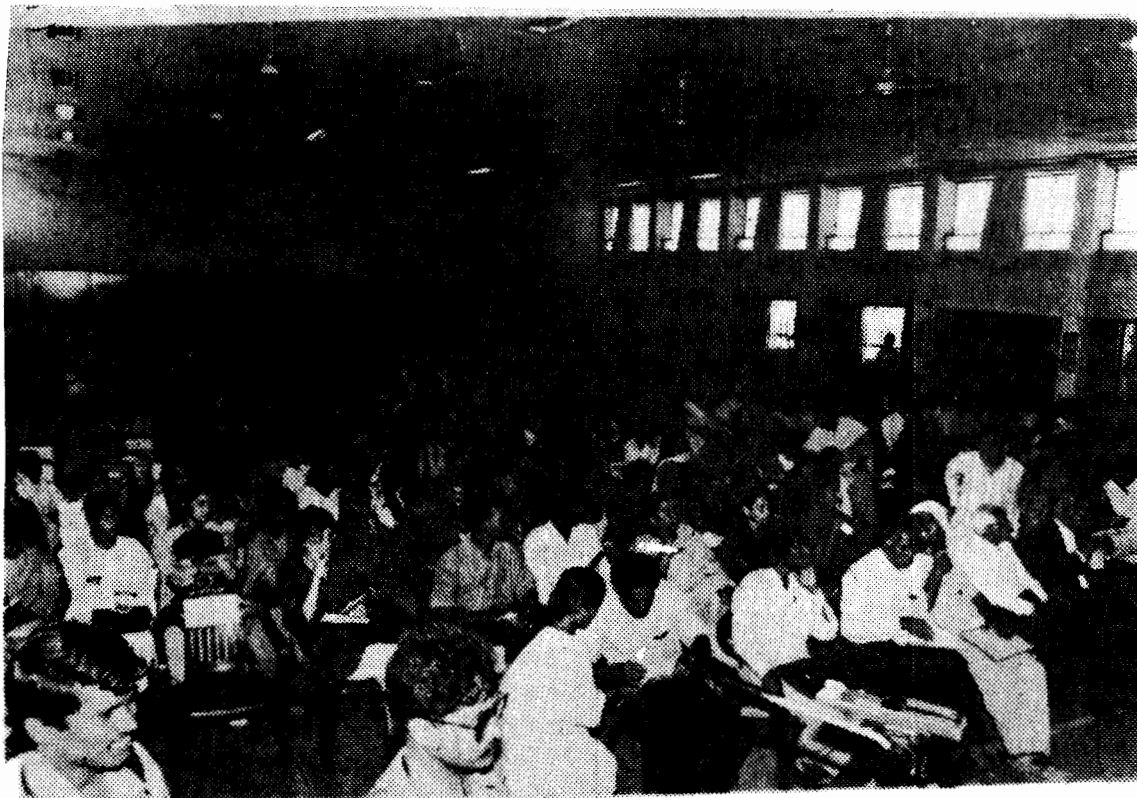
## AIDYO's movement for banning liquor in Bangalore

The Karnataka State Committee of the AIDYO launched a mass movement demanding total prohibition of liquor in the state from 2nd October itself. On 28th September a massive protest rally was held at Bangalore, attended by thousands of youth coming from Mysore, Mandya, Bangalore and far away places like Guibarga, Belgaum, Raichur, Dharwad and others. They came in a colourful procession which started from Chickdhalbagh and culminated in a meeting at Cubbon Park.

Mr. H.S. Doreswamy, the veteran freedom fighter, while addressing the gathering lamented how thousands of families were being ruined in the state due to fast spread of liquor habit. He gave a clarion call to the youth to launch a mighty movement against this menace. Comrade B.R. Manjunath, the State president of AIDYO was among others who spoke. The meeting was presided over by Com. Bhagawan Reddy, Vice President of AIDYO State Unit.

Later a delegation headed by Comrade Ramanjinappa, the State Secretary of AIDYO met the Chief Minister Sri J.H. Patel and had a long discussion with him on demand of suitable measures to curb draining of money and totally prohibit liquor immediately. The Chief Minister on the spot assured that he would implement it in the next year. However, the delegation impressed upon him to order total prohibition from 2nd October itself. Responding to it, the Chief Minister assured the matter would be considered seriously and measures would be taken at the earliest.

AIDYO called upon the youth to continue the movement till the demands are achieved.



A section of the delegates of the Convention organised by AIMSS, Bangalore against proposed Beauty Pageant.

# Fourth Bihar State Students' Conference

In Patna on 8th October last, thousands of students marched towards the Secretariat Building to hand over to the Chief Minister of Bihar a memorandum signed by lakhs of students from all over the state demanding solution to the burning problems in students' life. The well decorated procession started from the historic Gandhi Maidan and flanked by countless people marched through the streets of Patna. A barricade was set up by the police to prevent the students from going further. The students held a meeting on the spot which was addressed by Comrade Pratap Samal, All India President of the AIDS0 and other state leaders of the organisation. As the Chief Minister was not available, a five member delegation led by Comrade Rakesh Chandra, Convener of the AIDS0 Bihar State Organizing Committee, met the state Education Minister and handed over the memorandum.

On the following day over 600 delegates from various schools, colleges and universities from all over Bihar participated in the 4th Bihar State Students' Conference held under the auspices of the AIDS0. Amid thunderous slogans, Comrade Pratap Samal, President AIDS0 hoisted the flag of the organisation and Comrade Swapan Chatterjee, General Secretary, AIDS0 paid floral tribute on the martyrs' column. A presidium consisting Comrade Dipak Kumar, Comrade Ramprit Rai, Comrade Mohan Singh with Comrade Rakesh Chandra as its president was invited on the dais. Also invited were Comrade Pratap Samal, Comrade Swapan Chatterjee and Comrade Santu Gupta, the All India President, General Secretary and Vice-President respectively. Comrade Rabin Samajpati and Comrade Arun Kr. Singh, the former All India General Secretary and former President of AIDS0



Students' rally in Patna on the occasion of 4th Bihar State Students' Conference

respectively, were also on the dais. The proceedings commenced with the song composed on the great leader of the proletariat Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Speaking first, Comrade Pratap Samal, the All India President of AIDS0 congratulated the AIDS0 Bihar State Organizing Committee for organizing a conference so grand as this and urged the assembly to build up a mighty statewide movement against the rabid anti-people educational policies of the state government. A number of resolutions including the one on the political situation were moved before the house. A number of delegates spoke in support of the resolutions. Later, each resolution was passed unanimously.

A strong 26-member state committee and a

31-member state council were unanimously elected by the house. Comrade Ramprit Rai as president ; Comrade Mohan Singh, Comrade Ramnarayan Bhaskar, Comrade Indradev Rai, Comrade Kumud Mohato as Vice Presidents ; Comrade Dipak Kumar as Secretary and Comrade Kavindra Pandit as treasurer were elected as executives of the State Committee. Comrade Swapan Chatterjee, General Secretary, AIDS0 expressed his confidence on the leadership of the newly elected committee and council.

Last to speak on the occasion was Comrade Arun Kumar Singh, former President of the AIDS0 and a prominent member of Bihar State Committee of the SUCI.

The internationale marked the end of the proceedings. (More picture in page 7)

## School of Politics in Muzzaffarpur

Under the auspices of the Muzzaffarpur District Committee, SUCI, a school of politics was held on 21 and 22 September last at Rajiv Atithi Bhavan at Muzzaffarpur. Comrade Pritish Chanda, member of the Central Committee of our party, conducted the School which was attended by the important activists of the district. Comrade Amriteswar Chakraborty, Secretary, Bihar State Committee, and Comrade Shivshankar, Arun Singh, members of the District Committee and State Secretariat were also present there.

Comrade Pritish Chanda discussed mainly the necessity of accepting Marxism-Leninism as the world outlook. He also deliberated on the history of the development of human society and materialist philosophy. He discussed the problems of casteism in the present political situation. He showed how to fight individualism by determining the revolutionary object of life. In the last session, he discussed the organizational problems and how to solve it. While discussing the importance of Marxism-Leninism as world outlook Comrade Chanda said : Marxism is not a dogma. It is a scientific methodology applying which alone we can ascertain what is truth and what is not. Marx said that philosophers wanted to explain the world but the question was to change it. Marxism is a world outlook, a total philosophy,

a science, Marxism is not the philosophy of only the workers ; rather, it is a philosophy of mankind and should be applied to every aspect of our life.

While discussing the organizational problems he said : We as the representatives of the proletariat of our country are entrusted with the responsibility of accomplishing revolution. While in this path of struggle, many comrades, sometimes even very important and leading ones, can lag behind and at last deviate from the party line. So long as we are on the correct path we can advance. But when we have deviated from the correct line and fallen victim to reformism-revisionism, individualism, the erosion will start inside ourselves as germs of diseases work and will ultimately lead us to the point of opposing revolution. Individualism is now the greatest enemy before the communist movement. For fighting it, we shall have to adopt collective life, and strengthen collective leadership on the one hand and adopt mass life on the other. I should be a teacher, a doctor for the masses who can heal their wounds and educate them. Comrades should be the friends and the leaders of masses. They should not fall prey to ego-centrism and vanity. Higher party post means higher responsibility. Remember, people watch our life and activities. They watch whether we are doing what we preach. If you

can do that people will respect you. Such examples are there in our party that a father or an elder brother respects his son or younger brother who is a party executive as his leader. We should educate and rouse the masses by our lives and character.

This school of politics has created tremendous enthusiasm among the rank and file of the district party organisation and some old comrades who were suffering from personal problems were helped a lot.

## Beauty Pageant in Bangalore MSS West Bengal's Memorandum to PM

A five member delegation under the leadership of Comrade Sadhana Choudhury, the West Bengal State Secretary of the All India MSS submitted on September 24 a memorandum to the Prime Minister through the Rajyapal of West Bengal, demanding banning of the beauty contest to be held in Bangalore by the ABCL with the patronage of the Karnataka government.

Later a demonstration and a street corner meeting were held under the auspices of the Calcutta District Committee of the MSS demanding the banning of the beauty pageant on martyr Pritilata Day.

## Historic victory of students in Moradabad

Since long the students of Ruhelkhand university had been fighting for the fulfillment of their just and legitimate demand under the banner of AIDS0. Despite having submitted numerous memoranda to the vice chancellor of the university, their problems have only accentuated. All appeals before the university authorities fell on deaf ears.

In continuation to the above movement, an agitational programme was launched under the banner of AIDS0 right from the beginning of the academic year 1996-97. To lead the movement towards victory, a joint forum was formed along with other student organisations. The burning problems were malpractices by the university authorities over the declaration of examination results and mark lists.

However just after the first phase of movement, that is demonstration at the district headquarters, on 14.9.96, some student organisations including the SFI openly violated the standing code of conduct and detached themselves from the forum. Worth mentioning here is the fact that keeping itself entirely aloof, the ABVP tried to sabotage the movement by creating confusions and rifts among the general students. In spite of these odds, the movement marched forward under the leadership of AIDS0. A massive demonstration was held at the university administrative building, marking the beginning of the second phase of the movement.

But instead of listening to the students' pleas, the vicechancellor displaying his adamancy, called upon the administration and

his pet hooligans to foil the justified movement. The result was a barbarous lathi charge in which many students sustained severe injuries. It was shortly followed by mass arrests of students. At several places buses were stopped and students therein were arrested. Moreover instead of providing medical relief to those injured, the students were locked up. Comrade Harkishore Singh, Secretary, AIDS0 Moradabad, sustained severe injuries and was under treatment for 11 days under police surveillance.

Even such a barbarous and undemocratic move to paralyse the movement failed miserably. Angered by the anti-social activities of both the local administration and the university authorities, students of Moradabad took to the streets. 12 September saw a closure of all the colleges of the area. The atmosphere was rent with processions, meetings, road blockades, etc. A bandh was declared in Moradabad by the agitating students. People from all walks of life responded to the call. Seeing the tremendous impact of the movement even among the common men, the local administration as well as the college authorities, had to surrender. On 23 September, the vice chancellor agreed to a negotiation at the end of which he promised to fulfill twenty important demands of the agitating students.

The students, inspired by their historic victory, decided to launch a much more broad based and sustained movement against the anti-people educational policies of the government.

