

Budget Means Today Fiscal Savagery On The People

Budgeting has since long lost the sanctity, in the bourgeois senate even, particularly since Smt. Indira Gandhi returned to power. The importance that was once ascribed to it as an annual document to reveal the state of economy and the government's decisions on economic and fiscal matters is no longer valid as the dangerous trend of imposing additional financial burdens on the people preceding and following the formal presentation of budget has made 'budget by instalments' a regular practice. This not only reveals the deception but also desperateness of the ruling class in the midst of unprecedented all out crisis of moribund capitalism. The welfare mask is off, budget is now an additional instrument to fleece the people in the hands of the ruling class. People are left with no other alternative than to organise in mighty movements to resist the fiscal barbarities of the governments.

Dangerous Trend

The dangerous trend of imposing financial burdens on the people will be obvious from the bare fact that this year, the Central government has already proposed and which in all probability will be implemented excepting conceding to minor concession as in the case of the railways already announced, a total sum of Rs. 1300 crore, if the imposts by way of railway freights, fares, parcel charges, postal tariffs plus the new taxes shown in the two budgets, of the railways and the general budget are added together. But is this the end of the burden for the year? Certainly not. Even when the budgets are being debated in parliament, the union cabinet has put its seal of approval to increase in the price of coal by 12 to 14 p.c 'effective only after the budget session.' What is the meaning of budgeting then? And these followup measures of raising further revenues by taxing the people in the name of rationalisation of price structure of public sector goods and services will go on throughout the year.

Remember the experiences of the preceding years. In 1980-81, an additional financial burden to the extent of Rs. 2100 crore, by way of enhancing the price of selected petroleum products was announced just a few days before the formal presentation of budget. And in the full fiscal year Rs. 2600 crore was extracted from

the people other than the 'modest' figure of Rs. 286 crore shown in the budget. In last year, in the same fashion, arrangement was made to collect Rs 2,000 crore by means of enhancement in administered prices of coal, iron and steel, oil—this time including kerosene, railway fares and freights before deceptively showing the small figure of Rs. 310 crore in 'actual' budget. This year too is the continuity of the same trickery—rise in railway freights announced in December last year, to be effective from January this year will fetch Rs. 300 crore, plus the increase in the railway budgets to the tune of Rs. 261.45 crores, increase in postal and tele-communication tariffs announced earlier to net in Rs. 100 crore plus the additional burden of 590 crore in the budget over and above all these are coming hikes in public sector products and services. Mr. Gujral, the Railway Board chairman injured the feelings of the members of parliament by openly hinting at increase in monthly and seasonal tickets at his press conference when the railway budget itself was being debated!

Does it complete the picture? No, add to this the huge amounts of deficit spendings, hurriedly to look—Rs. 1335 crore in 1979-80 (Charan Singh budget), Rs. 1975 crore in 1980-81, Rs. 1539 crore (revised estimate being Rs. 1700 crore) in 1981-82 and for this year the figure is deliberately kept

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SUCI MLAs walk out from Assembly in Protest against the anti-people policies of the 'Left Front' Government in West Bengal

During the inaugural speech of the Governor of West Bengal in the current Assembly session, Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar, the leader of the Legislative forum of the SUCI said by interruption that as a mark of protest against the anti-people policies of the Government SUCI MLAs were leaving the House, boycotting the Governor's address. He also added: we are recording our vehement protest against the anti-people language and education policy of the 'Left Front' Government. The disastrous policies like abolition of the study of English at the

low to Rs. 1365 crore as the experts are telling from the trend. Besides, as we have mentioned the 'invisible budget' is very much there. By that term we mean the rise in administered prices by the government. One may argue that by allowing the public sector bodies to 'rationalise' the prices of products the government is bringing down the huge amount of subsidies. Is it so? The subsidies and subventions go to the capitalists and they have got no reflection in the lowering of prices of products. To elaborate on this point let us remind
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primary level, no retention policy upto class V, banishing the study of literature at the college level are to be withdrawn forthwith. For, this policy will strike a deadly blow at the root of the spread and advancement of knowledge and culture and dehumanise the people of our country and will definitely help in strengthening the grip of the vested interest so as to prolong the lease of life of the moribund capitalism. Not only did the people of the state under the leadership of the distinguished educationist, litterateurs and intelligentsia rise in bold protest against this disastrous policy but that the people went whole hog against this policy, is proved to the hilt by the fact that about 90% of the primary schools in the state have been, as usual imparting lesson on English language at the primary stage even ignoring the Government circular to the contrary. He demanded of the Government to withdraw the circular forthwith.

In the second place, on the question of law and order situation of the state, the Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary while presenting the statistics by comparing with those of other states, were only giving the

figures of looting and robberies but never gave figures of murders, thereby trying to hide the actual crime situation in the state from the public. They did not place the comparative figures of murders before and after the installation of the 'Left Front' Government in West Bengal. He also demanded of publishing actual picture of murders in the state and to appraise the House about it.

In the third place on the eve of poll in West Bengal, the contention between the Congress(I) and the CPI(M) for controlling the administration clearly manifests that none of them rely on popular verdict, both are for winning the election through administrative rigging. Reports of massive manipulation in the voters' lists right from the beginning is a clear indication to that end. He voiced strongest condemnation against this heinous drive and conspiracy to determine the poll result through out and out administrative rigging by giving burial to all democratic norms and principles. In tune with the aspiration of the democratic minded people, he demanded to stop rigging in election and make it free and fair

WEST BENGAL

Congress (I) and CPI (M) have only one point of contention: Who will have control over Administration before the Election

The people of West Bengal are witnessing a strange spectacle. With the election for the State Assembly in the offing, the contention between two sides poised for grabbing the election spoils, the 'Left Front' led by the CPI (M) and the Congress (I), has boiled down to just one point: which of the two sides will have control of the state administration on the eve of the election? The ruling 'Left Front' Government wants to advance the date of the election so that it is held earlier than schedule and before the expiry of its term while the administration is still under its control and has sent recommendation to the Centre to this effect. The Congress (I), on the other hand, wants an *interregnum* of President's rule in West Bengal on expiry of the 'Left Front' Ministry's term before the election is held so that the grip of the 'Left Front' on the administration can be loosened and the influence of the Congress (I) on the administration and election machinery strengthened during President's rule. The simple-hearted or those uninitiated into the mysteries of how elections are held in India these days might ask: How it matters who is in control of administration at the time of polling? After all, it is the people who will vote and elect representatives of their choice as MLAs? Not for the CPI (M) or the Congress (I) are such commonsense logic or faith in democratic norms. They are so much bent upon doing good to the people, so eager to serve them by grabbing governmental power, that they cannot leave it for the

people to decide but must have the administration in their hand before the elections so that they may decide for the people as to what is good for them! The way in which control over the administration at the time of the polls has become the central focal point in the dispute between the Congress (I) and the CPI (M)-led 'Left Front' it is clear that both the sides know for certain that today, it is possible to sway the overall results of an election drastically one way or the other through controlling the administration and government election machinery. There have been admissions of this in the reportings in bourgeois press too. A journalist, in a recent political commentary in one of the leading Bengali newspapers, has prophesied that if the elections are held after the Congress (I) has had a few months' time to consolidate its position through President's rule in the state, then Congress (I) would sweep the polls winning 70% of the seats, whereas if the elections are held with the present ministry in power, then it will be the CPI(M)-led 'Left Front' that would sweep the polls, winning 85% of the seats!

The message is loud and clear. In elections, people's verdict is no longer the determinant, it is centralised administrative rigging that holds the sway. So, the main aim of these opportunist parliamentary parties is to gain control of the administration and the election apparatus and then to resort to the various types of rigging through the administrative machinery starting from manipulations of voters' list, replacing of the cast ballot paper,

between polling and counting, with another set of ballot papers suitably stamped in their favour and organised manipulations during the counting of the votes in order to turn the election results in their way.

It is not that centralised administrative rigging of polls is peculiar to the state of West Bengal alone or has come about only recently. This has been an all-India phenomenon for quite a number of years. After the totally rigged 1972 state elections in West Bengal, our party cautioned the people for the first time about the existence of organised administrative rigging as had been revealed by the 1971 parliamentary elections and the 1972 state elections in West Bengal whereby the ruling bourgeoisie, by total rigging of the polls through the state machinery, took upon itself the task of artificially stabilising parliamentary politics in their favour by ensuring thumping majority for the party or combination of their choice. Subsequently, Morarji Desai has written about extensive rigging involving large scale tampering of ballot boxes and ballot papers in two parliamentary constituencies in Bombay in the 1971 elections, in his autobiography published when he was the Prime Minister. But he has been silent about the total rigging on all India scale in the 1977 elections for the parliament, presumably because the Janata Party led by him swept the polls. On the other hand, it was Smt. Gandhi who then raised the charge of rigging although not very vociferously. Again, who has forgotten that just three days before the 1977 parliament polling, the

CPI (M) leader Promode Dasgupta, jointly with the Janata leader Prafulla Chandra Sen, called a press conference at Calcutta and declared that they had definite information about lakhs of duplicate ballot papers having been printed and demanded postponement of the election as it would become a total farce unless these duplicate ballot papers were tracked down and destroyed? But when they themselves made a clean sweep of the polls, the same Promode Dasgupta said that Smt. Gandhi had made arrangement for total rigging, but the rigging machinery had not worked in her favour! But of course, he conveniently chose to remain silent as to for whom the rigging machinery had worked!

The people of West Bengal have bitter experience of total, centralised administrative rigging in the two Assembly elections of 1972 and 1977 when the chosen party or combination of the ruling class and the Establishment (Indira Congress in 1972 and the CPI (M) led 'Left Front' in 1977) swept the polls in an astounding manner, winning almost all the seats with equal facility irrespective of the naturally large variation in strength of the winning side from constituency to constituency and from area to area, winning almost all the seats by the same kind of suspiciously large margin while the all out centralised rigging was there for all to see from a thousand and one tell-tale signs like appearance of large numbers of valid, stamped ballot papers found strewn about in many a place; large scale widespread appearance of ballot boxes with broken seals, changed seals or no seals at all at the time of counting, etc.

Again, centralised rigging of polls was palpably revealed during the bye elections to the parliament held last year.

Although, because the row created over Garhwal focussed public attention sharply on that constituency, and because of Bahuguna's special position and closeness vis-a-vis the administration and the Establishment, the Election Commission declared re-election for that constituency, it said nothing about the results of the other constituencies. By this, such monstrosities as Rajiv Gandhi or the UP Chief Minister winning a much higher percentage of the votes polled than even Pandit Nehru ever did in his heydays, were allowed to pass.

It is only our party, the SUCI, that has all through consistently cautioned the people about the existence of organised, centralised rigging machinery and again exposed before the people its political character and aim in furthering the interest of the ruling class. The other parties, the bourgeois and the petty-bourgeois social democratic parties, the pseudo-lefts, because of their totally election-oriented opportunistic politics, have spoken of rigging only when it has gone against them, but have kept silent about it when it has benefited them. After the 1977 parliamentary elections, the Central Committee of our party, in a resolution, noted that not only the political parties but even many returning officers had this time officially admitted the existence of huge number of duplicate ballot papers and their distribution to different constituencies. Our Central Committee demanded that a high-powered, impartial enquiry commission be set up to investigate the widespread charges of rigging by various means and to expose the dangerous game of influencing the election results through using vast

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Savageries Unbound

What is happening in India, especially in the countryside, puts to shame any civilised society, National Conscience should be shocked at the outrageous incidents which are going to be almost a usual affair. Mass massacre of the poor and innocents by armed police force or organised armed hoodlums patronised by or at the wishes of the parliamentary parties whether ruling or in opposition but defending the common master, the crisis-ridden bourgeoisie, is going on in state after state, district after district, in villages. The severe crisis of moribund capitalism, accentuating destitution and unemployment is throwing up severe social tension and behind the so-called colouring of these events as caste conflicts, the truth of sharpening of class conflicts in rural side can no longer be kept secret. The savageries and bloody reprisals of the exploiting class against the exploited indicate the crying need of powerful integrated democratic movement of the rural poor irrespective of castes to which they may belong as this alone can be the real deterrent.

Bloody role call

As if a bloody roll call is going on especially in the states of UP, Rajasthan, MP, Bihar, Maharashtra, Punjab etc. The gory incidents are revealing in all their ugliness to show how hollow the talks of democracy, rule of law, basic human rights have become in this country. Whether in Naibodi village near Sonapat in Punjab or in Durg in MP or in Sheogaon in Maharashtra cool and calculated murders took place but to cap them all were the repeated massacres of rural people in Mainipuri district of UP. On November 18 was the blood bath at Doli village in which 34 lives were taken. The Chief Minister of the state took a "Vow" of exterminating dacoit-gangs and in that exercise lives of more than 300 people have been taken by police operation under cover of 'encounters', which may now be said to be the contribution of Indian police force as a method of mass-scale brutality. But on the day, December 30 Mr. Singh, the Chief Minister was getting words of appreciation for showing this brilliance, lives of 10 Jitavas were taken in another village, Sidhupur of the same district.

Mass massacres—the contending bourgeois parties all are guilty

The biggest opposition

party in the state the Lokdal along with the Janata, BJP etc. are busy in reaping political dividends in parliamentary politics by capitalising these incidents as instances of failure of law and order. But from the reports pouring in the national dailies it is now an open secret that not only the ruling Congress (I) but the Lokdal and others in the opposition are equally guilty of pursuing caste politics and maintaining close contacts with armed gangs of hoodlums, police and civil administration from top officials to police station level policemen as well. But all are common in one thing, that is, to defend the interests of the jotedars or rich farmers, against the just and legitimate demands of the rural poor.

The bourgeois party-armed hoodlum connection is so open a secret in UP that the Chief Minister of the state had no hesitation to admit it but he tried to confine this connection "only in dacoit-infested areas and that too much more in the case of opposition. But said he: "I think this linkage is not unlike the politician Mafia links in urban USA."

Writing on the close connection that these big parliamentary parties maintain with the armed dacoit gangs, a journalist

in the Statesman (January 26, '82) gave this picture:

"Politicians are now increasingly using the dacoit gangs to settle their scores with opponents belonging to different castes, in some cases politicians have used dacoit gangs just to liquidate their political adversaries with no caste consideration." He was also showing how the ministers, MLA's give protection to these gangs—how Phoolan, a notorious dacoit queen is enjoying that from the ruling party, how even the minister's relatives whose names are in the wanted list of police move freely, how licences of arms are freely distributed to noted anti-socials or on the other side how notorious dacoit leaders like Malkhan and Amar Singh adorn the Lokdal meeting by their presence, how a District Magistrate got his transfer order for the temerity of refusing arms licence to a known criminal backed by a minister's recommendation during the Janata rule.

Well, these are not unknown to the people but the fact of persistence of this unethical political conduct of these parties whether in power or opposition and direct connivance of the police and administration have come to such a pass that these no longer evoke any shock.

So, it is obvious that all these parliamentary parties jockeying for pelf and privileges of governmental power have given good bye to minimum norms and ethics. For, the chief minister readily admitted that fake encounters might have taken place but he showed his alertness only to underplay the figure. Not only this, when asked as to how was it possible to exterminate more than 300 people supposed to be connected with dacoit gangs without a single policeman losing life or being hurt, the answer

was that in that case the incompetence of police would have been proved! The matter does not end here. When asked as to how this campaign of exterminating dacoits did not touch a single among dozen of notorious gangs the government says that no big dacoit gang has been affected but they may have lost their men among the killed. Can you imagine a civilised Government talking in this cavalier fashion with such contemptuous disregard for the lives of citizens? What mockery is made of the freedom of life which let alone being guaranteed by the constitution should also be the sacred covenant in any civilised society?

Crocodile tears of the parties in opposition

The vulgarity of parliamentary politics in the country has reached such a stage that while the parties in opposition are jostling with one another to project their image as the champion of people's cause but they are shrewdly avoiding the real task of organising the rural poor, divided on caste line, against their common enemy, the jotedar class, through democratic movement that alone can stop these barbarities and win for the poor and exploited their just and legitimate rights as also dignity of man. For, these parties, all defending moribund capitalism in general and the rural rich in particular, fear of hurting their patron, the ruling class. That is why while Lokdal and others maintain the show of sympathy for the victims, the ruling Congress (I) Home Minister, Mr. Zail Singh proposes to issue a few licences of guns to the oppressed which is promptly corrected by his deputy. Even if this proposal is carried through or the other suggestion of manning the police stations with persons belonging to oppressed

castes, would these solve the problem?

It is simply moonshine because who does not know that the entire administration, police-bureaucracy in particular in states like UP are divided on caste line. So armed clashes even within the lawkeeping force will only make the situation worse. Any government having minimum sense of responsibility would have worked differently. It would have given all encouragement to oppressed caste people to develop their movement on just and legitimate demands and would have ensured due protection to that movement both from within the government and outside.

It is to be noted however that in our country long after three decades of Independence neither the Congress nor the Janata party, both of which were at the Centre, did make any break in the colonial legacy of the Arms Act which 'emasculated the nation' in the words of Gandhiji. Gandhiji uttered this hard reality in justification of his style of 'non-violent' movement which was to hide the reformist-oppositional role, his movement was to play, true to the character of Indian national bourgeoisie. And his successors whichever signboard behind which they rally, want this 'emasculatation' to continue for the perpetuation of the savage rule of capital. For, had the people been given the right to own and possess arms which the citizens of every free and democratic country enjoy then not only they could have saved themselves from these savageries, and dignity of their women-folk from the armed criminals whether in police uniform or not but this right and its actual implementation by itself could be the most useful deterrent to the criminals. But the

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ourselves that this figure of subsidies on heads like support price to food grains, subsidisation of fertiliser prices and for export promotion which was just Rs. 59 crores in 1970-71 has now risen to the staggering figure of Rs. 1765 crore, just a decade after. What is however very interesting to note is the fact that while assessing the resources to be collected for the Sixth Plan, the planners calculated that a sum of Rs. 3,250 crore would be saved out of cut in subsidies. But in this third plan year, let alone a cut there has been an increase by 6 p.c. in the allocation for subsidies in the budget!

However, the fundamental point is to be noted. The huge amounts of money that are being extracted—where are they going? Do they bring a modicum of relief to the people?

We know in this bourgeois set up that too at its moribund stage and more so in the context of third intense phase of crisis that is, overall and all out crisis surpassing all previous experiences in depth and dimension, not a single real problem of the people can have a proper solution; but that cannot certainly be any plea for any government bearing minimum sincerity and honesty to disown its responsibility of providing some reliefs to the burning problems in people's life.

But what a price the people have been paying or they have been forced to pay in the name of 'national development'? And what they have got in exchange? The balance sheet will be completely in favour of the capitalist class which has imposed on the people the burden of its most ruthless exploitation; but for this class of exploiters have gone all the toil and resources, extracted from the people. This is capitalism, moribund capitalism, as such reactionary capitalism. To have a measure of this balance-sheet let us take the case of the railways.

Crisis of moribund capitalism is at the root of the mess in financial-fiscal field

The Railways— Perennially sick

In a vast country like India, the railways as the arteries of economic activities and means of communication should not only provide efficient services for both passenger and goods traffic but can easily be one of the important revenue earners as also generators of employment given the adherence of a pro-people policy and an efficient administration. But what is the picture? Passenger services both for long distant journey as also for suburban sections have been deteriorating seriously. Recurrent accidents, severe overcrowding, frequent cancellation of trains particularly in suburban sections for want of usable rakes, damage of coaches due to systematic pilferages etc. are the usual features bedeviling the railways.

Absence of appreciable addition of lines, particularly in big junction stations, repairs and replacement of tracks, improvement in signalling system, replacement of unusable rakes is playing havoc with passengers' amenities and securities of their life as also the railway finance. But it seems no administration is there to look after all these. Besides, in absence of replacement of wagons which go unworkable to the extent of ten to twelve thousands a year, the danger of serious bottleneck in goods traffic looms large. Electrification scheme also suffers due to paucity of resources. The planning commission which originally allotted Rs. 10,000 crore for all these vital schemes has since drastically cut and asks the railways to extract half of the estimated resources internally, meaning thereby that the annual performance of raising the fares and freight charges will continue. Now why this paucity

of resources? Have not the people or rather have not they been forced to pay a colossal amount, year after year?

Just to remind our readers mention may be made that since 1978-79 i.e. the Janata rule this exercise of imposing huge burden on the people in the name of wiping out deficit in railway finance started. That year, Mr. Madhu Dandavate came with the bag of total imposts to the tune of Rs. 178 crore, increasing both freight charges and fares of monthly and seasonal tickets. The next year, that is after the return of Smt. Gandhi to power, a massive amount of Rs. 558.58 crore was imposed exploiting the same source followed by in 1981-82 a sum of Rs. 356 crores. And this year, before the budget was formally presented, hike in railway freight announced in December was to fetch Rs. 300 crore and in the budget, Rs. 61.45 crore was further added. In a rough estimate, there has been an increase in railway freight to the tune of 40% in just two-three years. It goes without saying that all these imposts go to give spurt in inflationary spiral and rob the people of their real earnings. It is worth mentioning that every time heavy and still heavier burden on the people has been imposed on the plea of wiping out deficit in railway finance but let alone diminishing, the deficit has been mounting due to the self-defeating exercise of finding resources by stoking the fire of inflation. The railways being the buyer of essential inputs like coal, steel, power had to meet heavier bills apart from meeting mounting costs of administration. Naturally, the increase in resources and increase in cost has been cancelling out each other. Whereas in a b s e n c e of

capital investment whether to replace wagons, extend lines, carry on electrification scheme or for replacement and repair of tracks etc. it either hits the employment or squeezes its potential in iron and steel as also engineering industries. Such is the result of bankrupt policies pursued by the government. But this is only the reflection of a part of the overall bankrupt policies in the economic and fiscal fields as also the intensity of crisis in the moribund capitalist system itself.

Sickness of industries reveals the sickness of the economy

This is the third year of much trumpeted Sixth Plan. In this year, unemployment touches record figure, destitution and miseries of common people mount to menacing proportion so much so that even the monopolists are giving admission to widespread sickness of industries or recession due to 'demand squeeze' that is to say, lack of purchasing power or market for their products. Stagnation stalks at the face of the economy everywhere. So, after the massive loan from IMF, pulling together of resources from bank credits, massive doses of taxation on the people, already bent low under its burden and savage exploitation of capital, black money legitimised, overdrafts, printing of notes, ranging to thousands of crores even the defenders of this moribund capitalist system expected heavier amounts in investment for generation of employment and purchasing power; what they found instead is the substitution of plan framework by the 20 point programme floated by Smt Gandhi. Only the expenditure on oil exploration and extraction remains for the compulsive reason but that too helplessly dependent on the

receipt of IMF loan on schedule and the rest of the huge resources go to feed the wasteful but ever increasing expenditures on defence build up, administrative costs including on police and para-military forces and subsidies and subventions to the capitalists. Just to have an idea about the colossal amount now being spent on wasteful non-development purposes mention may be made that out of Rs. 17,601 crore of revenue receipts this years about Rs. 1400 crore go towards defence, administration and subsidies. In the perspective of world wide third intense phase of crisis of capitalism moribund capitalist economy of this country is in a mess with a hand to mouth existence, landing itself in graver crisis from one crisis and in fact all their planning and programmes are haunted by the shadow of crisis. This is the reality and in that perspective is to be viewed the budget.

The Budget

The new Finance Minister while presenting this year's budget had before him several compulsions. First, a populist stance was to be maintained not only for the coming assembly elections but also to hoodwink the people in the midst of their acute sufferings and the resentments brewing and bursting forth; secondly, surreptitiously he was to make adjustments or dilution of plan investments in view of resource scarcity as also the terms contingent on the IMF loan; thirdly, he was to satisfy the strident demands of the industrial houses faced with recession at home and sharp competition in outside markets. He therefore, chose to be cautious.

The minister obliged the capitalists by concessions like exemption of excise duties on 38 items, introduction of dual pricing in cement like sugar, and one-third of production will be under 'levy' and two-thirds for open sale, protection of indigenous

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Stand up in Mighty movement to resist the fiscal barbarities

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electronic industry by imposing customs duty on imports, tax relief to exporters (exceeding by 10 p.c. over turnover last year, exemption of taxes by 25 p.c. over profits derived from overseas construction of houses etc. Bulk of Rs. 590 crore that the Finance Minister proposes as additional taxation in his budget will come from a auxiliary customs and excise duties, Rs. 290 crore and 196 crore respectively. Rs. 26 crore will be fetched by enhancing the prices of inland letter, postal envelope and printed post cards.

The monopoly houses, however, and their forum, FICCI point out that while the Prime Minister gives the call for making this year, 'a year of productivity', the machineries in industries suffer from obsolescence and require to be replaced by more sophisticated machineries in view of fast changes in technology. So, 'for competing in world market' as also for 'bare survival,' the industrialists press for investment allowance for this replacement which the government could not concede all at a time. In other words people will have to bear the cost of replacement of machineries, by which the industrialists have minted profits depriving the workers but demand to be assisted financially by the government obviously at the cost of people's sufferings.

The Finance Minister though could not meet this demand wholly but chose to be selective by making provision for Rs. 50 crores for modernisation of jute mills. Rs. 83.81 crores has also been provided for assistance to industries through government's financial institutions. But despite all this, sickness of industries has been spreading, deep recession faces wide range of industries, more in durable consumer goods industries.

About the so-called claims about concessions to the people

Now, a few words about the government's claim of giving concessions to the poor and middle class salaried employees by way of exemption of excise duties to 38 items and reliefs in income tax. The government says that the poor will be benefited from the exemption of excise duties. But it is a fact verified by concrete experiences that in a capitalist economy, as such and more so in our country, exemption of excise duty means increase in profits of the capitalists and no relief for the poor as the duty is transferable. Besides, the poor in our country are not so much acquainted with pencil and eraser and lest with water coolers and water filters on such like items the exemption is given. Secondly, not to speak of giving relief, the poor have been taxed by the enhancement of price of postal envelope from 35 paise to 50 paise and inland letter from 20 paise to 25 paise. But what is more dangerous is the serious inflationary potential in the hike of railway freights, customs and excise duties, railway parcel charges etc. The cumulative effect is sure to give further boost to inflationary spiral.

And is not the government also aware of the fact? Yes it is. Otherwise why it increases the plan allotment by 21. p.c.? But even then is it of any real worth? or it is to compensate for, to some extent, the erosion of money's worth. As a noted economist Dr. Bhabotosh Dutta writes (The Statesman, March, '82)

"Converted into 1979-80 prices, the three year total is not likely to reach even half the real value of the target. The Economic Survey, circulated by the Government could not conceal the danger of high

rate of inflation in the economy.

But even in the perspective of such high inflationary potential, the central government has been going on with high dose of taxation and high rate of deficit financing. A hurried glance will show that in the year 1980-81, the amount of deficit spending was to the tune of Rs. 1975 crore followed by Rs. 1700 crore in the next year and this year it has been shown deliberately low to Rs. 1365 crore.

Bulk of these enormous, amount as we have shown has been spent towards non-developmental purposes like defence, administrative profligacy and subsidies, showing the depth of crisis of moribund capitalism as also complete subservience of the state to the interests of monopoly finance capital.

Danger of Fascism

In the perspective of these concrete facts and the emerging severe crisis in the economy in the shape of runaway inflation, swelling unemployment, spate of closure, lockout, lay off, eviction and murderous assaults on the poor and destitute peasant, degeneration and decay all around, the so-called concession to the middle class people is to be viewed. Although in the concrete perspective of runaway inflation the so-called benefit on income tax is not only illusory but definitely deceptive.

The floating of 20-point programme and the deliberate attempt to woo the support of the middle class have dark forebodings. Going through the history, how fascism raised its ugly heads in Germany and Italy, one may easily recall that the middle class people suffering unemployment and acuteness of economic miseries but frustrated due to the failures in working class leadership joined the army of the fascist political forces. This feature has often been misinterpreted by many: Fascism is a middle class

Orissa AIDSO leads movement in protest against the anti-social activities in Ravenshaw College

For some time past various incidents of indignities to Female Students, forcefully entering the Women's Hostel, misbehaviour with teachers and administrative staff, torturing new-comer students in the name of ragging were vitiating the atmosphere of the Ravenshaw College, an institution with a glorious past. The College authorities, the police and the district Government authorities have been intimidated time and again against these incidents, repeated appeals have been made to take strict

counter revolution. Similar conditions in socio-political fields in our country are being attempted. The treachery of the social democratic parties like CPI, CPI (M), their joining in the bandwagon of national jingoism under cover of war threat which in reality gives support to defence build up at the expense of developmental expenditures and at the tremendous rice of people's destitution and miseries is giving direct help to fascist forces to gain in strength.

And what a price? Seven out of ten persons in the country, even according to the Planning Commission have been reduced to pauper. And this, after paying for the so-called national development over the three decades.

Despondency and abject surrender to fatalism can not be the answer. The toiling people of India will have to answer to these deceptions and fiscal barbarities by organising irresistible democratic mass movements, our party SUCI has been urging them to take in their hands. Let them respond to this call of struggle.

measures against the miscreants by the victims as well as the AIDSO organisers including Comrade Kailash Mishra, President Ravenshaw College Students' Union. The armed miscreants also made serious physical assaults, on several occasions, on Comrade Kailash Mishra and Narendra Panigrahi for their bold stand against these gross wrong-doings. But unfortunately the authorities took no steps which certainly gave the miscreants more impetus and they continued their hooliganism more ferociously. The situation worsened to such an extent that the newspapers of Orissa too had to publish various reports of these nefarious incidents and sensible personalities of Orissa expressed their concern over these. Mrs. Malati Chaudhury, a distinguished Sarvadaya leader of Orissa also expressed her serious concern publicly over these anti-social activities and their repeated recurrences in an institution of such a renown and stature like Ravenshaw College.

When all efforts to move the authorities to take strict measures against the miscreants failed Comrade Kailash Mishra started a fast-to-death Hunger Strike in front of the college office. While Comrade Mishra was on Hunger Strike he was attacked by a group of hooligans led by ABVP supported Vice-President of the College Union. Comrade Narendra Panigrahi, Organiser AIDSO, Cuttack City and Vice-President of Ravenshaw College Mess Employees' Association was also attacked by two armed hooligans in front of the New P.G.

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Organised Centralised Rigging has become the usual Feature of Election

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sums of money by the monopoly capitalists, because unless the rigging machinations were thoroughly exposed and exemplary punishment meted out to the culprits, then, in the future too, the election results would not be determined by people's votes but would be determined by the monopoly capitalist cliques in conjunction with the administration, and as a result, the elections would be reduced to a total farce.

This danger, if anything, has increased and become more real since then. The whole politics of the bourgeois and the pseudo-left parties have reduced to winning as many seats as possible at any cost in the quest for parliamentary pelf and power and have no relation to the people's interest. Again, these parties know that the election results are no longer dependent upon the people's support but on rigging of voters' lists, false ballots, false voters, breaking or changing of ballot boxes and above all, on the support of the centralised rigging machinery whereby the genuine ballot papers can be taken out of the boxes and replaced with another set of ballot papers to achieve a predetermined result. But only they who have the blessings of the ruling capitalist class and control the administration can hope to have the rigging machinery on their side. That is why the bourgeois and the pseudo-left parties from the Congress (I) to the CPI(M)—none of them really wants to expose the phenomenon of centralised rigging. Instead, they are on the one hand vying with one another in endearing themselves to the industrialists, the ruling bourgeoisie and the administration; while on the other, they are trying to have control over the election time.

This is the crux of the dispute between the Congress (I) and the CPI(M) in West Bengal today. The Congress (I) is afraid of the rigging machinery being used against it if the administration is controlled by the CPI(M)-led 'Left Front' during the coming poll. But it cannot openly speak about the existence of the centralised administrative rigging since that would give away the nefarious game. So, when they try to delay the election by raising the question of anomalies in the voters' lists before the Election Commission or at the High Court, they are actually playing for time so that the term of the present 'Left Front' Ministry is over before the elections can be held. Then, under the President's rule, which is but another name for rule by the Congress (I) Central Government, they hope to regain control over the administration and make a clean sweep in the elections through the rigging machinery. The CPI(M), on the other hand, is determined at all costs to have the elections while they are still in governmental power so that they may take advantage of the centralised administrative rigging. That is why the 'Left Front' Government which did not organise any mass movements on the burning issues in people's lives or against the anti-people fiscal, labour and other policies of the Centre during its five years rule, which counselled the workers to refrain from strikes—thereby virtually disarming them in the face of all-out attacks from the crisis-ridden capitalism, which threw cold water on the peasants' movements by preaching class collaboration in the countryside, which actually crushed mass movements with the same ruthlessness as any Congress (I) government but just chanted loose

anti-Centre, anti Indira talks from time to time to shirk responsibility for the people's plight and as gimmicks in parliamentary politics designed to mislead the people into supporting it—this 'Left Front' government is today for the first time suddenly talking a movement on the demand for a state poll during the tenure of its Ministry. A revolutionary movement indeed on revolutionary demands!

It is true that there are very serious and large-scale anomalies and discrepancies in the voters' lists compiled in West Bengal, so much so that without a thorough and painstaking rectification of the same, the election would be a farce. But to make this the only issue and not to mention about the arrangement for total centralised administrative rigging that is there, can only serve to safeguard the present capitalist order by screening the heinous election rigging apparatus from the people's eyes, thereby lulling the people into believing that once the discrepancies and anomalies are supposedly set right, the election is going to be free and fair.

Both the CPI(M) and Congress(I) are playing at this game. At present, in West Bengal, the ruling class appears to be more favourably disposed towards the CPI(M) rather than Congress(I), perhaps because of the faithful service provided by the CPI(M)-led 'Left Front' government during the last five years. This is CPI(M)'s strong point, and the Establishment is aware of it. Writing recently for a leading Bengali daily, Kuldip Nayar stated to the effect that the industrialists are generally in favour of the CPI(M) because if the CPI(M) or its unions enter into an agreement with the factory management, they abide by it, which cannot be said about the Congress(I)! Secondly, a large majority of the subordinate

employees and a substantial portion of the bureaucracy in the state support the present 'Left Front' government and because of this, even if President's rule is clamped down it will be difficult for Congress(I) to handle this administration and tilt the scale in its favour.

This is an indirect admission that apart from enjoying the backing of monopolists, the CPI(M) is endowed with greater prowess in the business of rigging because of its greater influence on the administrative staff who will constitute the rigging machinery. There are indications that, in the politics of pressures and counter-pressures pursued by the parliamentary parties serving the Establishment, the CPI(M) is using its strong cards in applying pressure on the Congress(I) in order to secure a better bargain by coming to an arrangement with the Centre and Smt. Gandhi, thereby trying to ensure the safety of the 'Left Front' Ministry and its continuance. There are numerous signs pointing to this. Apart from paying lip-service to the anti-Indira government programme adopted by the National Campaign Committee of the Central Trade Unions against the hated ESMA, the union, affiliated to the CITU showed very little enthusiasm for this movement which is of burning necessity to the working class of India. The Confederation of Central Government Employees, of which Vyas of CPI(M) is the General Secretary, actually kept the Confederation away from the anti ESMA all India General Industrial Strike of 19th January last. According to the decision of the National Campaign Committee, trade unions all over the country would have served notice for the strike on 19th January, but strangely enough, most of the unions affiliated to the CITU in West Bengal, the vaunted stronghold of the CPI(M), served no such notice and

the CPI(M)-led 'Left Front' government issued instead a call for Bangla Bandh on that date. Will it be wrong to conclude that this was done to avoid the onus of confronting Smt. Gandhi through participation in the anti-ESMA strike.

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Memorandum by Peasants of Jhunjhunu Dist. in Rajasthan

On 29th February 1982, a memorandum, on behalf of the peasants of the Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan was submitted to the Chief Minister of Rajasthan through the District Magistrate by the KKMf, Raj Kishan union and Raj Bijali Kishan union. The peasants and workers of these three unions paraded from the Gandhi Chowk to the Collectorate and a meeting was held there. Comrade D.P. Singh of KKMf, Comrade Bhola Ram of Raj Bijali Kishan Union and Comrade Man Chand of Raj Kishan Union addressed the gathering and asked them to organise themselves in people's committees. The 23 point demand in the memorandum included supply of adequate electricity for agriculture, supply of irrigation water, fertiliser, pesticide, cement etc. at cheap rates, introduction of secular and scientific education, allocation of ten percent of total financial resources for education, withdrawal of false cases, punishment to the culprits who damaged the statue of Shaheed Bhagat Singh at Pilani, revocation of all black acts like NSA, ESMA etc.

Announcement

Most reluctantly we are to announce rise in subscription rate from the present Rs. 10'00 to Rs. 11'00

Manager
Proletarian Era

Only organised, united mass movement can give a fitting rebuff to this sinister game of Bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties

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There are other signs too that the CPI (M) may be heading for a secret package deal with the Indira Congress. When the non-Congress (I) parties in Assam including the lefts made a move for forming a non-Congress (I) ministry there, the CPI (M) suddenly informed Rajyapal Merhotra that they would not participate in the proposed ministry but would support it from outside. This was seized upon by the Rajyapal as a pretext for turning down the proposal for a non-Congress (I) ministry and this paved the way for installation of the Congress (I) Gogoi Ministry in Assam.

There is more than a possibility that if the CPI (M) continues to enjoy the support of the monopolists, the ruling bourgeoisie in West Bengal, and is chosen for yet another term, in preference to the Congress (I), as their best bet for holding the masses from governmental position in this state and if the bargain between the CPI (M) and the Congress (I) is struck, then the Congress (I) will have to come to terms with the reality in West Bengal by agreeing to the elections, with "corrections" to the voters' lists as their face-saver. Then the people of West Bengal will once more taste "free and fair" elections under the aegis of the centralised administrative rigging.

In this stifling situation when even the minimum democratic norms, code of conduct and ethics are being trampled upon by the bourgeois and pseudo-left parties in their opportunistic quest for gaining self and power in parliamentary politics, it is the SUCI, and the SUCI alone, that has not

deserted the people but is steadfastly fighting for restoration of the minimum democratic atmosphere. Comrade Sukomal Das Gupta, West Bengal State Secretary of the SUCI, has voiced the people's demands in a statement: "We regret that our demand for extending by one month the last date of filing claims and objections for the cyclone-hit areas of 24 Parganas & Midnapore has not been accepted by the Election Commission ignoring even the humanitarian aspect of the problem. Besides, the manner in which enquiries have been conducted in different districts about the genuineness of the claims cannot rule out the apprehension that the final list may not be free from manipulation. The tussle between CPI (M) and Congress (I) as to which party will control the administration before the election also exposes the danger that the election is going to be a rigged one."

"We therefore, demand that the entire election machinery should be manned by such persons who are not the staff of or do not have partisan attitudes towards any government run by either the ruling Congress (I) at the Centre or the ruling CPI (M) in West Bengal. We strongly feel that election should be conducted in all states, including West Bengal, by such a non-partisan staff directly under the Election Commission for free and fair election."

It is the people who can put an end to the nefarious game of the parties which serve the establishment under different banners and thrive on rigged elections rather than on mass support. Will the people remain mute spectators, be the victims of yet one more rigged

Crisis-ridden moribund capitalism and the parliamentary parties at its service divide the poor to prevent popular uprising

(Contd. from page 3)

bourgeoisie suffering from mortal fear of proletarian revolution and the parliamentary parties subservient to them dare not break this colonial legacy, for they know it for certain that the exploited armed people following the real revolutionary leadership will not only bring an end to their nasty caste politics but also the moribund capitalist exploitative order itself, they defend.

Our Appeal

Our appeal to the rural poor belonging to all castes or with different religious faith is to grasp the warning uttered by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our beloved leader, teacher and guide that: "Capitalism which for the sake of national integration and formation of nation, at a certain stage of the development, tried to unify different communities of people into a given territory also tries at a different stage of its development i.e. in the imperialist stage, to disrupt the unity of the people for its own security against popular uprising."

Are not the rural poor witnessing that the exploiting class is taking advantage of every division be it caste or religious faith as a double edged weapon, that is to say, both for social discrimination as also for class exploitation and for this perpetuate this division of the poor. As for this division of the poor and exploited belonging both to so-called upper and lower caste, this inhuman torture on both goes on

election and let the situation drift till all vestiges of democratic norms and atmosphere are blotted out from public life, or will they rally round the SUCI and strengthen countercurrent against this rotten unethical politics that is spearheaded by the SUCI.

undisturbed. That is why the urgent task both for establishing their legitimate rights and human dignity is to develop integrated democratic movement by the rural poor in particular. By integrated movement we mean, movement not on economic demands alone but integrating it with social cultural movement for completion of the task of democratisation of society by removal of social divisions and indignities, left not only unattended but in reality, being exploited by the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parliamentary parties. By this vulgar caste politics, though not admitting, these parties are helping the bourgeoisie at this hour of severe crisis to keep the poor and exploited divided as anticipatory move against popular uprising.

We would request that they are to approach the problem not from injured caste feelings because that will not bring an end to this social curse rather that will help perpetuating this division. They are to realise the class content and class motive behind caste humiliation and oppression. And unless their movement is thus based on this higher proletarian ethics and moral values that their fight against social discrimination and indignities are not for elevation in social status or for economic benefits, personally or as a caste group. For, if this be the approach then they will surely end up their struggle, given economic prosperity, by making themselves the exploiters not only of the poor belonging to different caste but of their own caste. The history of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes' movements testify to this inimitable development. The reason is, capitalism, or for that matter moribund capitalism sustains these divisions

and its very law creates a layer of privileged even within the oppressed castes, more so because of deliberate policy pursued by the rulers. So unless the capitalist exploitative productive system is overthrown, conflicts between different strata and even within the oppressed strata will remain and in these conflicts caste, religion etc. will be used as divisive factors. Here is the class content of social discrimination and humiliation which must not be overlooked. On the edifice of this revolutionary proletarian approach Kisan Aur Khetier Majdoor Sang (KKMS), the peasant wing of SUCI is organising the rural poor. This is the right course. We appeal to the rural poor to take to this course to bring about a real change in the situation.

Defilers of Shaheed Bhagat Singh Statue go unpunished

At midnight on February 25, 1982, some anti-socials damaged the statue of Shaheed Bhagat Singh at Pilani. Police was immediately informed about the incident but none has so far been arrested.

It is learnt that two policemen were posted about 20 yards from the place and the operation was carried out by these anti-socials in front of these police men. Incidentally it may be mentioned that since the installation of the statue by the Pilani Shaheed Samity on March 29, 1980, the anti-socials are engaged in disrespectful activities and the administration has not been taking any action against them.

People Defy 'Left Front' Government's Despotic Orders Of Language And Education Policies In West Bengal

Walk out of SUCI MLAs in the last Session

On the last day of the session of the present Assembly a motion for adjournment was tabled by Comrade Devaprasad Sarkar, leader of the SUCI Legislative forum. The reporting that came out next day in the Statesman, i. e. March, 13, 82 is given here under:

"The abolition of English upto class V would have a crippling effect on students in the state. Mr. Sarkar said the students would find it difficult to pursue higher studies and seat for competitive examinations. With English medium schools allowed recognition, the state would have two categories among the students community. He said that guardians of many wards were taking them out of primary schools where English was not being taught and admitting them in English medium schools; resulting in quite a few closures of primary schools.

The decision to abolish English from the primary stage was taken without consulting educationists and guardians, Mr. Sarkar alleged. He questioned the Left Government's right of taking such a decision when wards of many of its leaders were being taught in English medium schools. Mr. Partha De, the Minister for School Education held a post graduate degree in English and was lecturer in the subject he added. The SUCI MLA's walked out because the speaker refused to give an assurance that the Minister of state for primary Education would make a statement. Before leaving the house, Mr. Sarkar announced that the SUCI MLA's would stage a Dharna in the lobby till the house rose for the day".

The adjournment motion as tabled by

Comrade Debabrasad Sarkar is given below.

"Government circular abolishing teaching of English at the primary level from this year, 1982 has been issued. If this instruction is carried through, psychologically, this would have a crippling effect on the future students of this state. Encroachment on academic autonomy, devaluation of study of language and literature, abolition of English at the primary stage as a stepping stone to withdraw English from the education system in general vis-a-vis the government decision to introduce automatic promotion after adopting no detention policy at the primary level will strike a blow at the root of the education and culture of this state. As a result the future generation will lag far behind with regard to spread and advancement of science and technology and the students would find it difficult to pursue higher studies, sit for all India competitive examinations and services or like.

Side by side, with full scale patronage and recognition of English medium schools the state would have two categories of citizens—on the one side a handful of English knowing well off privileged section and another section denied of similar opportunity. Not only that; after issue of latest circular, students are being transferred from primary schools and admitted into the English medium schools and as a result many a primary school is going to be closed. Thus this decision to banish English from primary stage, instead of helping spread of mass education would retard it. In a word, the aforesaid steps in the field of education would strike a deadly blow on education,

Appeal of the Educationists, Litterateurs and intellectuals for defiance

Distinguished individuals in the field of education, literature and culture like Sarbasree Sukumar Sen, Premendra Mitra, Pramatha Nath Bisi, Monoj Basu, Pratul Gupta, Satyendra Nath Sen, Rabindra Kumar Dasgupta, Nihar Munshi, Amalendu Basu, Arabinda Nath Basu, Santosh Kumar Ghosh, Prativa Basu, Nirendra Nath Chakraborty, Bimal Kar, Manik Mukherjee, Sailesh Dey, Saibal Kumar Gupta, Ajit Kumar Bandopadhyaya and Gouri Ayuub appealed to the teachers community of West Bengal to defy the 'Left Front' Government's anti-people order prohibiting teaching of English in primary schools from this year and to continue the teaching of English as before. In their joint appeal on behalf of the Siksha Sankochan Birodhi-O-Swadhikar Raksha Committee they said the 'Left Front' Government had issued this order shamelessly disregarding the genuine demand of the educationists, guardians and students of the state not to abolish English teaching from Primary level. They termed this act of the Government nothing but 'hated

science, culture, and human values. Yet, English is banished from primary stage only by official measure without verifying the opinion of the guardians, teachers and educationists who are associated with education throughout their life. Withdrawal of this decision and annulment of the Government circular to this effect are virtually linked with the cause of the broadest sections of the people. So the business of the house be adjourned to take up this important issue which is of overriding importance at present."

precedent of trampling public opinion' and as 'utterly autocratic'. They hoped that the teaching community would take up this challenge of the government and give a befitting rebuff by defying the order. It is heartening that the people at large in the state have taken up the issue and are putting up stubborn opposition to the despotic policy and attitude of the government on this issue, the admission to which is coming in the prominent national dailies. Here is one such reporting in the Statesman, March, 1, '82:

"When on February 18, Mr. Abdul Bari, West Bengal's Minister of State for School Education, told reporters at Writer's Building that the Government planned to take steps against the authorities of 15 schools for violating the official directive on abolition of English from the curriculum of classes III and IV, he implied a grossly wrong picture of the situation. (According to an official proclamation, English is to go from class V, too, next year). For the fact is that in a large majority of schools, in towns and villages alike, English is being taught at these classes in open or oblique violation of the Government order."

"Government schools in Calcutta and in the district towns.....have found it difficult to do away with the subject (English) owing to pressure from guardians and the fact that most other schools have retained it.

"Several forces have joined to make the Government's order ineffective. First, there is widespread opposition to the official policy. The Bangiya Prathamik Sikshak Samity the oldest of the

associations of primary school teachers led by the SUCI is determined to flout the Government's order at all cost.

"Apart from such organisational resistance, guardians are not yet prepared to accept the exclusion of English from the Primary syllabus as a fait accompli. With numerous English medium schools thriving outside the pale of the official ban, the guardians organised signature campaigns among themselves and submitted memoranda to headmasters pleading for retention of English at the primary level. The headmasters, in most cases, gave in.....

A spokesman of the Bangiya Prathamik Sikshak Samity complained that anti-Government teacher's were being threatened that payment of their salaries would be stopped unless they discontinued teaching of English at the primary stage. But opposition to the official policy is apparently so strong and wide that its supporters are not only keeping a low profile but have often acquired in the violation of the Government order."

AIDSO

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Hostel. Both Comrades Mishra and Panigrahi received serious injuries.

The college authorities have now formed a seven member equiry committee. Being requested by the Principal and members of the staff of the college following the formation of the committee, Comrade Mishra withdrew his fast-to-death Hunger Strike making it, of course, clear to the authorities that if the incidents were not completely checked, AIDSO would once again organise protracted movement.

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