

# Proletarian Era

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## Introduction of Sex Education in Schools : Latest Bourgeois Offensive Against Culture, Ethics and Morality

### Capitalist-Imperialist Design Behind Introduction of Sex Education

In 1993, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) organized a seminar to highlight the growing danger of AIDS/HIV and announced that to acquaint the students with this danger sex education would be introduced at the school level. It called this 'adolescence education', and brought out a set of books on this issue. In one of them it is stated, "...demand has gained momentum in view of the growing problems relating to sexual behaviour of adolescents and the AIDS pandemic has an element of urgency to it." Since 1999, NCERT in collaboration with the AIDS Prevention and Control Societies organized seminars in different states. The Education Departments of different states along with NGOs working on AIDS control campaigns also organized many orientation courses for school teachers. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education-2000 (NCFSE) set up by the NCERT during the BJP rule at the centre strongly recommended introduction of sex education in schools in view of the problem we are facing in this phase of globalization, namely, teenage pregnancy, sex and drug related crimes and violence, AIDS etc. The Council of the Boards of Secondary Education prepared a package on adolescent education and framed the new curriculum that would teach the students about human reproductive system and that includes chapters on understanding the special needs of the growing body, sexuality, vulnerability of adolescent girls, sexual abuse and violence and the

ways to combat it. The package has been adopted by 17 state education boards. West Bengal would be one of the first states to introduce sex education from the current academic year under the pompous name of 'lifestyle education'.

The impetus for all these endeavours came from a World Health Organization Report in 1991 which projected that during 1981-1990 the number of AIDS/HIV-infected persons would be about 40 million, one fourth of which would be children and 90 percent of the patients would be found in the third world countries. Based on this report the World Bank sponsored AIDS Control and Prevention Programmes in third world countries, and this has been introduced in our country also. In 1994 in the International Conference on Population and Development with delegations from 179 countries finalized a programme which urged all countries to "protect and promote the rights of adolescents to reproductive health education, information and care." The Governments are "to establish appropriate mechanisms to respond to the special needs of adolescents."

With strong encouragement from these international bodies and support of the ruling class the central and state governments are bent on introducing sex education at school level. But there has been strong public resistance against this policy. Parents, guardians and many eminent citizens have expressed their concern about the harmful effects on the young minds of such education imparted in schools.

There has been an outcry from teaching communities which have rejected the proposed books as virtual pornography and have expressed their abhorrence to teach such materials to their students. Faced with this public resistance some state governments e.g. of Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat have for the time being suspended the implementation of this programme. Strong opposition has been voiced in other states too. Our party SUCI, the students' organization AIDSO, the women's organization AIMSS have been in the forefront of these protest movements.

The protagonists of the governmental policy argue that sexual curiosity arises naturally in young boys and girls along with physiological development during adolescence. But if the subject is kept under cover, hush-hush, the young would satisfy their curiosity in a secret way, would indulge in abnormal or perverted practices and get addicted to pornography. In their view the only way to save our children is to give them proper education about sexual matters and to teach them at school about sexual hygiene, responsible sexual behaviour, and how to protect themselves from sexual violence.

We have to look critically at these arguments and judge how valid they are. This is not the place to go into a discussion about the reasons for the spread of AIDS or the politics of the AIDS Control Campaigns. But even the Government statistics on AIDS

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## SUCI condemns Rajasthan Government's firing on agitating Gujjar people

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in course of statement issued on May 30, 2007 strongly condemned the way BJP-led Rajasthan government in a fascistic manner opened fire on the agitating Gujjar people who were demanding inclusion in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category, killing 13 on the spot and grievously injuring over 100. The Gujjar people, observed Comrade Mukherjee, have been campaigning for the last six years to press for reservation under ST category and only after failing to elicit any tangible response from the government that they have taken the path of movement. Comrade Mukherjee severely indicted the Rajasthan government for not taking any initiative on time to amicably settle the issue through across-the-table talk with the agitators and instead preferring to stain its hands with their blood. Comrade Mukherjee also drew attention of all to the fact that while scope of employment is fast dwindling in crisis-ridden capitalism, the ruling bourgeoisie in order to confuse and divide the toiling masses is pandering to worst forms of casteism-communalism and thereby fomenting both pro-reservation and anti-reservation mentalities so that one community is pitted against the other over the quota issue, engaged in fratricidal bloodbath and thus the real cause of massive unemployment ever remains obscured and obfuscated. And the servitors of the ruling bourgeoisie like the BJP, Congress as well as the pseudo-lefts are all trying to entangle the people with this warped

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# Sex-related vices stemming from decadent imperialist culture

*Contd. from page 1*

infection and on the sections of population that are most vulnerable bring out the hollowness of the argument that people ignorant about sexual matters contract the disease. Statistical data do not bear out that the disease is most rampant among the adolescents and is transmitted among them because they are engaged in unbridled and unsafe sexual activity. In fact a large number of AIDS patients acquired the disease through blood transfusion, but still the illicit business of recycling of clinical instruments like injection needle or syringe are thriving. There is virtually no attempt to prevent that. Moreover, compared to AIDS very common and curable diseases like tuberculosis, enteric diseases, or malaria are claiming millions of lives each year but almost no fund or concern is there to combat these diseases. This raises question about whether it is the desire to save human lives that is behind the Governments' zeal to implement the AIDS control programme or to introduce sex education in schools.

Secondly, it is a fact that licentious behaviour, promiscuity, anarchy in sexual life, sex-related crimes and violence, spread of pornography, sexual abuse of children are increasing in our society. But is it because of lack of sex education at schools? Then why are such problems rampant and are on the rise in the western countries where sex education has been introduced and sexual knowledge is more freely available than in our country? Take the case of USA. The US Sex Information and Education Council introduced sex education in schools in 1964. But the results are contrary to their expectation. Many sociologists blame the imparting of sex education at schools for the heightened sexual activity, abortions and high rate of sexually transmitted diseases among the teenagers. A 2000 Report shows that 56 per cent of the girls and 73 per cent of the boys indulge in sexual activity before they reach adolescence. The rate of increase of sexual activity, teenage pregnancy, unwanted motherhood and sex-related violence was so sharp that the authorities had to open abortion centres in many school premises and provide pills and condoms to the girls and boys. In Britain where sex education was introduced in 1973, a 1998 statistics shows that

out of 1000 girls in the age group of fifteen to eighteen 65 become pregnant, and the rate was increasing at 4 per cent per year. In France, unwanted pregnancies have become so common in schools that the Government has decided to distribute contraceptive pills in schools. The western countries introduced sex education to get rid of such problems. But not only have these remained unsolved, they have become more acute and pervasive.

## **Sex-related Social Problems – Result of Crisis in Values**

History shows that sex-related problems depend on socio-economic conditions and cultural-moral values prevalent in the society and not on the level of sexual knowledge. It is the decadent imperialist culture which is at the root of sex-related vices. We cite here a few examples. In USA the percentage of HIV-infected population is more than 0.61 per cent, but in socialist Cuba, which is geographically close to USA and is much poorer, it is less than 0.1 per cent; in other Latin American countries the percentage is much higher. In pre-revolution China sexually transmitted diseases (STD) were as prevalent as in other third world countries, but after revolution socialist China gradually advanced to eradicate STD through implementation of well-planned socialist socio-economic programmes. During the Great Depression of the 1930s sociologists observed that in USA though the use of medicines for STD had doubled, the rate of increase of the patients was also doubled. On the other hand, as many western medical specialists had testified, socialist USSR had totally eradicated STD. Dyson Carter, a well known Canadian journalist described in his book "Sin and Science" the basic difference between capitalist USA and socialist USSR on the question of eradication of STD. The US experts laid stress only on the biological factors, whereas the Soviet experts primarily stressed the socio-economic factors, the cultural-ethical standards and their psychological bearings. Capitalism, with self-interest as the motor of all individual and social actions encouraged unrestrained sex. This was the underpinning of US-kind of sex education. On the other hand, socialism, inculcating social interest

as the prime essence of life, encouraged aesthetic approach to sex life. So in socialism, dealing with problems related to sex was entrusted to the health-care units. That is why, Anton Makarenko, a great educationist of the early period of Soviet Union, opposed introduction of sex education at school level and suggested for continuous efforts for elevation of moral and ethical standard of the people in general and students in particular, in course of the socialist reconstruction.

Sexual aberrations, sexual anarchy, crimes related to sex, sexual abuse of children - both girls and boys - , pornography, drug abuse and prostitution has spread like wildfire not only in our society, but throughout the world. More and more the students and youths are falling victims to these vices. Every day in the newspapers we read horrific stories of rapes, of even school children indulging in sexual crimes and violence, getting addicted to pornography etc. Social scientists and medical practitioners in the advanced capitalist countries and also in our country are worried at increasing sexual promiscuity among the teenagers. Incidents of young unwanted motherhood and abortion are on the rise. Along with this there is a constant barrage of propaganda about the menace of AIDS/HIV. Quite naturally, all these dangerous trends are today haunting the minds of the parents, guardians and all well-meaning people. They are, therefore, knocking all doors seeking solution of this burning problem.

All students of social sciences are however aware that these problems are social problems and the root of all these problems lies in the given socio-economic-political system. Needless to say that the ugly and pernicious manifestations of sex in different countries are no exception to this. The first point to note in this regard is that some fifty or hundred years ago these problems did not afflict the human society like they are doing now, and there was no sex education then. So the reasons for these problems have to be sought elsewhere. We have to analyse the root cause of these problems on the basis of science and history. We know that human culture is a superstructure on the material base, and hence cultural issues cannot be discussed in isolation without taking into

account the economic and political system in a particular society. What distinguishes man from other animals is man's ability to think. Human thinking leads to perception, conception and ultimately through these processes it gives birth to ideology. Approach, outlook, attitude, choice, desire, likes and dislikes, all are stemming from a particular category of ideology. Idea, positive or negative, guides and controls each and every human action. And in a class divided society any idea is bound to be a class idea. So ideas on sex or approach or attitude towards sex are also class ideas. So a class motive is also acting behind the idea of introduction of sex education in schools. It is the job of a social scientist to find out how a class attitude or a class outlook is reflected through a particular idea. We have to approach the problems related to sex keeping this aspect in view. Primitive man when he was merely hunter-gatherer was little different from animals in his behaviour. As the productive system developed and changed, human society also evolved from the state of primitive clan-communism to slave society, to feudal society, to modern capitalist society, and ultimately to socialist society. In course of the development of human civilization mankind has developed its value system and has continuously elevated it to higher and higher standards. With the advance of human civilization, ideas of self-restraint and responsible social behaviour in the field of sexual instinct and sexual impulse started to grow and to take root in the society in the interest of a healthy social environment and protecting the social fabric. In the feudal society religious values played an important role in this respect. In this society, the ethical standards, the aesthetic sensibilities, human relationship were guided by religious values. When the feudal system was replaced by the capitalist system, the Renaissance movement in the period of developing capitalism brought in a revolutionary change in the cultural field and in the value system. In contradiction to religious values came bourgeois humanism, which fostered new and higher cultural-ethical standards, a new sense of values, new aesthetic sense, and a new form of human relationship.

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# Why did SUCI boycott the so-called all-party peace meeting on Nandigram

On 24th May last, the CPI(M) and its allies in the name of restoring peace in Nandigram convened a so-called peace meeting. Ashok Ghosh, State Secretary, Forward Bloc, a constituent of the CPI(M)-led Front in West Bengal was entrusted with the responsibility of convening the meeting. Accordingly, Ashok Ghosh had a bipartite meeting with Mamata Banerjee, the Trinamul Congress chief and secured her consent to attend such a meet. It was very clear to us that this was a mischievous move on the part of the CPI(M) to cover up the heinous crime it has committed in Nandigram and wash off dirty linen. Trinamul Congress clearly under pressure from the ruling bourgeois class decided to join the meet. Having learnt that Mamata would attend the meeting, the bourgeois press was elated and all focus was on this so-called patch-up effort to bail out the CPI(M) and project Mamata Banerjee as a votary of peace as well as the sole opposition to the CPI(M) in the state.

But we decided to boycott the meeting and expose the 'behind the curtain' game to the people. The bourgeois press expectedly sought to create a big hype about the meeting and blacked out our viewpoint. Detailing the context in which we refused to join the meeting, Comrade Provash Ghosh, Satet Secretary of our party, wrote a letter to the Forward Bloc State Secretary on 23<sup>rd</sup> ultimo which was also released to the press the same afternoon. In the said letter, Comrade Provash Ghosh reiterated what he already told the Forward Bloc State Secretary on 10th May when the latter called up to inform about the possibility of holding the meeting that it was pointless to hold such a meeting in absence of the representatives of the 'Committee for Resisting Eviction from Land' (Bhumi Ucched Pratirodh Committee) which is leading the glorious struggle of the Nandigram people. In Nandigram struggle, there are two opposing sides— the ruling CPI(M) who is the aggressor and offender and the 'Committee for Resisting Eviction from Land' representing the brave Nandigram people fighting to resist the attack. In the circumstances, Comrade Provash Ghosh asserted in no

unequivocal a term, nothing tangible would come out of a meeting on Nandigram where the CPI(M) will have representation but not the 'Committee for Resisting Eviction from Land'. Secondly, Comrade Ghosh pointed out, everyone is aware that in order to crush the peasants' movement in Nandigram, the CPI(M) leaders and the state government have repeatedly unleashed barbaric fascist assaults by mobilizing armed criminals and huge contingents of police forces from various other districts. Three were killed in the barbaric attack let loose on 7th January. Again on 14th March, the police and the criminals wearing police uniform pounced upon the struggling peasants and opened up indiscriminate firing killing and grievously injuring many more. The village women were gang raped by these police-criminal assailants. The Chief Minister in order to justify this mass killing and rape first claimed that the police fired in self-defence. Later, faced with severe protest and downright condemnation from the people of both the state and outside the state, he in a typical theatrical manner tried to play down the matter by shamelessly uttering in front of his own partymen in a meeting, 'I have committed a mistake, I own the responsibility'. But so far the state administration has not arrested even one single person responsible for the mass killing or gang rape, let alone punishing them, mentioned Comrade Ghosh. For all this, the CPI(M) leadership and state government have lost all credibility not only to the Nandigram people but to the entire people of the state. In view of that, Comrade Ghosh once again pointed out that any meeting of the kind proposed would be of no avail unless

- 1) All those accused of murder and rape are arrested
- 2) Exemplary punishment meted out to all the police officers in whose presence and under whose orders have all these murders and rape taken place.
- 3) All the camps erected at Khejuri area adjoining Nandigram to house criminals and from where firing and hurling of bombs are being resorted to regularly are dismantled immediately and the firing as well as bombing

stopped forthwith.

- 4) All false cases lodged against the movement activists are withdrawn.
- 5) The injured are provided proper medical treatment.
- 6) Adequate compensation given to the families of those killed and injured.

But comrade Provash Ghosh expressed his grave concern over the fact that the meeting was being convened without any of the aforesaid necessary tasks having been undertaken and without any invitation to the 'Committee for Resisting Eviction from Land'. Even no invitation had been extended to the parties connected with the movement but not having any representation in the assembly. Similarly the various mass organizations and the agitating intellectuals and artists were left out. As a result, the people of the state were not only upset with the proposed all-party meet but even were apprehensive on many counts as to :-

1) When the CPI(M) leadership and the state government were being impeached in the people's court, abhorred and despised by one to all in the state and the country for committing such carnage and mass-rape, would not this move before the ensuing Panchayat elections virtually help them to salvage their sullied image by posing as if they were taking real initiative to establish peace in Nandigram? Moreover would not this in the interest of the CPI(M) place the attacker and the attacked, the rapists -murders and those raped and murdered on the same category?

2) Though the Court had not given any order whatsoever prohibiting arrest of the accused, yet by squandering away time in the name of holding such meetings as well as advancing the plea that the matter was 'sub judice' and the report of the administrative enquiry not yet released, would not the entire crime be hushed up and the criminals spared of any punishment — something that has become customary with the CPI(M) criminals in this state? There are more questions involved. For example,

i) For the last few months, the People of Nandigram have been shedding their blood and sacrificing

life to stall entry of the attacking police force and the CPI(M) criminal brigade in Nandigram. With the strength and morale of the movement being so high, no one could say that in absence of police law and order was endangered in Nandigram — something which could not be said about any other district or police station area stuffed with several battalions of police. In the circumstances, the whole endeavour would be that in the name of bringing back those who had left their homestead out of fear, the CPI(M) criminals who after committing the horrendous crime on 14<sup>th</sup> March had to flee alongwith their families to evade mob fury and who were being claimed by the CPI(M) as 'deserters' would be thrust inside under police protection to precipitate fresh terror in the region. The movement activists had, however, already announced that except the persons accused of perpetrating the crime, all other members of their families could come back and stay at their houses. Their safety and security would be fully assured. In fact many had already come back. In spite of that, the CPI(M) leadership by concocting and sustaining the issue of 'rehabilitating deserters' was creating confusion in public mind and under cover of that was weaving a fresh scheme of attack. It could, therefore, be said with all certainty that this meeting would also be used by the CPI(M) for the same purpose.

Under the circumstances, Comrade Provash Ghosh mentioned in emphatic term, by attending the so-called 'peace meeting' our party could not betray the oppressed and repressed peasants of Nandigram, the people of West Bengal and particularly the kith and kin of those killed and injured as well as the raped mothers and sisters. Hence we decided to skirt the meeting and Comrade Ghosh informed the same to the Forward Bloc state secretary. Comrade Ghosh also added that we did not have any obligation whatsoever to the domestic and foreign industrial houses that under their pressure we would have to join this meeting throwing the public interest to the winds.

Every one is aware how this much-hyped meeting abruptly

*Contd. on page 6*

# Sex education will open floodgate of promiscuity to lead the youth away from path of struggle

*Contd. from page 2*

The bourgeois humanist values inspired the people to fight against feudal autocracy, religious dogma and obscurantism. The rising bourgeoisie preached the freedom of the individual, emancipation of women, freedom of love. Bourgeois humanism talked of love being union of minds, based on free choice of two individuals. It said that real love transcends mere physical attraction, it is an ennobling experience involving care, tenderness and mutual respect and spurs the partners to honour their social obligations. This new sense of values and new type of morality cast its influence in the field of sex and started to govern human sex impulse. Sex actions of individuals began to be guided by ethical-aesthetic attitudes and sensibilities. Powerful social movements upheld the concept of restraint and responsible conduct in respect to sex behaviour. The great humanist literature and art wonderfully portray the beauty and aesthetics of the whole mental world built on love between man and woman. It is now established that with respect to human beings, today sex is no longer a mere animal instinct. Human sexual attitude, sex impulse and sex actions are inextricably linked with what idea governs an individual; ideological mooring of an individual and his attitude towards sex cannot be separated from one another; an individual's sexual response is not just biologically controlled, but is mediated and guided by his ethics and culture.

It is from this viewpoint that we have to judge the present crisis in relation to sexual matters; we have to realize that this sexual crisis cannot be discussed in isolation from the moral and cultural crisis engendered by decadent capitalism. We must understand that today capitalism is no longer the progressive force that it was during the Renaissance. Acute crisis has engulfed the capitalist production system, and capitalism is now surviving only through ruthless exploitation of the people. In this changed context bourgeois humanist values are totally exhausted and have become a privilege in the hands of the ruling class for perpetuating its class rule and its exploitative machinery. The

bourgeoisie is mortally afraid of working class revolution and as capitalism is getting more and more mired in deep economic crisis, from its fear complex of revolution the capitalist class is not only suppressing movements arising out of people's resentment, but at the same time it is trying to divert the people's attention by spreading the most vulgar culture which eats into the very vitals of the society and destroy the fighting strength of the people from within. The bourgeoisie have discarded the noble ideas that it once upheld. In all countries the capitalists have targeted their attack in the cultural arena and on the education system which play such an important role in moulding man's thoughts. Long ago Marx said that the bourgeoisie transforms everything, even the most cherished relationship, into a commodity. Today under the slogan of globalization, art, literature, education, health, culture, everything has been converted to tradable commodities. The capitalist class wants to introduce such type of culture and value system which would promote hedonistic attitude, an urge for instant gratification of the base instincts, apathy towards social problems, lack of sense of social responsibility, lack of courage and determination. The imperialists attack not only politically, economically, militarily, but also culturally. Through control over education, print and electronic media the imperialists are destroying the sense of ethics and morality and the cultural fabric of the society. This is giving birth to dehumanized, self-centred, machine-like robots thriving in a consumerist culture.

## Effects of Capitalist Rule in India

If we look at our country we see that sixty years of rule by the Indian bourgeoisie has brought us to the brink of disaster. All pervasive economic crisis is accompanied by rampant hunger and unemployment. Economic disparity has reached unimaginable proportions. The richest people in Asia live here, but the number of people below poverty line is more than 300 million, greater than the population of the United States. We possess nuclear weapons and missiles and are

preparing to send a man to the moon, but our position in the roll of UN Human Development Index is way down in the 127 position among 177 countries. As the people's resentment is growing, the capitalist class, in tune with the capitalists-imperialists throughout the world, is becoming more ruthless in the oppression of the people and in trampling their democratic aspirations, and at the same time it is actively promoting a decadent culture. Pornographic magazines and films are openly promoted. Obscene advertisements occupy pages of newspapers, the prime time in TV channels, and huge roadside billboards. Newspapers are full of titillating stories of the sexual escapades of the famous and not so famous persons. AIDS control campaign advertisements openly sanction having sex at any time, at any place and only counsels to do it safely using condoms. There is alarming rise in the use of drugs and alcohol among the youth and all sections of society. We know that man devoid of self dignity and moral values behaves like a beast. The capitalist class has launched an all out attack to destroy the value system in the society. Our leader, teacher and guide, the great Marxist thinker of the present era Comrade Shibdas Ghosh said long ago that, "...a nation going without food, suffering the worst kind of oppression and exploitation, and half-fed and half-clad for days together can also stand up, fight, acquire the power to combat, organize itself and rise up holding its head high, provided its moral strength remains intact and the people have a correct ideology before them." The bourgeoisie know this very well and that is why they are engaged in a conspiracy to totally destroy the moral character of the nation by promoting a degraded culture. Their ulterior design is to rob the people of their will and strength to fight, so that the struggle that is growing in the society to overthrow the capitalist system does not gather strength. Their policy is to bar the access of the common people to education. They know that real education would arm the people with the knowledge to determine the root cause of their misery and to find out the correct way to come out of it, and this would oust them from their position of power. In the field

of education, on the one hand they are following a policy of curtailment of education to ensure that the people do not acquire the ability to arrive at the truth, and on the other hand they want to design the content of education in such a way that it would impart knowledge only the technical aspects of science, but would not nurture any value system. They want to impart that type of education which would destroy the moral fibre of the nation. By opening the floodgate of sexual stimulation they want to incite the base instincts of man, so that they do not have the strength of character, the strength of mind, the determination to fight against tyranny and oppression. Introduction of sex education in schools is a part of this evil conspiracy. The government is utilizing the concern of the people about sex-related problems among the children and the youth to implement the policy of introduction of sex education in schools. Sex education would directly and indirectly convey to the young mind that instant gratification of the sexual instinct is nothing wrong, only 'safe sex' is to be practiced. Instead of value-oriented, character-building, man-making education which the great personalities of our country dreamed of, the present-day ruling class is conspiring to vulgarize the education system, to use the medium of education to open the floodgate of promiscuity to lead the young people away from the path of struggle.

## Fight the Vulgar Capitalist-Imperialist Culture and Defeat Their Evil Design

About the crisis in moral values of the present-day society Comrade Shibdas Ghosh said, "Whereas the appeal of the old religious moral values have long been completely exhausted and the bourgeois humanist moral values too are almost exhausted, and since the revolutionary ideology and the new moral values of the proletariat are yet to influence the political-cultural movement and the social life adequately, a vacuum has engulfed the field of ideology and morality. This is the root cause of this all-out crisis." Thus the crisis in values that we are witnessing today is a reflection of the crisis in capitalism.

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## Defeat imperialist conspiracy of drowning the children in sex-perversion through motivated curriculum

*Contd. from page 4*

Sexual aberrations among the teenagers are the inevitable outcome of the deliberate action programme of the ruling capitalist class. Therefore we can never come out of these problems without combating and defeating the class design of the capitalists-imperialists.

The question naturally arises about how we can combat this invasion of vulgar imperialist culture and life-style, and their destructive policies. The definite and unambiguous answer is that only the emergence of a new culture and a new ideology can give rise to a higher sense of values which would create among human beings with dignity and self-respect intense hatred against this vulgar culture, pornography and perverted sexual attitudes and practices. Vulgar imperialist culture can only be countered through higher culture, values and ideology. Hence the prime necessity is to give birth to an all-embracing cultural movement at all levels on the basis of new thoughts, ideas and culture. How are we to generate this counter-current of higher culture and ethics? We know that values are born out of struggle, the struggle against injustice, oppression and for a better society. Witness the flowering of culture during the Renaissance and the high moral-ethical values that bourgeois humanism brought in during its uncompromising fight against decadent feudal society. We have seen how the freedom movement in our country inculcated in the youths a sense of social responsibility, moral courage, sacrifice and dedication and inspired them to noble deeds. Ideas of nationalism and national liberation which constituted a progressive ideology in the context of those days guided these movements and gave birth to higher standards of values and morality. But today nationalism has become a weapon in the hands of the ruling bourgeoisie to suppress the people's movements and perpetuate its class rule. Bourgeois ideology has turned out to be out and out reactionary and cannot generate and foster noble characters. Today higher culture, morality and ethics can only be released through struggles for overthrowing the capitalist system which is breeding all social injustice, oppression and tyranny. The class attack of the capitalist-

imperialists has to be combated through class struggle based on higher values and a definite ideology. These higher values can come only from Marxism, the noblest ideology of the present era, which has emerged as a science of all sciences strictly following the scientific and dialectical methodology. This is the ideology which can guide the people in all aspects of life, including sex. As the struggle to overthrow capitalism is growing in the society, out of this struggle a new value system is also emerging, and only through participation in these movements can we be imbued with higher sense of values, ethics and morality to combat the onslaught of imperialism in all fields.

So we see that the problems which are causing so much worry to parents and guardians stem from a crisis in values and cannot be tackled through introduction of sex education, whose introduction will not enhance true knowledge, but only heighten sexual desires, promote the base animal instincts and their immediate gratification. They have to be combated on a different plane by releasing a powerful current of social and cultural movements based on higher ethics and morality. We appeal to all, who want to build a healthy social and cultural environment, who want to create a wonderful world for their children and the youth in general, to come forward and take active part in the movements for overthrowing the capitalist system. Only through such active participation can they assimilate the knowledge and the new culture that is born out of this struggle and thus be instrumental in releasing a powerful, progressive social movement against the cultural decadence fostered by the capitalist-imperialists, which in its course would combat, counteract and ultimately bring to an end this menace. While being engaged in these movements, they will have to raise the demand for secular, democratic, value-oriented, character-building education and for scrapping the policy of introduction of sex education in schools. There is no way other than this painstaking arduous struggle to defeat the imperialist conspiracy of drowning the populace in degraded and vulgar culture.

We also urge the people to note how overzealous the CPI(M) and its

allies are in introducing sex education in schools. They have become the main votaries of the measures for disarming the downtrodden people. The real face of the protectors of capitalism hidden behind the mask of leftism is being clearly exposed. This may have come as a rude shock to many, though this behaviour of CPI(M) is not unexpected. We have discussed many times in these pages how Comrade Shibdas Ghosh held that from their very inception the CPI and the CPI(M) never grew as a true Marxist-Leninist party. We have shown through our analysis how their actions and policies reveal their social democratic nature, how they have always acted as a force of compromise between labour and capital. Their attitude towards sex education once more shows how correct our analysis is about their class character.

### Parents are the Best Teachers to Impart Sex-related Knowledge

It is heartening that throughout India, parents, teachers and eminent citizens are registering their protest against the government's proposal on introduction of sex education. But we notice that even among those, who have an appreciation of the root cause being the crisis of values, and who are vociferous in their protest against the capitalist conspiracy to promote unbridled sexuality through the introduction of sex education, a section feels that some instruction on these issues should be given to the students in an acceptable way obeying the canons of decency, without in any way stimulating the sexual instinct. What we want to stress here is that there should be a clear understanding of the real issues. We have discussed that moribund capitalism is the root of this decadence and vulgarity, and we have to unmask the bourgeois motive behind this policy. Imparting knowledge about sex to the children and youth has a meaning only if it is done in such a way that it plays a role in building up their character, in helping them to acquire a high sense of values. Else there can be no purpose in having that knowledge. Throughout the past, humankind obtained the necessary sexual knowledge from nature, today at an appropriate age there is no difficulty for them to have access to books in which the subject is treated

scientifically. Hence with respect to acquiring necessary knowledge and information with respect to sex no problem was faced in the past. Parents used to play an important role and nowadays the biology of sex is already covered adequately in the secondary school curriculum. We, therefore, feel that there is no need to impart any additional information on the biological or physiological aspects. But human sex life is much more than a purely biological affair; it involves ethics, aesthetics, morality, individual likes and dislikes, individual and social responsibility etc. The content of human relationship in love has changed in the course of human civilization and great artistic works wonderfully portray the aesthetics of this relationship. Who can impart this knowledge and create in the young mind a value system in relation to sex? This has to be individual, specific and the approach will vary from one adolescent to another. Open class room is not the place for it, nor are the teachers properly equipped for the job. We also cannot be oblivious to the fact that in the existing climate of all-round crisis of values in the society, a section of teachers may fall victim to the degraded culture and use the opportunity offered by sex education to sexually exploit the students or give indulgence to sexual stimulation and excitement. There can be disastrous consequences if the responsibility of sex education goes to the wrong people. In our view the children can obtain the necessary information in the best way from their parents and family. Elderly people guided by high sense of values and enjoying the respect of society can in some situations do the job. It has been said that now the parents do not devote enough time to the children. To find a way out of this problem what is needed is to release a movement to make the parents aware of their role and duties to teach the children and inculcate in them a value system. Help may also be taken from the medical fraternity or psychological counselors. It is our task to organize movements involving parents, guardians, teachers and all right-thinking people for creating social awareness on the issues and to find the right path to come out of the problems that are threatening our society.

# SFI's Fascistic Grip over Students' Unions in West Bengal

## A wind of change wafting across after Singur-Nandigram struggle

After the CPI(M)-led front was saddled in governmental power in West Bengal in 1977, free and fair elections to the various students' unions in schools and colleges practically became a thing of the past. The college union polls virtually turned into farce with the SFI, the students' wing of ruling CPI(M), aided and abetted by the CPI(M) and government administration manipulated the results in their favour either by unleashing terror and using muscle power or in connivance with the pliant authorities. The situation became so worse that the general students were losing all interest in participating in the elections and choosing their representatives. Many of them preferred to stay away on the day of election so as to avoid 'trouble' or other forms of harassment including threat and intimidation. But of late there is a perceptible change of the scenario. In the aftermath of the Singur atrocity followed by Nandigram carnage which laid bare the anti-people fascist face of the ruling CPI(M) masquerading as leftist-Marxist and the valiant resistance offered by the peasants there have spurred the student community to come out of their shell and voice their protest against the ruling dispensation. Thus, alongwith the various sections of the society including prominent personalities and intelligentsia, the student community is also could not but overcome all hurdles and hesitation, brave all odds to assert their power in combating and confronting the despots. This is being reflected in the results of elections to the college unions where the SFI is being drubbed by the opposition. This no doubt is a welcome sign. But to understand the significance of this

turn around in the mood and action of the student community, it is necessary to take a closer look into the past and present contextual aspects.

### College Unions evolved to safeguard students' interest

It is well known that the students' unions emerged in the process of democratization of the society to safeguard the democratic rights of the student community and play necessary role in imbuing the spirit of education in discharging social obligations. It was the vanguards among the students who used to take lead in union activities and ensure that these student bodies worked as supplementary to overall enhancement in the standard of education, check to any aberration or retardation and as an instrument of fostering creative faculty among the students. The state has a glorious past of fervent students' movement both during anti-imperialist freedom struggle and anti-Congress left-democratic movement in the post-independence period. Hailed and acclaimed as flowers of Bengal, the students and youth here organized and participated in many memorable movements against attack on education, attempts to retrograde mental process as well as various injustice, oppression and suppression the common people became victim of as a fallout of sinister design and machination of the power that be. During British colonial rule in India, students played an inspiring role in stimulating the freedom struggle, achieving and protecting civil and democratic rights. Great leaders like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Bhagat Singh and many others took active role in building up student

movement and setting up students' unions. Netaji Subhash Chandra, after expulsion from Presidency College, deeply felt the necessity of cementing students' unity to stand firm against any whimsical sermon of the authority intending to align with the forces of reaction. He was the first to take initiative for forming students union in the Scottish Church College. Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh who epitomizes the fervour of youthful vigour and crusade against all injustice and maladies also found college unions extremely effective in uniting the students against social infirmities, aberrancies and vagaries. All these great patriots, luminaries and men of letters during the period our country was in ferment against alien rule also rebutted in their own way the false notion that such unions should be non-political. Rather, they all rightly understood and preached that students must develop necessary political consciousness to combat evil political forces retrograding progress and descending upon people all kinds of oppression and repression to subserve vested interest. Bright students not only enrolled themselves as active volunteers of the freedom movement but also took part in many legitimate social movements and achieved through struggle many democratic rights.

### Post-independence scenario

After independence, the student organizations, mainly leftists, fought against misrule of the Congress government particularly in West Bengal, which along a historic course emerged as the citadel of left-democratic movement. These leftist organizations, which controlled most of the elected student unions, built up many historic movements against many-pronged attack on education. Apart from academic demands, they also fought against various extra-academic anti-people measures of the government like anti-transport fare hike movement, food movement etc. Participation in students' unions and nurturing a left mind was till then considered as manifestation of a progressive mind cherished and adorned in the society. At that time, the AISF, the student arm of undivided CPI was the largest student organization having bulk of student unions under

its command. AIDS0 founded in 1954 to develop militant student movements under the guidance of the illumining thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era, on the edifice of higher proletarian ethics and culture also soon became a significant constituent of leftist students' movement and gained control of a number of unions as well. Apart from the general demands on education that all the leftist organizations had then raised and agitated for, AIDS0, committed to fight for scientific, secular and democratic education for all also raised some extremely pertinent issues like pernicious moves to introduce vocational education, seat restriction scheme and other measures of curtailment of education. Though organizational strength of AIDS0 was then relatively less, the aforesaid demands raised by it in the interest of education had created some definite impact but in academic circle and among the well-meaning thinking people. The AISF, which later split into AISF and SFI, however continued to make some leftist gestures and even conducted some outwardly militant movements to pose as the champion of students' interest. But as the undivided CPI notwithstanding its communist signboard grew as a typical petty-bourgeois outfit and took part in the democratic movements from a reformist-compromising outlook solely to derive electoral mileage, the AISF also participated in the students' movements with the same reformist attitude and intent never allowing the struggles to intensify beyond a certain point so that the ruling class interest is not jeopardized. To some extent, it did succeed in carrying the students riding on the wings of deception. After split, the SFI tried to pretend to be more militant and dominated the scene. But as there was no difference between the CPI(M) and CPI in so far as class character was concerned, the SFI proved to be no different to the AISF in its stance or approach. Rather its has been a policy to be more subservient to bourgeois class interest with a camouflage of sham militancy.

However, notwithstanding some incidents of muscle flexing and other influences including money power being drawn upon to capture

*Contd. on page 7*

## SUCI on all-party peace meeting on Nandigram

*Contd. from page 3*

ended within a short time of its commitment with Mamata walking out of it on the plea that the CPI(M) representatives refused to recognize Nandigram killing as a genocide as if they were expected to do anything to the contrary. News of a fresh meeting is already round the corner. This only corroborates what we had anticipated and apprehended. In

fact, thinking and discerning people have been extremely supportive of our stand. While the vote-based political parties irrespective of hues will work out their stratagem to diffuse the issue by hook or by crook, we shall guided by Marxism-Leninism-Shibdas Ghosh thought leave no stone unturned to take this historic struggle to its logical culmination.

## SFI ensured that no student movement surged against CPI(M) misrule

*Contd. from page 6*

college elections by big rightist and pseudo-left organizations and slow but definite indication of politicization of the unions in the negative sense of the term, there was in relative terms a democratic process being followed then in college elections and students were more or less not debarred from casting their votes according to their will. In the seventies, Chhatra Parishad, the student outfit of the Congress then under autocratic Indira Gandhi [NSU(I) of West Bengal] fired the first salvo against the prevalent democracy in college elections and tried to take hold of the unions in a fascistic way. Though it could not sustain its hold for long, it set precedence as to how the student unions once regarded as centres of selfless social service and platforms of action against injustice could be converted into dens of power-mongering, corruption and abode of a few self-seekers estranged from education and ostracized from any ideology worth the name.

### 1977 and afterwards

In 1977, the CPI(M)-led Front came to power in West Bengal capitalizing on the anti-Congress wave then sweeping across the state. In no time, the Chhatra Parishad was washed out from almost all colleges and universities and the SFI captured the unions. While one thought that with SFI making it to the centrestage things would improve, the reality was just the reverse. Instead of shaping up the student unions as instruments of students' struggle for restoring democratic atmosphere in the campuses and encouraging the extra-curricular social and cultural activities thereby developing a higher democratic consciousness among the students, the SFI began to trample underfoot all the democratic rights of the student community

achieved through arduous struggle during the freedom movement and Congress regime. First casualty was much-vaunted autonomy of the academic institutions. Immediately after coming to power, the CPI(M)-Front government, under the plea of cleansing the wrongdoings of the Congress dissolved all elected academic bodies, subverted autonomy of all universities and colleges and appointed CPI(M) party-men as administrators. Wherever so needed, existing rules were suitably amended to materialize thrusting of CPI(M) men on the governing bodies. Many of these amendments were utterly undemocratic in nature. Beside this, the CPI(M) embarked upon political recruitment in almost all posts from the top to bottom, right from vice chancellor, college principal to non-teaching staff and peon. Within a few years, they completed the course of capturing administrative power of educational institutions in a most undemocratic way that would make even reactionary rightists envious. The SFI openly supported all these undemocratic measures and thus sought to regiment the mindset of the students in favour of an outright anti-people anti-education act. The CPI(M) leaders also gave a free hand to SFI to do any thing, stoop to any level for capturing students union. With the help of administration the SFI, in the name of undertaking union activity started to control admission procedure – distribution of admission forms to issue of identity cards – extracting big-ticket donation from the guardians for securing admission of their wards. In fact, SFI leaders were found to run parallel administration in the schools and colleges with the administration capitulating to their dictates. The authorities were made to serve back dated election notice, non-cooperate with oppositions, distribute nomination papers through SFI controlled union, cancel

valid nomination papers of the oppositions, and pressurize opposition candidates to withdraw nomination papers. Dangling carrot of securing better jobs or better result in the examinations using 'sources' or with the help of pliable teachers or office staff, it created a band of supporters masquerading as students and bereft of any semblance of ethics or morality. These notorious gangs were freely used to gag voice of dissent, manipulate union election results, prevent opponent candidates from filing nomination, threaten common students of dire consequence if they voted for the opposition, threaten and scare away genuine student electorates on the day of poll and resort to large scale violence if so needed to countermand election. Instances were reported when male miscreants raided ladies colleges with deadly weapons, physically assaulting the girl students and outraging their modesty because they did not relent to the pressure of supporting the SFI in the elections. Even the ruling party with the help of its candidate appointed as the principal through backdoor concentrated all its administrative might and coercive means to dislodge an elected union and replace it by an SFI-sponsored panel. This is how it reduced the student union elections into a farce in most of the places. Even the last vestiges of ideological commitment, if any, were wiped out with utmost care.

It is true that the Chhatra Parishad, due to its ideological bankruptcy, could not attract the common students even in early part of the Congress regime. So it banked upon muscle power and anti-socials to capture the students unions. The SFI too, right from the day of its inception preferred to adopt the same line albeit under the garb of fighting against rightist reactionaries. Instead of building up

students' movement against anti-people education policies of central and state governments, it had only one point agenda—grab and keep in captivity all the students' unions by hook or by crook, rob them of the very essence of their existence and reduce them as appendage to the ruling party. While the student unions in the past were centres of pulling rising trend in the society and encouraging the students to cultivate higher values and ethics as well as promote healthy culture, the SFI in a planned manner converted them into warrens of corruption, counters of distribution of favours and conclaves of some career seekers. In the process it stripped the students' unions of its deemed character and made them an abode of vile culture. Once the student leaders were respected as persons of character and higher morality. But with SFI taking over, the leaders were mostly dreaded as power centres with plethora of nuisance value. Thus the very backbone of the students was broken so that no students' movement could surge forth against the wrongdoings and misrule of the CPI(M)-led government in the state. SFI leaders thus took every care to ensure that the CPI(M) rule in the state is prolonged no matter the students plunge into the dungeon of social alienation, apathy, patrons of cheap mentality, vulgar mindset and all out degeneration. In its bid to fulfil this objective, it did not spare the other left student organizations particularly the AIDSOS who declared a crusade against this sinister design. This very scheme of dehumanizing the people, invoke regimentation in every sphere and stifle voice of opposition is nothing but a fascist ploy. This is how the SFI established its fascistic control over the student unions with the blessings of the CPI(M) who through systematic planting of hard-

*Contd. on page 8*



On 22 May last AIDSOS distributed books among the students of victims' families of Nandigram genocide. More than 5000 students participated. All India leaders of AIDSOS were present and addressed the gathering. 800 students received books. On their way back, AIDSOS members were attacked by CPI(M) goons but they resisted.

## SUCI condemns Rajasthan Government's firing on agitating Gujjar people

*Contd. from page 1*

mindset simply to derive electoral mileage, added Comrade Mukherjee.

Comrade Mukherjee called upon all the people of the country irrespective of caste, creed, community, ethnicity or religion not to fall prey to such false notions or frenzied outlook that would not bring any succour to the problem but only precipitate disaffection and trigger fratricidal feuds and instead, come forward to develop conscious organized left-democratic movement on the burning issues of life that can only bring relief, if any, from all-round strangulation, cement people's unity and expedite emancipation from back-breaking capitalist exploitation.

## Strong anti-SFI sentiment all over

*Contd. from page 7*

core party fanatics having no requisite qualification or background in the key posts turned the academic arena into its fiefdom.

### Manifestation of simmering discontent among students

Suffocating in such an undemocratic atmosphere and being outrageous against the hooliganism of the SFI goons, the common students were also airing their disapproval of the sordid state of affairs shattering the arena of education and relegating the student unions into merely offices to carry out orders of the ruling party. With gradual unfolding of the downright anti-people pro-capitalist pseudo-left character of the CPI(M) and crystallization of people's protest, the anti-student face of the SFI no more remained obfuscated, as was not the simmering discontent within the student community. Arrogant SFI was ousted from the leadership of the students' union. In several student union elections held thereafter, the power-mad SFI leaders either tasted defeat or saw marked reduction in the number of seats going their way. Cracks began to appear.

### Post-Nandigram—a watershed

But after the barbarism in Singur and Nandigram, people from all walks of life burst into protest. CPI(M) leadership was indicted by one to all, charged of large-scale murder and rape. As students wing of the CPI(M), SFI was also being hated and despised as an accomplice to the crime. Surge of protest movements marked the revival of the environment surcharged with the vibrancy of legitimate mass movement in West Bengal. People awoke from 30 year long slumber to take up cudgel against misrule and savagery of the CPI(M). This

awakening has been reflected in the recently held student union elections where anti-SFI sentiment was largely pronounced. Whereas earlier the students were either forced to stay indoor on the election day to give walkover to the SFI or took no interest in the student body elections, the valorous fight of the peasants of Singur and Nandigram has stirred their conscience. The valiant peasants of Nandigram proved to all that if people unitedly rise in protest and offer organized resistance against oppression and repression, the despotic rulers are forced to retreat. Accordingly, the students also broke the shackles and came forward to inflict crushing defeat to the SFI. There is signaling of crumbling of three decade long inertia. In all three Faculties (Arts, Science and Engineering) of Jadavpur University, SFI has been routed in the elections by opposition alliances with the AIDSOS as a partner. In Presidency College, Raghunathpur College, Srirampur Girls' College, Jogamayadevi College, Muralidhar Girls' College, Gopiballavpur College to name a few, AIDSOS either has won the union election alone or is an important constituent of the winning combination. Even in Calcutta University, this year, AIDSOS could contest in 31 seats and won in 19 seats. Students are found to be openly giving vent to their accumulated wrath against the SFI. Mood of the West Bengal is out and out anti-SFI. If the students close their ranks and unite on a common platform of legitimate left-democratic students' movement under genuine left leadership, the evil influence of SFI would be wiped out, glory of students' movement would be restored and democratic conscience and consciousness prevail once again on the students to herald a new era.

## SUCI expresses grave concern over indiscriminate police firing in Panitenki at Indo-Nepal border

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in a statement issued on 30/05/07 expressed grave concern over indiscriminate firing resorted to by the police and the para-military forces yesterday (29/05/07) at Panitenki, in Indo-Nepal border upon people claiming themselves to be Bhutanese citizens but expelled from Bhutan decades ago being branded as infiltrators and since then living as refugees in different camps in Nepal, when they were trying to cross over from Nepal to Bhutan through North Bengal, killing two and injuring many more. Recalling the backdrop of such an explosive situation in the northern border area with Bhutan and Nepal which might turn even worst in the days to come, Comrade Mukherjee said that whereas the need of the hour was to initiate tripartite talks between Bhutan, Nepal and India in order to find out a just, durable and amicable solution of this serious problem which involves lives of thousands of common people, Government of India preferred to see this grave humanitarian issue simply as a law and order problem and did not hesitate to open fire on these refugees and kill them. Comrade Mukherjee, once again urged upon the Central Government to show extreme restraint and take necessary initiative to organize the tripartite talks involving Bhutan and Nepal governments and concentrate all its efforts towards finding out a just and lasting solution of this critical problem.

## SUCI condemns Hyderabad bomb blast and holds utter callousness of central and state governments responsible for such serial explosions rocking the country at regular intervals

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in course of a statement issued on 19 May, 2007 strongly condemned the most reprehensible act on the part of unidentified miscreants in effecting such a powerful bomb blast at Mecca Masjid in Hyderabad on 18 May 2007 that took away ten precious lives and left scores of others inflicted with grievous injuries. Comrade Mukherjee also denounced the police firing on the protesting mob immediately after the blast at adjoining Shah Ali Banda area killing three on the spot. It is clear from the reports received so far that despite prior intelligence information both from central and state sleuths about possibility of such planted blasts by anti-social elements, there was complete lax in the security arrangements in and around the Mosque, which was identified as one of the vulnerable spots for such acts of sabotage, added Comrade Mukherjee. Comrade Mukherjee also strongly indicted both the central and state governments for paying scant regard towards adopting appropriate security arrangement guaranteeing full proof security to each and every citizen in spite of several incidents of such blasts like those of Samjhauta Express, Malegaon in Mumbai, Mumbai suburban Railways, Delhi Jama Masjid, Varanasi Sankatmochan temple, Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore and Paharganj-Sarojini Nagar markets in Delhi that have rocked the country in the recent past and snuffed out hundreds of innocent lives and maiming hundred others. It only shows how insensitive and disdainful the governments have been to the all important question of protecting the lives of the citizens and instead preferring to bask in the customary plea of 'handiwork of terrorists' or 'sabotage by foreign agencies' whenever such dastardly acts are being indulged in by destabilizing forces and quarters of vested interest, observed Comrade Mukherjee.

Offering heart-felt condolences to the bereaved families, Comrade Mukherjee demanded immediate nabbing and stringent punishment of the culprits, ensuring fool-proof safety and security to the citizens of the country and adequate compensation to all those affected by this cowardice act. Comrade Mukherjee also appealed to the people to exercise calm and restrain and maintain communal harmony to frustrate the nefarious design of the disruptive forces seeking to precipitate disaffection among various communities and whip communal and such other frenzies by perpetrating heinous crime of masterminding such serial blasts at different places.

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