## SUCI movement to help the flood victims of North Bihar

Incessant rains and unprecedented flooding of rivers like the Bagmati, the Balam, the Adhwara, etc., caused havoc in North Bihar, especially Darbhanga, taking a toll of more than hundred lives and innumerable cattle. Thousands of people became homeless and the crops of hundreds of acres of land had been destroyed. Since 1978, this type of natural calamity had never occurred. In some places, public life had suffered much more than during 1978 flood. The flood had damaged a vast area including Bahadurpur, Hayaghat, Singhwara, Kusheswarasthan, Benipur, Beroil, Ghanashyampur and Baheri block leaving the poor peasants in a complete helpless condition. The big political parties or MLAs, MPs, busy with their political game, had no time to stand by the people in this grave moment of disaster. On the contrary, the Darbhanga unit of the SUCI came forward with all its strength to form a Jana Sangharsh Morcha comprising different sections of the masses and started movement for immediate relief operation. In order to press upon its demand the SUCI put a road blockade on Darbhanga-Samastipur Road for 3 hours and compelled the district administration to distribute relief materials to the affected people. Under the pressure of the movement the district magistrate was compelled to form an all party committee and issued a circular to the BDOs to distribute relief materials according to the suggestions of this committee. But in utter disregard to this circular the BDO of Bahadurpur, on the plea of repairing the river embankment of Nunthora and the payment of workers, plundered government money with the help of some of his agents. But when it was revealed that workers were not paid a farthing, the All Party Committee and the Jana

Sangharsh Morcha demanded of the DM to suspend the BDO immediately and retrieve the amount he had plundered and to lodge a complaint against him with the police. As the SUCI was in the fore of this movement, the said BDO became so angry that he instigated some anti-socials and contractors to attack and heckle the SUCI leaders, Comrades Benoy Kumar and Ashoke Kumar Singh on 6.9.96 when they went to the BDO office to attend the all party committee meeting. Moreover, that very BDO flouted again the DM's order and on the advice of local CPI MLA distributed the relief materials on 8.9.96 ignoring the recommendations of the all party committee which evoked deep resentment among the masses.

The party, mobilizing the aggrieved masses, organised a mighty movement which compelled the district administration to serve show-cause to the BDO and this movement created a great impact on people.

## SUCI demonstration in Muzzaffarpur

In protest of price rise, unemployment and anti-people steps of the state and the central governments more than 600 people, at the call of the Sakra Unit of Muzzaffarpur district of the SUCI, demonstrated before the Office of Mural Block Development Officer on 14.9.96.

A delegation consisting of Comrades Shiv Shankar, Arun Singh, Baleswar Rasulpuri, Rajkishore Misra, Harinandan Thakur, Ram, darash Misra, Nagendra Ram, Baidyanath Shah, Arvind Pawan and Shiv Chandra Das met the BDO and submitted charter of demands

## Rasta Roko against Bus Fare Hike

Jeypur, Orissa 4.9.96:- A rasta roko movement was held at Baipariguda against the bus fare hike by the Government of Orissa. It raised 2 paise per km both in passenger and express services. About 300 party workers including 100 women came out in a procession, held a meeting on the state highway, held rasta roko against the unjust hike of bus fare. It continued for 3 hours. Thousands of vehicles stood on the road stranded. Hundreds of people thronged the area and welcomed this move. Many of them also took active part. The armed police came in and arrested the workers. It created enthusiastic response among the public.

## Demonstration at Jajpur

At Jari, khetmajdoors and poor people, the activists and the supporters of our party, have been mounting movement for some time against the vested interest. These with the help of Congress-Janata Dal-police nexus took recourse to every means to suppress the SUCI-led movement. Failing which armed hoodlums of the Congress and the Janata Dal on 17th August swooped down in Jari, looted belongings of the poor people and severely assaulted our comrades. In the violent rampage, 50 families were rendered homeless. Comrades Gokul Mallick, Ratnakar Mallick, Kalandi Mallick and Rama Kanta Mallick were grievously assaulted. Police being in direct connivance, did not take any step against criminals. Besides condemning this heinous role of this unholy nexus, on 24th August, a protest demonstration was staged on behalf of our party against this dastardly attack before District Collector of Jajpur, Orissa.

## Subramanya Bharathiar's Memorial Day Observed

The 75th memorial day of Subramanya Bharathiar, a great poet who fought uncompromisingly against British imperialism, was observed through a public meeting organised jointly by the Madras-Chingkepet district organizing committees of All India Democratic Students Organisation (AIDS0), All India Democratic Youth Organisation (AIDYO) and All India Mahila Sanskritik Sangathana (AIMSS). The meeting was held at Victoria Public Hall, Madras, and attended by a large gathering of students, youth, women and senior citizens. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Hosimin Thilagar and was addressed by Comrade Thangam of the AIMSS, Comrade Illango, the State President of AIDYO and Comrade Baskaran, the State President of AIDS0. All the speakers with solemnity recalled the great poet and appealed to the students, youths and women to enlighten their own life by joining in the movements for social change, culling lessons from Bharathiar.

which included demands job opportunities to farm labourers, immediate payment of pension allowances and rehabilitation of displaced persons during the anti-encroachment drive launched in the block.

On the same demands, another demonstration was held before the Turki BDO office of Muzzaffarpur on 13.9.96 which was led by Comrade Kashi Sahani and was addressed by Comrades Shiv Shankar and Arun Kumar Singh.

**PRESS CLIPPINGS****Taliban's ban tells on women****Afghan war widows on verge of starvation**

Kabul, Oct. 14. - Kabul's 30,000 war widows are the greatest victims of Taliban's ban on female employment.

They are a miserable lot. Their families throw them out, there is no hope of remarriage, their malnourished children must scavenge. They are often blamed for their husband's deaths: they failed to pray hard enough for their spouses' safety!

And now, banned from working, many are on the edge of starvation.

Many of them are scatters in bombed-out houses on the rocky hills surrounding the capital. "We are no better than dogs" Farzana, 25, says.

Before the Taliban militia captured Kabul last month, Farzana worked in a project run by Care International, teaching women how to knit. She earned enough to feed herself and her two children, aged six and four, but now she must stay at home and ponder a desperate future.

She cannot carry on with her work at home because Care does not have any Afghan women employees to deliver wool. A man would not be allowed to deliver supplies under the Taliban's strict segregation rules.

Her husband was killed in a rocket attack on Kabul four years ago and since then she has lived off her knitting skills.

War widows, most with four to five children, live alone or in groups with other widows, such is their pariah status. Many are beggars, sitting silently for hours at the entrances of mosques, wrapped in burqaes, or wandering the streets with hands outstretched.

Some used to eke out a living going from door to door offering to wash clothes or clean houses. They could earn about a pound a day doing domestic work, enough for two or three large pieces of Nan (bread). That, too, has stopped.

Ms Heather Robinson, 31, from Liverpool, who works in Kabul for Care, said half the widows had incurred debts of about £ 20 to their baker, neighbours or relations. "The widows are frightened of going out in case they are beaten."

A survey of 5,000 widows conducted by Care found that 76 per cent had no income and

survived by scavenging or borrowing. Before war broke out 17 years ago, widows and their children were traditionally protected by the late husbands' extended families. But such charity is impossible now that Afghanistans are all but penniless.

The Kabul office of Action Contre la Faim says half the city's 290,000 children aged under five are stunted. More than 23,000 are severely malnourished" ... - *The Times*, London

**Jordan : victim of IMF**

Jordan is another victim of the structural adjustment programme, the IMF's latest policy prescription for the 3rd world countries. The OPEC member of the Gulf, for the sake of a mere \$60 million loan-promise from the IMF, sells out the interest of the millions by privatising the public distribution system of the food grains. So far the government itself imported wheat, sugar, rice, powdered milk and allotted them to the public through ration cards at subsidized price. But following IMF's conditions it had to cases its monopoly over imports, allow entry to the public sector into import business and cut subsidies at the same time. The consequences are severe - the price of bread, the main staple food of the Jordanians

rises from 85 fils (Rs. 4.20) and 120 fils (Rs. 5.95), for different quality bread to 180 fils (Rs. 8.75) and 220 fils (Rs. 10.85) a kg. The worst victim is the 4.2 million population estimated to be living in poverty depending on availability of basic commodities at subsidised prices, in a country where "the distribution of income is very lopsided and the cost of living is almost as high as in the much richer economies of the Gulf".

The people and the Opposition refuse to see eye to eye with the government justifying that shortage of government exchequer results in a \$ 211 million deficit for the high commodity imports. Rather they criticise the government's failure to check "corruption and recover loans (of which rich Jordanians are the main beneficiaries)".

People's protest is mounting in the country. Series of demonstrations - which the media calls "food riots" - rock Jordan nowadays.

In the month of August before the education ministry offices demonstrations were held in the city of Karak. As the movement gains momentum, the government's highhandedness mounts and even the army is being deployed to crack down on the unarmed protestors.

(Source: *Frontline*, 20.9.96)



4th Bihar State Student' Conference in Patna. On the dais (from Left) Comrades Mohon Singh, Dipak Kumar, Rakesh Chandra, Pratap Sasmal, Arun Kr. Singh and Rabin Samajpati. (News at page five)



Karnataka AIDS O organised Protest Demonstration against Beauty Pageant

## Zaverchand Meghani Birth Centenary Observed in Gujarat

The birth centenary of the revolutionary poet Zaverchand Meghani was observed in Gujarat under the initiative of AIDS O. Exhibitions, seminars, drama competition, badgewearing programme, students rally, etc., were held in different districts of the state. Meghani Yatra, a rally of over 3000 students, was held at Ahmedabad.

Dr Madhusudan Vyas, the noted folklorist, Sri Yashvant Sukla, a leading educationist, Sri Prakash Shah, a renowned Sarvodaya activist, Prof. Dinesh Sukla, Sri Janak Dave, a noted dramatist, Prof. Satish Vyas, Prof. Gaurang Jani, Father Francis Parmar, former Principal, St. Xavier's College and many high school teachers paid tribute to Meghani. Comrade Jayesh Patel, Secretary, AIDS O, Gujarat State Committee, also paid tribute to the poet.

# Assam State Committee's Review of the Latest Political Situation in Assam

The meeting of the Assam State Committee of the S.U.C.I. held on 4th and 5th October '96 after reviewing the latest political situation of the state, issued the following statement :

This meeting of the State Committee notes with grave concern that soaring price rise of all essential commodities, including foodgrains, mounting unemployment problems, sharp erosion in people's purchasing power and hundred and one such problems have created severe crisis in the people's life in the state. Not to speak of establishing new industries, the existing industries are being closed down. Finding no means of livelihood people are driven to take to unethical means of livelihood. Rampant corruption in all walks of life has become the rule of the day. Comparing with the economic crisis severe political crisis has engulfed the state. Along with the democratic rights of the people, their legitimate right to express grievances is being drastically curtailed. Police, para-military and the armed forces have created a reign of oppression and terror. Oppression by the security forces on innocent people is being let loose unabated. Allegations of killings of innocent people are often being raised. An atmosphere of fear and terror has

engulfed the entire state. Absence of free and democratic atmosphere has virtually brought all normal political activities to a halt. In the name of politics, killing, terrorisation and abduction are gradually increasing. In consequence, loosing faith in politics people are becoming apolitical. As a result of which it has become impossible to develop legitimate democratic movements against the ever increasing exploitation and oppression.

We have emphasized earlier that, the capitalist rule and exploitation have given birth, as in the whole country, so also in the minds of the people of Assam to genuine grievances centering round economic, political, cultural and linguistic questions; legitimate demands are raised. And hence we have told, the explosive situation in Assam can only be tackled if these problems are realised in proper perspective and initiative is taken to solve the same properly. But we have noted with indignation that the governments at centre and at state, engaged in safeguarding the interest of the ruling capitalist class, have taken recourse to solve the explosive problem by raising camps of security forces in nooks and corners of the state and by their indiscriminate operations. As a result grievan-

ces in the minds of the people have deepened; solution of the problem has become a far cry. In the interest of proper solution of the obtaining critical situation, we once again demand that the haughty military approach be abandoned, social security forces act, disturbed area act and all the operation of the security forces be withdrawn and initiative to solve the obtaining situation of Assam be taken by eliminating the genuine grievances and fulfilling the legitimate demands of the people on the basis of the good wishes of the patriotic people of Assam.

We have repeatedly reminded the people of Assam that the anxiety and apprehensions which are prowling in the minds of the people, particularly the Assamese speaking people, be that centering round economic or political issues, all are cropping up from the prevailing capitalist system of the country. In the prevailing situation the unity of the exploited toiling people is imperative for building up democratic mass movement conducive to anti-capitalist socialist revolution. Any other course in the name of revolution and even sacrificing hundreds of youths with revolutionary fervour will be recorded in history as a wastage of revolutionary potentialities.

## A Review of Afghan Situation

(Contd. from page 2)

which is strictly forbidden by the scripture. If the common people are kept submerged in mediaeval darkness by playing upon their religious sentiment the ruling class can continue their ruthless oppression and exploitation of the people with ease. So the US imperialists have, in reality no contradiction with fundamentalism. They denounce fundamentalism only when it directly affects their self interest. They cry hoarse over 'human rights' and 'democracy' when their imperialist interest is even slightly affected. Turning a blind eye toward Afghan development the US imperialists once again proved the hollowness of their concern for 'human rights' and 'democracy'.

In an article in a previous issue of the Proletarian Era, published on June 1, 1992, it was shown, "...it may be mentioned here that though an all-out mighty anti-feudal struggle covering social, political, cultural and economic aspects of society for achieving the task of democratic revolution was yet to develop in Afghanistan still it is to be noted that people's national aspiration was gradually developing as democratic concepts had been gradually thriving within the society and they were getting organised to liberate themselves from the feudal bondage. The overthrow of monarchy in 1974 would not have been successful, had there been no social support behind this move. But the Soviet intervention worked as an obstacle to this normal process of development of the Afghan national aspiration".

An analysis of this revisionist policy of the

then Soviet leadership was provided in the *Thesis on International Situation* of the historic first Congress of our party held in 1988. It was stated therein: Another fact of this wrong theory of implanting revolution through conspiratorial means or a coup is that it is acting as the basis of the policy of intervention pursued by the revisionist leadership of the Soviet Union, ostensibly to help develop revolution in a foreign country and to protect the revolution from the onslaught of counterrevolution engineered by the imperialist powers. Actually this is no different from the Trotskyite theory of export of revolution. Hegemonism, pervading the foreign policy pursued by the revisionist leadership of the Soviet Union, is a byproduct of this theory. Its intervention in Afghanistan stands out as a glaring example of this phenomenon and has not only maligned the nobility of communism but also caused damage to the interest of revolution in that country."

Subsequent events in Afghanistan proved the correctness of this analysis of our party. Because of this utterly revisionist policy the nobility of communism has, no doubt, been maligned. But this does not justify the imperialist capitalists in launching anticommunist tirade under cover of cheap humanist stance and popular democracy. The sordid history of black deeds of the imperialist capitalists who are now masquerading as champions of 'human rights', 'democracy' and 'liberty' are now known to all. The long record of barbaric and savage onslaughts to suppress

the freedom loving people of Asia, Africa and Latin America, their interference and intervention in the internal affairs of the independent countries are now well known.

The Soviet intervention was, however, a shock to the patriotic Afghan people and they had an intense feeling of national humiliation. As a result all forces - the forces of reaction, the forces of religious fanaticism and outmoded conservative elements i.e. all forces who obstruct social progress and people's emancipation from exploitation got an upper hand. All these forces were then backed by the US and other western imperialist powers through Pakistan. This is the history of the reactionary backlash in Afghanistan.

The people of Afghanistan will have to probe how fundamentalism can sweep the country even at the fag end of the twentieth century. Fundamentalism today is in the lap of imperialism. Fundamentalism is a hindrance to the unity of the people and help in perpetuating the oppression and exploitation of the people. But it must be remembered that it is the people who say the last word in shaping their destiny and it is the people who make history. People must initiate struggle to uphold democratic norms and democratic values.

The fundamentalists cannot turn the wheel of history in the opposite direction. It is only because of the temporary setback in the international communist movement that fundamentalism can thrive with the covert or overt support of the imperialists. But the situation will change and the reaction will be defeated if the people are united and initiate conscious struggle against all sorts of oppression and exploitation.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE