

ON PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION OF ASSAM

On 27th December, '90 at midnight, the President of India, on the advice of the Central government, has brought the state of Assam under President's Rule applying article 356 of the Indian Constitution. Simultaneously the 'Disturbed Areas Act' and 'Armed Forces (Special Power) Act' have been imposed in the entire state. The state Assembly has been kept under suspended animation. The general election to the state Assembly supposed to be completed within 7th January 1991 has automatically been deferred. Not only this, the election of representatives to the Lok Sabha from this state which could not be held last time with the rest of the country—as the Election Commission of India and the then Central government bowed down to the unjust pressure of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) who wanted postponement of Lok Sabha election with an ulterior political motive raising once again the bogey of inclusion of names of foreign nationals in the voters list, has also been once again postponed.

Nobody knows when such election will be held. The process of election has come to a halt in the state of Assam. The political activities and the struggle which could be resumed after the Assam agitation are now again faced with powerful hindrance. In defence of promulgation of these draconian Acts along with the imposition of President's Rule, the deployment of Army in Assam placed the whole state under a semi-military rule.

The Central government stated that the law and order situation of the entire State of Assam broke down to such an extent in which holding of free and fair election was not possible, that the secessionist activities of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) have assumed such an alarming proportion that it needs to be firmly dealt with and that failure of the AGP government to deal with the situation adequately, made the Central intervention inevitable. Whatever might be the alibis and pleas of the Centre for promulgation of these extraordinary measures, no doubt they have caused flagrant infringement on people's democratic rights. But the most disturbing aspect of the situation is that whereas these undemocratic Acts have very naturally caused severe resentment amongst the people, amongst a sizeable section of the people these have come as a great relief. This paradoxical situation therefore

needs to be clarified and in doing so, the genesis of ULFA activities along with its stated aims and objects need to be studied in a bit detail.

It may be recalled that the organisation known as ULFA, was formed, as they claim, on 7th of April, 1979, with the object of freeing Assam from the 'Indian Colonial Rule' and establishing a 'Sovereign Socialist Assam' and called upon the people of the state to resort to armed struggle to achieve this goal.

It may be mentioned here that though the organisation speaks in one place in its pamphlet of freeing Assam from 'Colonial exploitation' but in another place it also speaks about the exploitation of 'Indian Capitalist Class'. Again, it is to be noted that although it professes the aim of establishing 'scientific socialism', it nowhere mentions about its adherence to Marx's-Leninist principles and ideology. However, the Binod Mishra faction of the CPI(ML) is reported to have played a decisive role in the emergence of this organisation. In a recently published article in an Assamese weekly Mr. Mishra placed immense faith in the cherished goal of the ULFA and also hailed this movement. The IPF too was found to have affinity and softness towards the ULFA movement. But notwithstanding their support and sympathy it was

however not claimed to be their own movement.

About the earlier developments and the emergence of the ULFA, it may be mentioned that since independence a number of secessionist movements developed in the North-East region of India. The history of abortive secessionist movements in Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur are known to all. In spite of these movements being suppressed by the bourgeois Army operation, the feelings and some sort of similar movements still persist in this region. Beyond North-Eastern border of India, in the adjoining areas of Burma, it is known to all that another secessionist movement is going on there for a long time. Who are they and what is their politics, are yet to be ascertained correctly but it is found that the three current secessionist movements going on in Manipur, Nagaland and Assam have strong links with that movement in Burma and it is in Burmese territory that the ULFA activities are reported to have received their arms training at the initial stage being aided and abated by their counterparts in Nagaland and Manipur.

Though as per their claim, the ULFA came into existence—as far as in 1979 during the Assam agitation, yet it could not develop itself as a force to reckon with at that time. In 1985 the Assam agitation came to an end through the Assam Accord. The AGP which emerged as a political party out of the AASU, was voted to power enthusiastically by the Assamese speaking people with a great expectation in their heart. But with the passage of each day by its performance it began to manifest its true colour. Soon it was found that this government was nothing different and better than other bourgeois governments like the Congress(I) ones. Instead of developing a pro-people attitude and seeking people's cooperation in the matter of ad-

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Comrade Nihar Mukherjee Condemns US Genocide In Iraq

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, has issued the following statement on 14th February, 1991 to the Press :

We strongly condemn the ghastly genocide in Baghdad perpetrated by the US-led so-called multinational forces yesterday killing mostly children and women utterly belying all their claims of avoiding the civilian population from the target of attack.

World public opinion must rage in vehement indignation and disgust to bow down the audacious and despotic head of US President Bush for the crime against humanity.

Delhi SUCI Criticises Banning Anti-Gulf War Demonstrations

The Delhi State Organising Committee of the SUCI has, on 30.1.91, issued the following statement :

"The recent orders of the Government banning anti-war demonstrations outside the diplomatic missions and their cultural and information centres in Delhi have come as a rude shock to the peace loving and democratic people of Delhi. It has exposed the real character of the present minority Government. Obviously, the present order of the Government is a part of the conspiracy to frustrate the attempts to build up a people's movement against war and for peace.

"By affording refueling facilities to the US air force planes at the Bombay and other airports, the Government has now openly come out in support of the aggressive acts of the US imperialism.

"We appeal to all the political parties, who value democratic rights, to come forward on this particular issue and jointly protest to force the Government to withdraw the orders."

ministration, the AGP government solely depended on the police and the bureaucracy to rule the state. In an unscrupulous manner, it discriminated against the ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities and in the process incurred their wrath too. It pursued anti-people economic policy and helped an aspirant bourgeoisie to grow.

Its utter incompetence and inefficient

performance also angered the people. In the process it became totally alienated from all sections of the people and began to indulge in worst form of corruption and nepotism, faced further wrath and indignation of the people and when eventually people's movement against the government began to develop it did not hesitate at all to

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ULFA's ideological position is akin to Assamese chauvinism

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brutally suppress them with the help of the police and administration. Under such a situation it is found that a large number of AGP and AASU cadres started to join the ULFA and the ULFA too readily admitted them as members.

As it grew in strength, the politics of the ULFA began to manifest itself in different forms. That the ULFA adhered to the politics of individual assassination became clear from the very beginning. Selective killings of political opponents—and at the initial stage they were found to be mostly belonging to the Congress (I) along with some notable businessmen—were resorted to by this organisation. Certain persons involved in social evils as claimed by them were given death sentence and executed. Discovery of bodies in the wake of Army operations at different places, however, reveal a different story unlike their earlier killings where they owned responsibility and gave explanation for such actions. Such things were missing in these cases. These types of brutal killings have very naturally caused deep dismay and disgust amongst all sections of the people. The nature of their operation, the terror tactics, notwithstanding their avowed objectives, instead of generating any kind of warm feelings about them, very soon gave birth to a fear complex in the minds of the people. The AGP government, however, remained completely silent and inactive about all these killings and did not arrest and punish the persons responsible for these killings. Gradually people who did not like these killings began to sense a nexus between the government and the ULFA. Similar is the case with collection of lakhs and lakhs of rupees from big

businessmen and other professional people (which later on also covered smaller businessmen and traders through collective imposition of levies) to which the ULFA resorted to in the name of collection of 'War Fund'. Evidently the people failed to comprehend the justifiability of this form of collection and in this respect too strong misgivings began to develop. Here also the AGP government was found to be silent.

Apart from the manner of forced collection in view of loose and amorphous nature of the organisation, doubt about the credentials of the collectors also arose in the minds of the people. To some people it also appeared as an AGP inspired move to raise fund for election through coercion with the help of the ULFA. The ULFA leadership never explained their position in order to dispel such suspicion working in the minds of the people.

The third method—kidnapping and imprisoning people and trying them according to their own rule was also not only very much disapproved by the people but caused annoyance and anger amongst a great section of them too. Fighting against corruption and social evils means making common people aware of them and giving birth to a people's movement against them and thereby forcing the government to discharge its responsibility in controlling and eradicating them. Moreover, kidnapping a big businessman in order to extract money and releasing him subsequently on payment of ransom also turned out to be a futile exercise because people found that this type of act on the part of the ULFA could not prevent the big businessman from indulging in corrupt practices and profiteering; on the contrary such acts were likely to

encourage the big businessmen to indulge in more ruthless exploitation through subtle means in order to meet the growing monetary need of the ULFA.

Apart from these, the ULFA, through the formation of some other certain outfits with different names, formed certain cooperatives the obvious purpose of which was to enlist people's political support. But as we know, it is a governmental task and whatever is necessary, it is to be done by pressuring the government. But here the ULFA was found to be instrumental in hiding the failures of the AGP government, making no attempt to expose the failures of the AGP government's anti-people policy of serving the bourgeois interest. Moreover, whereas the ULFA clamoured against corruption, it allowed the AGP ministers to indulge in it rampantly. What is more, the ULFA leadership failed to see that the manner in which they were forcing people to offer free labour was causing anger and resentment among them. They also failed to see that by denying common people the remuneration for their work, they were allowing the government to squander public money earmarked for developmental work.

In the context of the prevailing notions that the ULFA would in their own interest help the AGP to remain in power for next five years, the incidents of killing of certain individuals who were likely to be the candidates in the next election, belonging to the parties opposed to the AGP, further strengthened people's belief that there exists a strong nexus between AGP and ULFA. Apart from common cultural links stemming from their common attachment to Assamese Chauvinism between AGP, AASU and

ULFA, these types of activities in which one was found to be helping the other directly or indirectly, also caused strong resentment amongst the masses and the democratic people strongly refused to accept the claim of ULFA to be a revolutionary organisation. Whatever might have been the earlier perception of people, particularly of the Assamese speaking people about ULFA, which, as explained above, aroused much expectation particularly at a time when deep distress and frustration arising out of betrayal of the AGP was haunting their minds, as a result of ULFA's indiscriminate use of terror and taking resort to threat, particularly due to the latest revelations, that feeling of appreciation and affinity is being fast replaced by a fear psychosis.

At the same time another vital aspect has also become evident. Whereas everywhere the revolutionary organisation which really meant revolution without exception conducted vigorous and sustained ideological movements through innumerable meetings, group discussions, individual discussion, literary campaign, constant publication of leaflets and booklets, etc. on different issues in order to give birth to oneness of mind and approach, ULFA was found to be not at all interested in these types of persuasive campaign. The result was that whereas people were divided in terms of caste, creed and religion, the Assamese chauvinism vertically divided the people of Assam into two hostile camps, and the ULFA although claimed to be a revolutionary organisation made little or no effort to eliminate this pernicious influence of chauvinism and was rather found to be virtually siding with chauvinism. It is also worth noting in this connection that instead of relying upon revolutionary slo-

gans, the ULFA was found to be using unhesitatingly those discredited slogans which were raised by the chauvinists of Assam at the time of Assam agitation.

In order to have an indepth study of the ULFA movement another important aspect needs to be taken note of.

The cultural and ideological base of the ULFA movement, as is being found, is akin to the extent of being identical, not only with the Assamese nationality feeling but with the very plank of Assam movement—Assamese chauvinism—the slightest break from which has not been witnessed. And then again is it not another adventurist movement being indulged in by the petty-bourgeois elements, in which the aspirant regional bourgeoisie has sneaked in to derive maximum political and economic benefits after arriving at a rapprochement with the Indian monopolists? Failure of the ULFA movement to emerge as, not to speak of a revolutionary movement, but simply as a pro-people movement capable of uniting all sections of the toiling people become more glaring when viewed from another side.

While Assam is a composite state inhabited by diverse people having different language, religion and culture, where forging unity amongst all these people is really a stupendous task, as fear is presently haunting all such groups of being dominated by the others, the ULFA seems to be little interested in forging such unity although we all know that such unity is the sine qua non of every revolutionary movement. Whereas Proletarian Internationalism alone can help in forging this unity, the ULFA leaders are seen to be bent on using nationality feeling, more particularly Assamese nationality feeling, to strengthen their base, which act in the prevailing situation of

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Dismemberment of Assam cannot solve problems

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Assam marked by ethnic and communal conflicts, makes it suspect in the eyes of other non-Assamese and tribal people and keeping apart the question of correctness or incorrectness of their contention that Assam is being colonially exploited. It however is a fact that a great deal of confusion persists on this question while there is no scope of a detailed and exhaustive theoretical discussion on this issue, still a few points need to be raised in this connection. Whatever may be the internal weakness and however half-baked it may be, through the process of Indian national movement, emergence of Indian Nation is a reality. People of India belonging to different nationalities and ethnic groups by joining Indian freedom movement, voluntarily initiated the process of formation of Indian nationhood and ultimately gave birth to the Indian State and as such, it may be correctly said, exercised their right to self-determination. It is well-known to all that baring some smaller ethnic groups in remotest parts of the country, almost all nationalities joining the Indian freedom movement transformed it into a single movement for emancipation and thus voluntarily merged into Indian Nationhood—feeling of being 'Indian' developed as a result. Revolutionaries nowhere disturb this natural process of nation formation, never try to dismember states already formed on the basis of nationhood as it creates disunity and cleavage amongst the toiling people and hence the revolutionaries are opposed to secession in the sense of dismemberment of state already formed on the basis of a nationhood. A large nation having many other benefits, the Marxists strongly disfavour bifurcation of such large state if there is no overriding proletarian interest involved. But the activities of the ULFA reflect no un-

derstanding of this fundamental Marxist concept when without making any attempt to substantiate their claim, the ULFA simply brands Assam as a colony of India.

No doubt India is a capitalist state having developed all features and tendencies of imperialism. Countries outside India are having enough experience of this phenomenon. But by that it can never be said that in today's situation different regions or different states of India whose people themselves voluntarily and consciously gave birth to this India—free and sovereign, by driving out British imperialists from India which as a compact country was non-existent before their advent—are being colonially exploited or they are colonies of India. As colonial exploitation has its distinct form and meaning and this type of misleading, unreal characterization in India's case is tantamount to ignoring with closed eyes the dire fact of exploitation by capitalist class, — its devastating effect upon revolutionary movement in India, can not be summarily dismissed as simple mistakes arising out of mere ignorance. The ULFA which does not clearly state that it is a Marxist-Leninist force, that they are communist but pose so, and create thereby a halo—as stated above, does not feel any necessity to providing a theoretical study to establish that Assam is a colony of India. Again, their latter call to free Assam from Indian capitalist exploitation and rule is equally dubious. (It would be clear to anyone that these two approaches are not only inconsistent but contradict each other).

In the context of their secessionist activity being indulged in by the ULFA, that too in the name of socialism and revolution but having no theoretical basis, what is also causing concern and agony to all sensible minds is whether American imperialists have got any underhand

link in all these activities, whether the CIA has already spread its nefarious network in this region as it is wellknown to all that during the Assam agitation, through the revelation of all facts about project Brahmaputra, CIA's intention to destabilise this region came to the fore. This time too, disturbing reports are pouring which positively point at the attempt of CIA to sneak in to cause destabilisation.

Such being the ideological confusions arising out of the ULFA phenomenon, our party in Assam, long back felt the urgent necessity to undertake ideological campaign amongst the people to bring clarity on all such issues.

However, our party does not have that organisational strength to conduct it adequately. About the CPI(M) and the CPI's role, the less said the better. Their inaction, mysterious silence and sometimes endorsement of some of the points raised by ULFA, instead of helping Assamese speaking people to realize the weaknesses and danger inherent in the ULFA movement only contributed to further aggravation of the situation.

Then again, the need of the situation was to develop joint democratic movements seeking solution of the burning problems arising out of Centre's abject neglect and AGP Govt.'s misrule which were causing deep disenchantment amongst the people taking the advantage of which ULFA's adventurous ideology was making rapid inroads. But here, too, our appeal to other Leftist parties, particularly the CPI and CPI(M), fell into deaf ears. The situation, therefore, fast aggravated in course of the adventurous acts of the ULFA with the connivance of the AGP govt., thus making the vertical division amongst the people which started during the time of the Assam agitation, further acute—with one section of them demanding stern actions against the ULFA activities

while another section remaining quite confused and harbouring sympathy for them. In this atmosphere this belief also gained ground that in the context of some form of understanding as was being found, the ULFA might use its arms to vote AGP to power. Many of the political parties, therefore, demanded President's Rule to restore law and order and ensure free and fair election. Although such fears could not altogether be ruled out, our party cautioned that the main issue was not law and order question or administrative measures. As the ULFA phenomenon predominantly is an ideological one involving a sizeable section of the population of the state, it has to be dealt with politically and ideologically. People are to be freed from the influence of the ULFA, and are to be made conscious of the dangerous consequences likely to arise out of these type of activities. The President's rule and military intervention instead of being a panacea would plunge Assam into a far more dangerous situation, pointer of which might be found in Punjab and Kashmir. But none paid heed to this grim warning of our party in time. As a result of irresponsible conduct of the political parties like the CPI, CPI(M) and others, the inevitable has come at last. President's Rule armed with two draconian Acts has been promulgated in Assam.

Assam is now virtually under military rule which has already led to largescale arrests and torture of common people. Although to everyone acquainted with such military operations it is clear that what has happened in the meantime is nothing but a fringe of what will come, in future, when being faced with resistance, the military will come down heavily with its naked character. All these are causing deep discontent and resentment amongst the people and will further alienate them from the broad starts of

the common people of India.

Our party, however, sensing the worst danger looming large has been frantically trying to unite all the democratic forces in a bid to make them aware about the gravity of the situation and urging them to undertake the responsibility of going to the people to help them realise the futility of disastrous consequences likely to arise in the form of death to thousands of patriotic minded boys and girls if at this inopportune moment arms are taken up to capture power or to secede from India. Although the result of this effort cannot be regarded as an allout success, it also cannot be denied that it is meeting with growing response.

Refuelling US warplanes is a disgrace —Comrade Nihar Mukherjee

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI has issued the following statement on 18.2.91 :

It will remain a disgrace in the glorious chapter of anti-imperialist struggle of India that this country has been utilised for more than a month for refuelling US planes in its barbaric attack in the Middle East.

If the Left and democratic parties did organise a powerful united struggle, minority Government led by Chandra Shekhar could not dare to help US imperialism.

But not only Congress(I) all the ruling parties including CPI(M) maintaining close relation with foreign capital, expressed only nominal protest inspite of tremendous public resentment against refuelling.

Now, after consulting USA and finding alternative refuelling facilities in Sri Lanka to defuse the public resentment refuelling has been stopped in India. No political party can claim credit for it.

Lenin Death Anniversary

ASSAM

On the occasion of the 67th death anniversary of Comrade Lenin, the Great Teacher, a largely attended public meeting was held on 21st January '91 at Lakhiram Barua Sadan, Guwahati, under the auspices of the Assam State committee of the SUCI. Comrade Kalayan Choudhury, Secretary, Assam State Co-

mmittee of the party, presided over the meeting. Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, member of the Central Committee of the party, the main speaker, dealt at length in the light of the teachings of Comrade Lenin the various aspects of the present international communist movement, the serious threat posed by the modern revisionism in this respect and stressed

the need to launch a serious ideological struggle against all these reformist forces. He further appealed to the people of the Soviet Union and other East European countries which in the meantime reverted back to capitalism, to stand firmly and develop revolutionary movement to restore socialism there.

At the outset, a resolution was passed unanimously condemning the attack of America and other western imperialist forces on Iraq and demanding immediate stop to this attack. It

viewed that the solution of Kuwaiti problem can only be sought through joint attempt of the Arab League Countries and not by the intervention of the American imperialists. The resolution was moved by Comrade Chandralakha Das, member of the State Committee of the party and seconded by Comrade Ajit Acharjee.

TAMIL NADU

The Tamil Nadu State Committee of SUCI observed 67th death anniversary of Lenin on 28.1.91 at LLA Hall, Madras.

A resolution condemning US aggression on Iraq was unanimously accepted.

The meeting was presided over by Com. Narayanasamy, member, State Secretariat of our party. Comrade Jagannathan, State Secretary of our party, the main speaker, urged to rearm the Communist workers with the teachings of Lenin and strengthen the SUCI, the Leninist party on our soil.

Com. Baskaran, member, Tamil Nadu State Committee also spoke.

Movements in Kerala

The Nayanar government of Kerala recently announced a 33 p.c. increase in state busfares. Our party took no time in protesting strongly this anti-people move. On the day of implementation of the increased fare, our party organised picketing at National Highways and Bus Stations in almost all District Headquarters. 452 of our comrades were arrested on that day. In Alleppey false cases were instituted against 34 party workers including the district Secretary Comrade R. Rajeevan, when they were arrested during picketing. The party made vigorous campaign all over the state exposing the true face of Nayanar government. In culicut district many struggle committees were formed in which common people joined in numbers. They took up various action programmes including picketing. In Ernakulam district the party coordinated different passengers' committees into a district level action committee.

The government was compelled to withdraw the increased fares, but that it did very partially. So the movement continued and the government started ruthless police repression. In Ernakulam hundreds of protesting people were severely lathicharged and leaders including Comrade Jyothikrishnan and Comrade Francis, party district committee members were

arrested. The police demolished the shed created by the struggle committee in Ernakulam city and took away the microphone set. Protesting against this barbaric attack by the so-called 'Left Front' government and demanding complete withdrawal of the increased fare, the Action Committee called a bandh in Ernakulam city. Huge police force was deployed. Leaders were arrested. Every propaganda was stifled. CPI(M) employed party machinery and even goondas to beat the Action Committee members and the common people. In spite of all these Bandh was successful in many parts of the city and shops remained closed.

In Culicut district thousands of people demonstrated before police stations and elsewhere and picketed on highways against unlawful arrests.

Immediately after this the party took up intensive campaign programme against intolerable pricerise of essential commodities and the aggravation of communal situation, a conspiracy of the ruling class to break the unity of the toiling people. Padayatras were held in different districts and more than 750 public meetings were held en route. Starting from 10th of December last, this programme continued till the end of December, 1990.



Facing CPI(M) assaults above one lakh people in a meeting of our party at Bhubaneswari in kulturali, South 24 Parganas, WB, on Feb. 1 protested CPI(M)'s barbarity to crush SUCI, colluding with police, jotedars and goondas. Comrades Shankar Singh, Polit Bureau member, Pravash Ghosh, member, CC & Secretary, WB State Committee, Asit Bhattacharyya, member, CC, Yakub Pailan, Secy. South 24 pgs. dist., Amir Ali Halder, Secy., AIKKMS, WB, Debaprasad Sarkar, M.I.A, Prabodh Purkait, MLA are on dais among others.

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