

# Proletarian Era

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## Union Budget 2013-14

### Innocuous look, grisly offensive character

Well ahead of the day of presentation of union budget, usually at the end of February, the media start creating a hype centring on it. Common people pressed under the grinding wheel of ruthless capitalist exploitation are led to believe that this budgetary exercise is a big event in national life. A bunch of bourgeois economists and columnists having mortgaged themselves to the oppressive ruling monopolists for earning money and the tag of expert commentators swing into action to establish that the need of the industrial houses, big business and multi-national corporations (MNCs) is the need of the economy and meeting that need alone can foster growth, whereas any measure for mitigating the multiplying distress and hardship of the wretched multitude is tantamount to populist overture, allowing political short-termism to overrule economic imperatives and rein back reform. It is true that this design is getting increasingly exposed to the suffering millions who find their condition further worsened after each budget irrespective of which party or combination is in the government. But that exposure is causing rather more of frustration, despair and apathy, a kind of naïve reaction, than unfolding the truth and spurring them to desired action for frustrating the design. Hence, it is necessary to focus on certain basic aspects of the budget avoiding all high-sounding phrases and jargons so that people could be helped in understanding how the bourgeois governing machine is playing ducks and drakes with their lives.

#### False claim of growth

As is customary, the government releases an Economic Survey before presentation of the budget. The Survey is expected to provide a glance at the actual performance of the country's economy in the bygone fiscal year and indicate what ought to be the roadmap for the next

year. This year, it would appear, that the Survey after admitting perceptible slide on all fronts, has presented a rosy future as if happy days are here again. According to it, GDP growth which slowed down from 9.3 per cent in 2009-10 to 5.0 per cent in 2012-13 is going to pick up to range between 6.1% and 6.7% in 2013-14, wholesale price inflation will fall to 6.2-6.6% by March despite hike in diesel prices and higher rail fares and freight rates, and the medium-term price trend is distinctly downward, especially for nonfood manufactures. Interestingly, the Survey has not given any clue as to what is the basis of this over-optimism.

It is pertinent to mention that bourgeois economists always projects GDP (Gross Domestic Production) figure as yardstick of economic growth. But in capitalism where most of the wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few rich depriving and pauperizing the multitudes of poor and have-nots, GDP could never be any indicator of economic progress since it never reflects distribution of increased wealth. What then ought to be the real indicator? Surely, the indicator should be if the general standard of life of overall population is going up or not. Is it happening? It does not require any knowledge of economy to say, "No", "Not at all by any parameter". As the Arjun Sengupta Committee set up by the government, over 77% people are languishing at below poverty line (BPL) level. But, the foreign-trained economists in Planning Commission and Prime Minister's advisory board in their bid to shield the hard reality with fanciful propositions and gymnastic of words claimed that those who spend of Rs32 in cities and Rs 26 in villages can no longer be considered poor and hence poverty has been considerably alleviated. But, one to all poopooed this ludicrous

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### SUCI(C) calls the union budget 2013-14 a blueprint of escalated ruination of poor and showering largesse of concessions to corporate sector and rich

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 1 March, 2013:

A cursory glance at the highlights of the Union budget 2013 announced yesterday with much fanfare of stimulating "growth" would reveal that the entire direction is towards providing plethora of concessions and subventions to the industrial houses and MNCs leaving the suffering people in the lurch. Fiscal savagery like curtailment of subsidy particularly in fuel, fertilizer and food is galore. What is disquieting is that while the axe is on the common people, the figure of exemptions and rebates to the corporate sector and the affluent in the name of fiscal stimulus amounted reportedly to Rs 5, 70, 000 crore as against estimated fiscal deficit of Rs 5, 42, 499 crore for the year 2013-14 showing how sound (!) fiscal prudence is in practice. Customarily, the unproductive defence budget, despite unveiling of so many scams and kickback incidents centering on procurement of military hardware, has been raised to a whopping Rs 2, 03, 000 crores. There is not even an iota of reference to any measure to either curb generation of black money or unearthing at least a part of it nor announcement of any step to book the tax defaulters and evaders. Rather, a 'Voluntary Compliance Encouragement Scheme' has been announced for service tax defaulters and introduction of 'General Anti Avoidance Rules' deferred for three years. A host of liberalization measures in capital market operation including much more free inflow of foreign capital has been granted to fuel speculative activities on a larger scale. The Finance Minister has ended his responsibility to the poor by exuding confidence in 'direct cash transfer of subsidy scheme' notwithstanding the fact that there is no infrastructure for its implementation nor is the operation free from inherent flaws as was evident in the flopped pilot project of the scheme in Rajasthan a few months back. Likewise, in order to divert people's attention from the growing crime on women and diffuse the rising protest against it, the FM has prescribed an 'economic solution' by floating a so called 'mirbhaya' fund and the ludicrous proposition of opening a women's bank.

The FM has sought to feather his nest by boasting increased grant in most of the areas of allocations, but he remained conspicuously mum on how does he propose to raise commensurate revenue. This leaves doubt that within no time, he might revise budget proposals, impose more burden on the people through 'out of the budget' route as has become the fashion with these functionaries of decadent moribund bourgeois parliamentary system, besides resorting to large scale market borrowing, disinvestment of PSUs and printing of currency notes to multiply inflationary pressure several folds. Floating of number of expert committees and commissions for advising government on economic issues, deciding tariff and tax structures etc. also point towards progressive curtailment of the role of the parliament and devolving increased power on the executives which is nothing but footsteps of fascism. When the multitude of poor and have-nots reeling under soaring price-rise, galloping unemployment, increasing job loss, rising starvation, wrenching poverty and virtual non-access to rudimentary healthcare and education, expected the government to come to their rescue, the budget instead of addressing a single of these issues has been a craftily drafted blue print of serving class interest of the ruling monopolists and MNCs couched in sweet-coated utterances, mellifluous coinages and prattle-like economic jargons.

We call upon the people to feel this anti-people character of the budget and raise their voice against it.

# Dipping GDP is due to fall in consumption, admits Economic Survey

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benchmark. And to add to the woes of these warriors (!) against poverty, the Economic Survey quoting the Human Development Report 2011 has stated that India's HDI ranking has slipped further to 134 out of 187 countries.

Notwithstanding plummeting GDP growth rate and escalating destitution of the people at large, wealth of the monopolists and super-rich is swelling. And the Finance Minister (FM) also could not but admit that to emerge as the "10<sup>th</sup> largest economy of the world", he and his government have "left many sections of the people left behind" and not responded to the "compelling moral case of equity". This only goes to show how hollow is the claim of the government about economic growth being "inclusive" meaning reaching out prosperity to all. So, the oft-parroted argument of his and the ilk that "higher growth leads to inclusive and sustainable development", falls flat thereby proving this much-boasted growth trajectory to be a bane for the poor and have-nots.

Revealing also is the explanation provided by the Survey about dipping GDP. It admits that there is sharp decline in consumption meaning people's purchasing power is falling rapidly. That is the law of capitalism where production is not for meeting people's needs but to ensure maximization of profit by the capitalist owners by exploiting the masses. Exploited masses are starved of money to buy goods. So, produced goods remain unsold causing market crisis of the capitalists. Hence, production is stopped, recession sets in, shutters are downed at the industries throwing millions out of job. Shrinkage of market precludes establishment of new industries. So, unemployment soars. Over and above, following the inexorable law of capitalism, inflation, despite recession or stockpiling of goods, soars up causing spurt in price line. Accumulated effect of all these shunt out the common man from the market accentuating market crisis the decadent moribund capitalism is gasping under. In such a backdrop, sounding optimism about economy being back on the growth path would have some meaning if thrust was on generating income for the people, provide them job at need-based remuneration on permanent basis and take specific steps to stimulate their purchasing capacity.

## Misplaced priority of the Survey and Finance Minister

But the agenda of the FM and his government is altogether different. As regards priority, the Survey emphasized that India must tackle its twin deficits, fiscal deficit and current account deficit. And to the FM, "challenge is to get back to the growth rate of economy", "imperative is foreign investment" and "greater worry is the current account deficit", and not only not offering even rudimentary relief to the suffering countrymen but to snatch whatever little is available. The direction of the budget is also towards that end. Take the issue of current account deficit meaning imports overtaking exports. Explanation provided is that because of global financial meltdown, demand for Indian goods in foreign market is dwindling while absence of domestic production in many areas impels import. In spite of fall in rupee value (meaning number of rupees equivalent to one US dollar or euro is more which enables an importer of Indian goods to procure more by spending dollar or Euro), there is virtually no rise in export. While the first reason is on account of the insurmountable crisis of global capitalism endemic of the system of which ruling Indian capitalists are inseparable part, the second reason put forward is not wholly true. There are many items like sugar, wheat, rice, pulses and even onion which make foray into foreign market for harvesting super-profit and then the same items are recycled into domestic market through import route and sold at exorbitant prices. Moot question is minting maximum profit by hook or by crook.

Secondly, as inflow of foreign currency through export route is not taking place, the government is desperate to increase the same through other avenues like facilitating foreign investment in Indian capital market (commonly known as share market) and allowing FDI in various sectors like retail, banking, insurance and even defence. With that objective, this budget has also announced a number of measures to attract FIIs (Foreign Institutional Investors) as detailed at clause 95 of the same. "SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India)", says the FM, "will simplify the procedures and prescribe uniform registration and other norms for entry of foreign portfolio investors." Opening up pension fund to FDI and widened exposure of pension corpus to the

vagaries of capital market is also aimed at securing foreign investment on a larger scale besides providing more fodder to the cannon of speculation. Moreover, to intensify capital market speculation, the FM has announced a few other steps as well. Significant among them is viewing derivative trading in commodities (a kind of betting on price movements of various commodities) as "non-speculative transaction" and qualifying for certain tax benefits. This apparently innocuous move has wider ramifications. Increased speculation in this area to avail of tax exemptions would seriously affect prices of essential commodities and thus while punters would smile, people would bear the brunt. In many of our previous write-ups, we, based on the teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, eminent Marxist thinker and Founder General Secretary of our Party, the SUCI(C), have shown that finding productive investment to be non-profitable, crisis-ridden capitalism today, among other things, is increasingly diverting surplus capital in speculation and usury to book profit. That is glaring in this budget also. Besides speculation, the very grant of an additional deduction of interest of upto Rs 100,000 on house building loan upto Rs 25,00,000 for tax benefits is an attempt to release more bank funds towards housing loan and thus helps banks in minting profit through usury root. At the same time, this credit-driven fuelling of house construction would bring a temporary boom in the building material market. But, one is aware what devastating has been the fall-out of this deployment of surplus capital in usury and resulting credit-driven stimulation of economy and speculation as was witnessed in the sub-prime crisis that rocked not only US but the whole capitalist world just a few years back. Interestingly, when the bourgeois world with the help of the very powerful propaganda machinery at its command, was out to prove that the capitalist economy throughout the world was on a recovery path, the very "economic forethought" of running the country's economy on market borrowing has landed many European countries in acute sovereign debt crisis meaning the entire country turned bankrupt because of loan repayment default. USA, considered to be the locomotive of world imperialism-capitalism, is inching towards bankruptcy as well as the world's

largest debtor country with a national debt of US\$ 16.6 trillion. Yet, the FM as baggage-carrier of crisis-stricken capitalism could not but pursue the same path of running the economy on debt.

## Fiscal prudence (!) and budget deficit management

The FM has stressed another area as his priority. That is bringing down fiscal deficit or in other words, closing the gap between increased expenditure and lower income of the government. He takes pride in keeping the fiscal deficit target in 2012-13 at 5.2% of GDP, marginally lower than the original estimate of 5.3%. He claims that. He asserts that "faced with a huge fiscal deficit, he had no choice but to rationalize expenditure" ... "cut the Government's expenditure by almost 18 per cent in 2012-13 over 2011-12" to achieve this success and this 'dose of bitter medicine... seems to be working'. However, the fact is that the biggest share of these 'cuts' (worth a total of just over Rs.1 lakh crore), of Rs.92,000 crore, came from savings in the form of the unspent funds that were allocated to various ministries last year. In other words, planned expenditure was drastically pruned. On the other hand, in 2012-13, government lost potential tax revenue worth Rs 5.7 lakh crores mainly due to bumper exemptions and rebates to the corporate sector in the name of fiscal stimulus. Fiscal deficit, as per revised estimates in the Budget is projected at Rs 5,20,925 crore. According to Economic Survey, in the first nine months of the current fiscal year, corporate income tax fell by 4.9 per cent, customs by 18.9 per cent and central excise by 16 per cent. Clearly, plethora of sops granted to the industrial houses, MNCs and big business for recovering their "losses" (read shortfall in potential revenue) has caused this deficit even after drastic curtailment in subsidies and expenditure burden of which is borne by the wretched toiling masses. And this excessive liberal approach to the corporate houses, MNCs and the super-rich and imposing 'hard decisions' on the poverty-stricken countrymen show no sign of abatement. The Economic Survey has advised that to augment revenue, the government should not increase tax (read direct tax particularly of the corporate sector and super-rich) but broaden tax base (which means bringing non-tax payers into tax net,

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# When people are starving, budget emphasizes on foreign capital inflow and lowering trade deficit

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imposing tax in areas hitherto not covered and implicitly concentrating more on indirect tax by squeezing the common man). The FM also traverses the same way but with a stunt.

He has tried to show that he has bucked the trend of splurge-the-rich and soak-the-poor posture by timorously imposing a 10% surcharge on income tax for those paying tax of Rs 1 crore (10 million) and domestic and foreign firms with taxable income above Rs 10 crore. This is another case of perfidy. First of all, this additional surcharge is just for one year and there are reportedly 42, 800 individuals who admit to be paying tax of Rs 1 crore or above. 315 of such individuals are stated to be members of parliament showing how representative of the oppressed millions is the country's legislature. The additional tax levied on them is a peanut for them and with innumerable ways available for dodging tax payment, it is not going to trouble them in the least. Similar is the case with the corporate sector. Corporate bodies received direct tax concessions worth Rs 68,000 crore this year but paid just Rs 22,855 in taxes whereas the statutory rate is 32.445%. Moreover, bowing to the demand of the big domestic and foreign tax defaulting corporates, the FM has also deferred introduction of GAAR (General Anti Avoidance Rules) till 31-03-2016. As per his own admission, this marginal increase in direct tax to select segments is expected to generate only Rs 13,300 crore, barely 2% of estimated budget expenditure. One ought not to forget that the Indian rich are now one of the lowest taxed segments of the global rich, following abolition of estate duty, long-term capital gains tax and a very low tax rate on individuals and companies. To add further, while gold purchase is a means of storing black money and massive import of gold mostly in the smuggled form is one of the contributing factors for the most 'worrying' current account deficit, the Finance Bill, tabled alongwith budget proposals, shows substantial increase in the limit of duty free import of gold. It is also queer that when large import of gold by the rich and affluent is one of the factors for widened current account deficit, there is further impetus to that. As one critic has currently pointed out, the new measure will almost certainly increase the work of couriers, without making any

dent on gold import or reduce smuggling. On the other hand, the people at large are forced to bear the brunt of indirect taxation and spiralling inflation propelled by such fiscal measures, by way of paying higher prices for items of need.

## Ruse of increased allocations

The FM has sought to feather his nest by boasting that total budgetary allocations have been increased by 12%. This, too, is a deception. First of all, if inflation rate on a very conservative estimate is considered to be 10%, will it not erode the claimed hike in no time? Next, outlays did not necessarily mean outcomes. It seems this tendency to show overly optimistic numbers has now become institutionalized. As mentioned earlier, a sizeable chunk of allocated resources remained unutilized during last year. Secondly, absence of any clear indication as to how the additional revenue would be mopped up to meet stated 12% increase in expenditure leaves doubt that soon, the FM might revise budget proposals and impose more burden on the people through 'out of the budget' route as has become the fashion with these functionaries of decadent moribund bourgeois parliamentary system. Alongside, income side of the country's balance sheet would be sought to be improved through increased market borrowings, disinvestment of PSUs and the covert method of printing currency notes. It may be added that the finance ministry and the Reserve bank of India (RBI) are expected to raise around Rs 3.7 lakh crore or around 64% of the Centre's budgeted gross borrowings of Rs 5.79 lakh crore in 2013-14 from market loans during April-September 2013. Disinvestment target is reported to be around Rs 50,000 crore. All these are backdoor means to garner resources at the cost of the common people. With sovereign debt on the rise and as per latest statistics having touched as high as 0.87 trillion US dollars (around 4.4 lakh crores of rupees) to have every Indian including the slimy morasses at the bottom carry a debt burden of 701 US dollars (around Rs 35,000), things could turn harrowing as is seen in the entire Europe today.

## Novel way of fighting inflation

The FM, at the start of his budget, said that his "economic space is constrained" because of,

among other things, "a tight monetary policy to contain inflation". But, people are yet to have any feel of even a measly step, let alone tight, to arrest spiralling inflation. One might chuckle in amusement at the FM's assessment of inflation. While the Survey even spoke of "strong inflation" having "slowed down consumption demand" and held that as a main factor of sliding growth rate, the FM argues in his budget speech that "aggregate demand is cause of inflation", "food inflation that is worrying" and hence there is need to "take all possible steps to augment the supply." In other words, in the textbook language, inflation is stated to be "demand-pulled". Incredible indeed! While the pauperized countrymen are having no means to earn even a square meal a day and recession is gripping the economy in absence of demand, the 'economist' FM holds that demand is increasing so much as to trigger severe inflation. This discovery of the FM is novel and merits recommendation for Nobel Prize! But that is not all. The FM at the same breath says that "agriculture continues to perform very well", and "in 2012-13, total foodgrain production will be over 250 million tones." So, there is no shortage in production. Then, what ails supply? Our "learned" FM has no answer. Supply is constrained not due to any fall in crop yield but because of hoarding, black-marketing, loopholes and irregularities within the administrative machinery, reckless export of some of the items keeping the countrymen starving and increased speculation on price movement of commodities including essential items. The FM, however, is not "worried" on this count nor does he spell out how he proposes to augment supply.

## Curbing black money—not on the FM's agenda

Allied issue is of curbing huge black money stamping around with impunity in the domestic market fuelling inflation. There is not even an iota of reference in budget to either any step to curb generation of black money or recovering at least a part of huge unaccounted money. To put it in simple terms, undisclosed income or wealth on which tax is evaded is black money which is generated through criminal means like unlawful money transactions, understatement of income and property value, smuggling of drugs or arms, bribes,

cut-money taken by politicians and bureaucrats, and so on. This enormous black money is increasing money supply beyond any count, multiplying inflationary pressure, defrauding the exchequer and distorting the economy. In fact, ever swelling black money is running a parallel economy. It is stated that as high as Rs 75, 00, 000 crore of black money, just a fraction of the total in circulation, has been stashed away overseas through dubious means and lying in the personal accounts maintained by Indian industrialists, politicians and bureaucrats for netting further illegal gains. If this huge amount of black money could be brought back to India, even after repaying entire foreign debt in 24 hours, there would be a surplus 12 times larger than the foreign debt which, if invested, would earn an interest more than the annual budget of the Central government. All the taxes could be abolished and by spending only small fractions of this money all Indians could be brought out of the hunger trap, Public Distribution System (PDS) could be universalized, the problems of water treatment, sanitation, waste management, renewable energy, health, education, urban infrastructure and allied fields in the country could be solved.

But to the 'corporate lawyer' FM, who speaks of "fighting inflation on all fronts", adopting stringent measure to rein black money generation and unearth the already accumulated unaccounted money is not on the agenda. Rather, he is busy showing amnesty to the tax evaders. Apart from deferring GAAR as stated above, he has also announced in the budget a 'Voluntary Compliance Encouragement Scheme' for service tax defaulters. A lot of other things like indirect encouragement to foreign entities to dodge tax by choosing Mauritian route, created for round-tripping of large incomes, for investing in India, are all meant to buttress that purpose. It is also worth noting that neither Rs 1.76 lakh crore 2G scam nor Rs 10.67 lakh crore coal auction scandal found any mention in the budget though on account of this, the exchequer has lost potential revenue to the tune of Rs 12.25 lakh crore. Such mammoth defrauding of public exchequer is thus non-event to the FM, his government and their lackeys feigning concern at yawning budget deficit.

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# Comrade Tarun Mandal, MP, SUCI(C) in Parliament

## On railway Budget

Participating in the debate on the Railway Budget 2013, Comrade Tarun Mandal, *inter alia*, said on 7<sup>th</sup> March that this budget is out and out anti-people. It has not only imposed additional burden of increased fare on common passengers through backdoor, but kept provision for suitably revising the tariff upwardly as and when it is so desired on the ostensible plea of fuel cost rise and such other false pretexts. The Railway Minister has also derided the people by going back from his assurance of not hiking the fares further after hefty increase in the tariff just a month back most undemocratically through the route of executive legislation bypassing parliament. The proposal to create a Railway Tariff Authority which will have the statutory power to increase the railway fare and freight any time and would not have any obligation to Parliament is also equally undemocratic. Apart from passenger fare, the Railways also have increased freight charges by around 6 per cent and kept an option to increase the same further through the newly-fangled pretext of 'dynamic fuel adjustment' which would have cascading effect on galloping rise in the prices of essential goods and push up inflation further thereby putting more pressure on common people. The all important issues of passenger safety and amenity have not been addressed save and except some hollow promises. Increased emphasis on PPP model is also a step ahead

towards eventual privatization of railways. As regards augmenting revenue, he mentioned that he had repeatedly said in this House that such could be done by curbing massive corruption, rampant pilferage and huge wastage and economizing the expenditure.

The Sundarbans, which covers most of his constituency, is a world famous heritage site but thoroughly backward. He requested the Railway Minister of state Minister of Railways, Shri Adhir Chowdhury to ensure continuation of the projects like extension of Gosaba-Gatkhali-Jharkhali line, doubling tracks between Ghutiary Sharif and Canning, Joynagar and Namkhana and Magrahat and Diamond Harbour. He also pleaded for for increasing the number of local trains.

## On the atrocities on Tamil population in Sri Lanka

Drawing attention of the House to the barbaric atrocities perpetrated on the Tamil population by the Sri Lankan army, he said that such crimes are in total subversion of all international norms, conventions and covenants of human rights and remind one of the Nazi barbarity, war crimes in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq. He demanded stringent punishment of the Sri Lanka army personnel responsible for such savagery. While demanding this punishment, it is also equally imperative, he said, that similar atrocities on the people of Kashmir, Manipur and other parts of the land be stopped forthwith. He further added that

the ethnicity, language, equality and freedom of the Tamil people of Sri Lanka must be respected and protected by the Sri Lankan government. Suitable compensation to the families of the dead, to the injured must be provided as per international standard and rehabilitation of the displaced and homeless ought to be guaranteed. We know that as in all capitalist countries, the government of Sri Lanka is also trying to break the growing unity of the toiling masses by fomenting narrow sectarian parochial-communal sentiments and pitting one section of the people against another. Indian Government must fulfill its international obligations and ensure that the common citizens of both India and other neighbouring countries live in peace, harmony and honour.

## On the plight of the Hindustan Cables Limited workers

Pointing out the severe plight of the workers of sick Hindustan Cables Limited, a PSU, because of non-payment of due salary and other benefits for last year despite the assurance of the Prime Minister about disbursing all salaries and wages to workers of any sick PSU, he said that probably the nodal Ministry, which in this case is the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises has forgotten the words of the PM and also the clear court verdict in this regard. He demanded immediate release of all dues to the *bona fide* claimants.

# Women determined to wrest their just demands and stand against growing atrocities on them bring out rallies round the country on the International Women’s Day on 8 March



Rohtak, Haryana



Cuttack, Odisha



Jabalpur, M.P.



Ranchi, Jharkhand



Kolkata, WB



Patna, Bihar



Delhi



Kachhar, Assam



Ahmedabad, Gujarat



## AIDSO protests education policies



AIDSO launched a countrywide movement against the education policies of the Union and state governments that shatters education for common people, different programmes were held. In West Bengal massive demonstrations of students of schools-colleges-universities were held on 7 March in Kolkata (above) and in Siliguri against abolition of pass-fail system (i.e., introduction of automatic promotion) up to class VIII in schools, exorbitant fee-hike at all levels of educational institutions and other demands. In both cases, demonstrations were led by all India and state leaders of the organization.

An important agenda of the movement was sending postcards addressed to the prime minister with charter of demands signed over by students individually. Like at other places students were found to be posting those cards in queues at Kanpur (below), UP. Demonstrations in West Bengal have become particularly significant and timely in view of the fact that the TMC-led government is issuing *farmans* or undemocratic orders to prevent school, even college and university students from joining any movement even if the government policies are shattering their education.



## AIDSO demonstrates against leak-out of question papers in Odisha



Opposing leakout of Physics question paper of 12 class examination and demanding exemplary punishment of those responsible for it, AIDSO organized protest rallies round the state. When AIDSO activists and supporters were demonstrating before the residence of the State Education Minister on 9th March, Police resorted to indiscriminate baton charge inflicting grievous injuries to five students and arrested 50 including girls. Comrades Akshay Das, State President and Shibashish Praharaj, State Secretary, AIDSO led the demonstration.

## SUCI (C) deplored further hike in petrol-diesel, called for powerful movement to rescind the move

Strongly deploring the decision to impose another hike in the prices of petrol-diesel by the oil companies in exercise of what is called newly bestowed price-freedom by the government, Comrade Pravash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), in course of a statement issued on 16 February, 2013, said that the Congress-led UPA government in utter disregard to the escalating burden of spiralling price rise on the people has virtually made it a practice to daily raise domestic fuel tariff under this or that false pretext. The so-called freedom granting to the profit making behemoths fraudulently holding the figure of notional under-recovery as incurred loss is in fact a euphemism for total decontrol of fuel prices which, once implemented full-fledged, would tear the pauperized countrymen into pieces, added Comrade Ghosh. While dangling the carrot of marginal increase in the slab of direct taxation in the coming budget, rolling out this sinister plan of total decontrol slated to fuel escalation of indirect taxation is a clever ploy to shield the policy of triggering price spiral in subservience to the vile class interest of the ruling monopolists trying to prolong its mutilated existence descending hell upon the oppressed multitude, said Comrade Ghosh.

Comrade Ghosh called upon the fuming countrymen to close their rank and build up countrywide powerful resistance movement organized from the grass roots level pending which this savage attack would accentuate and strangle them with yet more ferocity.



SUCI (Communist) activists in a Joint Demonstration against Central Budget, Railway Budget, hike of price of petroleum products and the state transport fare hike at Apna Bazar Circle of Laldarwaja of Ahmedabad on 6 March, 2013

## “Morcha” — Urdu organ of SUCI (C) launched in Kolkata



On 5 March, the 60th death anniversary day of Comrade Stalin, great leader of international communist movement, “Morcha”, Urdu organ of SUCI(C) was launched in Kolkata. Comrade Soumen Basu, Member, Central Committee and West Bengal State Secretary, formally released the inaugural issue. Speaking on the occasion, Comrade Basu said that this publication, now to be brought out every month, would fulfil, to some extent the need of communicating the thoughts and teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, eminent Marxist thinker of the era, to the Urdu-speaking community. Dr. Nehal Ahmed, well-known social worker, observed that when the media is suppressing the truth, “Morcha” which in Urdu means boldly rising against injustice, would help articulating the voice of the people. Also present on the occasion were Shri Sayeed Hassan, noted teacher and Smt. Prem Sharma, former Vice-principal of Jalan School.

# Increased burden on people, plethora of sops to domestic and foreign monopoly capital

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## Drastic cut in subsidy and public welfare

Naturally when pledge-bound to let off the rich, affluent, fortune makers, criminals, thugs, punters, squanderers of public fund, bribetakers, hoarders, blackmarketers and of course profiteering propertied class and capitalist owners, the FM has no other course but to slay the slain and make people victim of escalated fiscal savagery. To “create economic space and find resources to achieve the objective of inclusive development”, the FM has announced drastic cut in subsidy. Oil subsidy has been slashed from Rs 96, 880 crore to Rs 65,000 crore which means fuel prices would rise continuously to push up the prices of essential items on a sustained basis. But, according to the FM and the Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, if prices shot up, people would purchase less fuel and thus save good amount of foreign money needed to import oil. Whacking knowledge about economics and economization no doubt! They mean to say that poor peasant would stop using diesel for running pump sets for irrigation, passengers would travel on foot being unable to meet increased bus-railway fare, people would eat less and dress scantily as prices of essential items would soar following rise in transport cost. Thus, “austerity” on the part of penury-stricken masses would save valuable foreign exchange to give economy a boost though the ministers-bureaucrats-executives would continue to spend lavishly from public exchequer for their own comfort, luxury and perks. So, these privileged “economic experts” of the exploitative ruling class has reduced fuel, fertilizer, food subsidy, taken together, from Rs 2, 47, 854 crore in 2012-13 to Rs 2, 20, 971 crore on the plea of reducing budget deficit. It is reported that to achieve the current projected fiscal consolidation of the government, estimated reduction in subsidies would be to the tune of Rs 1, 66,824 crores. In tune with the policy of gradual reduction in expenditure towards public welfare, grants towards education and healthcare are also effectively curtailed. For example, allocation of Rs 27, 258 crores for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rs 37,330 crore for healthcare fall far short of requirement. Moreover, the allocations for health, rural

development and education are lower this time as a proportion of GDP. Economic Survey also admits that public expenditure on health and education remain abysmally low by international standards.

Similarly, substantial hike in Railway fare is a severe blow to the common people. The Central Committee of our Party, in a brief statement criticizing the Railway budget, had shown that after imposing steep hike in passenger fare and freight charges a month back through the most undemocratic executive legislation route bypassing parliament, the Union Railway budget defrauded the countrymen once more by further hiking fares and charges and indicated periodic rise commensurate with fuel price movement as well as eventual privatization of Railways by increased recourse to PPP (private public partnership) model.

It is thus clear that while granting limitless waivers and exemptions to the corporate sector and millionaires and billionaires is considered as prudence and part of fiscal consolidation, keeping eyes shut on the black money generation as economic dynamism and allowing speculators and price manipulators to thrive as market friendliness, giving subsidy to certain key areas is presumed as otherwise avoidable luxury. What would one call this? Evil intent, impishness, devilry or declaring war against people?

## Defence budget continues to soar

Similarly, despite unraveling of a series of mega-scam involving purchase of military hardware and ancillaries, the FM has increased most unproductive defence budget to Rs 2, 03,672 crore—almost 40% of fiscal deficit. The FM has also assured “the House that constraints will not come in the way of providing any additional requirement”. Alas! He does not feel it necessary to give any such assurance if the question is of giving some relief to the oppressed and distressed countrymen. We know he cannot because of definite reasons. It could be seen that immediately after budget announcement, a section of the bourgeois economists and commentators criticized so meagre allotment for military.

According to them, though our military strength needs augmentation to ensure requisite deterrence against both China and

Pakistan, the budgetary allocation pales in comparison to that of China. It is pertinent to note that while the country’s people want legitimate settlement of border and all other disputable issues with the neighbouring countries through peaceful means and mutual dialogue, the Indian ruling class in its petty class interest is intentionally dilly dallying and lingering all such matters. Rather, it is covertly fomenting a war psychosis and making people believe that the country is under threat of external attack and hence is needed upgradation of military power. This is far from truth. History vouches for the fact that if the country really faces any external threat, it is not mercenary army of the oppressive capitalist state, but the people of the land based on granite-strong unity, imbued with true patriotic fervour and aroused by higher and nobler ideology who would provide effective resistance and defend country’s sovereignty. So, raising military budget in capitalist India by snatching morsel of the multitude has nothing to do with people’s interest but is out and out anti-people move. In fact, the ruling Indian monopolists aspiring to emerge as a formidable military super-power not only in Asia but at international level are continuously upgrading and sophisticating its arsenal curtailing public expenditure. Also, to stimulate sagging capitalist economy, Indian ruling class has no option but to resort to increased militarization of economy. These are the reasons behind regular hike in defence budget keeping people starving and reel under price spiral. But, except lone MP of SUCI (C) in present parliament, this sinister motive is not unmasked rather lent credence to by the entire opposition including the pseudo-Marxists.

## FM’s “sops” to the people

The “learned” FM and the bourgeois economists and financial analysts might take umbrage at this. “Who says”, they may contend, “that the FM has kept the vast masses of the people out of the ambit of benefits?” “There are so many proposals to materialize financial inclusion”, they might scream. So, we have to take note of those novelties in the budget. “Financial inclusion has made rapid strides. All scheduled commercial banks and all RRBs are on core banking solution (CBS) and on the electronic payment systems (NEFT

and RTGS). We are working with RBI and NABARD to bring all other banks, including some cooperative banks, on CBS and e-payment systems by 31.12.2013”, claimed the FM in his budget speech. That means, modernization of bank operations would realize the object of “inclusive growth” no matter whether the semi-starved, semi-nude pauperized millions who constitute majority of the citizenry have even a pittance to keep in the banks.

As regards job creation, allocation under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme (MGNREGS) is same as it was in the last year’s budget. But, the funds are not fully utilized for the purpose stated nor is there any demand for increased allocation. The ministry of rural development’s data shows that in 2009-10, MGNREGS created 284 crore person-days of work. The next year it was 257 crore and it further fell to 216 crore in 2011-12. Is it because rural poor do not need job? No, not that. While the declared purpose of the scheme was ensuring livelihood security of the poor and jobless particularly in rural areas, it is now used only when administration feels that there is a need for undertaking asset-creating jobs in the countryside like enhancing soil productivity and water availability. So, availability of work under MGNREGS has become seasonal, typically occasion-based and hence deviated from the declared object. And reported embezzlement of MGNREGS funds by a corrupt nexus of corrupt administration-panchayats-police-criminals-ruling party goons and leaders as also denial of due wage to actual beneficiaries has now become legendary. The FM, however, feels that everything is hunky-dory in this field. His prescription of job creation is now not in the industries as gainful need-based remunerative engagement but in temporary unorganized construction work offering low incomes and little social protection. But we know that if the government really desired, it could, like the period immediately after independence, create sizeable job in establishing more number of efficiently run industries under state sector like ONGC, NTPC, etc. But without treading that path, the government is allowing the private monopolists to swallow the existing PSUs through disinvestment route.

And then there are stunts

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# Resist savage fiscal assault by developing powerful people's movement

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beyond compere! "To empower women and keep them safe and secure", the FM has proposed a Rs 1,000 crore "nirbhaya" fund without spelling out anything about its utilization fields and methods. Is it that he visualizes increasing crime and violence on women and hence the fund for giving doles to the victims? Queer indeed! Equally ludicrous is the proposal to open a Women's bank to serve women exclusively. It does not require much of intelligence to understand that these are all cunning ploys to divert attention from the real cause of growing rape, sexual assaults and other atrocities on women and diffuse the movement crystallizing centring on the ghastly Delhi gang rape case.

## Hoax of Direct Benefit Transfer

Next is the much-hyped "Direct Benefit Transfer" (DBT) scheme which, the FM claims, "has captured the imagination of the people, especially the poor." On the plea the present practice of providing food and some other essential items at subsidized rate through public distribution system (PDS) is flawed because of pilferage and rampant corruption, the government last year floated DBT to directly transfer the monetized subsidy component to the beneficiary's bank account who, the government says, can then use the same to buy services from the market. "When we say 'Aapka paisa aapke haath' (Your money, in your hands), why should anyone oppose it", observes the FM in his budget speech. Sorry Sir! One cannot rejoice a bluff. DBT is conceived as an Aadhaar-Enabled Cash Transfer (AECT) project. But, there are diverse opinions on the very justifiability of implementation of Aadhaar. Apprehensions about the very project being ill-motivated are also sounded based on international experience. Moreover, there are implementation hiccups as well. Secondly, most of the rural poor has no bank account nor are there bank branches everywhere. The government claims that these problems would be overcome through a system of "branchless banking" for which a band of banking correspondents (BCs) would be recruited in rural areas. According to the government, cash transfers could be withdrawn in rural areas through BCs, who would use Aadhaar-enabled

biometric devices or mobile phones to authenticate beneficiaries. It goes without saying this is destined to open another floodgate of corruption as mostly village headmen, moneylenders and fertilizer dealers would enroll themselves as BCs and corner benefits by wielding power. In March 2011, an internal circular of the State Bank of India noted that the BCs were "found to indulge in malpractices, such as asking for unauthorized money, over and above the bank's approved rates of charges from the customers". The Finance Ministry was investigating BCs "demanding thousands of rupees in deposits" from account holders. So, how that is there would be 'direct transfer of benefits' without intermediation of corrupt middlemen and extortion? In fact, all these have been vindicated in the abject failure of the pilot project of DCT launched in December, 2011 in Kotkasim village in Alwar district of Rajasthan. So much was their hardship that the residents of Kotkasim wanted the scheme to be extended to all parts of the state so that everyone suffered like they did and realized what cruel joke it has been to the people. And the shameless FM states that he sees "smiling faces and happiness on the faces" of the DBT recipients. In fact, such deceptions are manufactured in such a manner as to look like 'radical innovations' to provide relief to the masses. Apparently, it would appear how sincere the government is in cleansing the system of aberrations and benefit the toiling masses. But surreptitiously, the whole aim is to deprive the masses of even whatever rudimentary benefits they were hitherto receiving, expose them to further distress and difficulties, squeeze out every drop of their blood with more cruelty and snatch their morsel to swell the coffer of the oppressive ruling class through backdoor. These, in fine, are some of the samples of envisaged "inclusive growth" and government's concern for *aam aadmi* (common man).

## Not a single issue of people addressed

It would thus be clear that a while the multitude of poor and have-nots are reeling under soaring price-rise, galloping unemployment, increasing job loss, rising starvation, wrenching hunger and virtual non-access to rudimentary healthcare and education, the Union

Finance Minister, betraying shrewdness of a most astute craftsman of subserving class interest of ruling oppressive capitalism, has presented a budget which addresses only the needs and wants of the industrial houses, corporate sector, big business and MNCs. To camouflage that, subservient economists, columnists and bureaucrats are engaged in creating a smokescreen of 'economic compulsion' and prescribe 'hard-hitting reforms' as the only remedial course to rescue a sinking economy. Noteworthy is the fact that while economy is guided, operated and led to total disarray by the government and its pliant pundits couching rigmaroles, delirium and all nonsense in high-sounding phrases and jargons to shield the reality, it is the common pauperized people who are asked to bear the brunt. Lest the people should refuse to obey, it is felt necessary to come out with certain deceptive schemes to befool them. So, there is nothing for a common man to expect from the budget except a fresh dose of derision, deprivation and ruthless economic oppression.

## Sinister conspiracy of capitalism must be foiled

This clearly shows that the budget is no panacea, not even an iota of endeavour to mitigate people's growing hardship. Rather, it is fraught with ill motives, teems in utter falsehood and deceptions. It is a class budget, budget of the corporate sector, budget of the oppressive ruling monopolists, budget of exploitative finance capital and hence is, in fact, a brazen attack on the life and livelihood of the people. Unfortunately, there is no one in the country except SUCI(C) guided by the illuminating thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh to make people aware of this sinister conspiracy of capitalism and indicate the remedial course. It is only expected that the parties and forces owing allegiance to ruling capitalism like the Congress, the BJP and other regional bourgeois petty-bourgeois parties would not bring to the fore the dubious game of the ruling class behind the so called reform agenda. Rather, they would hold brief for them, overtly and covertly, save and except certain show of select opposition for public consumption and score over each other in cornering votes. To be illustrative, though the so called economic liberalization was

rolled out by the Congress during its tenure in the 1990s, the BJP government which was installed in power also carried out the same agenda. Even many items of the package of reforms now being implemented like FDI in retail were initiated during the BJP regime. But what is most noticeable is that the self-styled Marxists-leftists like the CPI (M), CPI are also sailing in the same boat notwithstanding their posing themselves as big critics of the government policies. Even while admonishing the government for one after another anti-people reforms, the CPI (M), CPI take every care to see that the target is the ruling party only and not ruling capitalism as if the party in power is doing all these things of its own and a change in the government would bring all relief to the people. This is typical of any political party vying with others to grab the seat of power by playing to the gallery. In fact, many of these economic reforms like inviting FDI, setting up Special Economic Zones (SEZs), imposing additional cess and taxes on common people while granting plethora of concessions and exemptions to the industrial houses, commercialization and privatization of key sectors etc. have been followed by the pseudo-Marxists and their associates when in power in some states. Because, like the bourgeois outfits, these self-proclaimed Marxists have also been in the race for appeasing the ruling class for pelf and power. Hence, they are also keeping a watch that the wrath and indignation of the suffering people are never channelized towards anti-capitalism nor could there develop any conscious sustained powerful organized movement against the ruinous economic reforms. This treachery of the pseudo-Marxists is enabling the ruling class and its trusted circle to press people under the grinding wheel of ruthless capitalist oppression through economic policies of globalization-liberalization. SUCI (C) appeals to the people to realize that this budget is not only anti-people but is blue-print of a murderous economic attack in the offing. So, it is incumbent on them to achieve their just demands by building up powerful organized movement and resist this onrush of capitalist economic reforms under pressure of movement and isolate the pro-capitalist forces which are working as hand-maiden of the ruling class in making their life a nightmare.

## **SUCI(C) expresses profound grief at the demise of Comrade Hugo Chavez, President of Venezuela and expresses hope that the people of Venezuela will unwaveringly carry forward his glorious-legacy of fighting the US imperialists**



Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), has issued the following statement on 6 March, 2013 :

We express profound grief at the passing away of Comrade Hugo Chavez, President of Venezuela and a great anti-imperialist fighter. His consistent, courageous and uncompromising battle against the sinister designs, hegemonism and machinations of US imperialism, against the exploitation and oppression of the people of not only Venezuela but entire Latin America till the last breath of his life and his laudable role as President in providing many notable reliefs to the people of Venezuela will remain

ever alive in the minds of the millions and millions of toiling people of the world and work as a powerful source of inspiration in their struggle against imperialism, more particularly US imperialism. We pay our glowing tribute to the memory of this valiant anti-imperialist fighter and an outstanding leader of the people of Venezuela and hope that the people of Venezuela will unwaveringly carry forward his glorious -legacy of fighting the US imperialists tooth and nail and spread it out in all the countries of Latin America.

## **SUCI(C) strongly opposes government's decision to lower age of sexual consent to 16 years**

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(C), has issued the following statement on 15 March, 2013:

We strongly oppose the decision of the Government of India to lower the age of sexual consent to 16 years which, instead of abating the rising graph of sexual crimes and violence, particularly juvenile crimes, perversion among the teenagers, rapes and gang rapes, moral turpitude, eve-teasing, stalking and public disrobing of women and voyeurism, would only propel further growth of such ghastly acts and gross wrongdoings and accentuate moral degradation. When the need has been to take stern action against sexual offenders, promoters of obscenity and vulgarity in media and through films, pornographic literatures, fashion shows and plug the sources of such widespread sex-perversion and promiscuity, the government in the sinister class interest of the ruling bourgeoisie fomenting and pandering to all kinds of depravity and degeneration to prolong its mutilated existence by destroying the moral backbone of the people, particularly the youth and even the adolescents, is only taking measures to add fuel to the fire. It is also disquieting to note that the opposition parties including the pseudo-Marxists are remaining passive, if not indulgent onlookers to such a heinous move of the government.

We call upon all right-thinking people to rise in organized protracted protest movement against this vile decision of the government.

## **IACC expresses its grief at the demise of President Hugo Chavez**

Comrade Manik Mukherjee, General Secretary, International Anti-imperialist Coordinating Committee (IACC) released the following condolence message on 6 March, 2013 :

The demise of Commandant Hugo Chavez, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, after a long and heroic battle against cancer has come as a great shock to the people fighting against imperialism all over the world. President Hugo Chavez was a valiant crusader against imperialism, particularly against the imperialist machinations of USA. His resolute fight against imperialism has inspired the freedom-loving people of all countries and has roused the Latin American people to take a spirited stand against US aggression. He led the Venezuelan people in the struggle to defend their national sovereignty and to fight against imperialist aggression, oppression and injustice. IACC expresses its profound grief at his demise and conveys its heartfelt condolences to the Venezuelan people, his family and his Party, the United Socialist Party of Venezuela, for their great loss. In this tragic hour we stand in solidarity with the people of Venezuela, and renew our pledge to uncompromisingly fight against imperialism and its aggressive acts.

## **Gwalior SUCI (C) organized movement against privatization of electric power supply and fake inflated electricity bills**

On 23 February 2013 the Gwalior unit of SUCI(C), organized a massive protest demonstration against the proposed privatization of electricity in Gwalior by 1 September 2013. To prepare the ground for privatization, the MP State electricity corporation is sending fake inflated bills to the poor slum dwellers. After wide door to door campaigning and numerous street corner meetings, rallies were organized from different areas towards the office of the General Manager, Central Province Power Distribution Company, Gwalior region, which turned into a sit in demonstration in front of office gate. Hundreds of people from all walks of life including women took part in the demonstration. Addressing the demonstration as the main speaker, Comrade Pratap

Samal Delhi State Secretary, SUCI(C), urged upon the people to stand united and fight against the despotic attitude of Electricity Company and onslaught of privatization and commercialization of essential services by the government. He expressed the confidence that, if the people fight united and build movement against the privatization of electricity, the administration can be forced to withdraw the move. A memorandum demanding the withdrawal of fake bills and all the fake court cases and to stop privatization of electricity was handed over to the General Manager of the company, at the demonstration venue. The demonstration ended with a firm resolve to continue the movement and make it more widespread to ultimately stop the privatization.



*Demonstration of part-time teachers of college and universities at the gate of the West Bengal Assembly on 8 March, with their long standing demands of recognition and appointment as full-time teacher, proper pay-scale etc. was not only refused any hearing by TMC ministers but brutally assaulted by the police with 76 teachers arrested. The teachers pledge for continuation of movement.*

## **Commemorating the great martyr Chandrasekhar Azad at Durg, Chhatisgarh on February 27, 2013**



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH