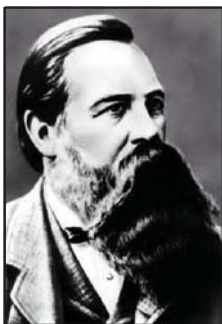


Proletarian Era

Volume 44 No. 23
July 15, 2011

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

Price : Rs. 2.00



5 December 1820 — 5 August 1895

Red Salute Frederick Engels

“It is the essence of bourgeois socialism to want to maintain the basis of all the evils of present-day society and at the same time to want to abolish the evils themselves. ...Whoever declares that the capitalist mode of production, the “iron laws” of present-day bourgeois society, are inviolable, and yet at the same time would like to abolish their unpleasant but necessary consequences, has no other resource but to deliver moral sermons to the capitalists, moral sermons whose emotional effects immediately evaporate under the influence of private interests and, if necessary, of competition.”

— Frederick Engels

(The Housing Question Part II, p. 41-42)

Menace of Black Money, how to fight it

For quite sometimes, it became apparent that huge generation and circulation of black or in other words unaccounted money is not just running a parallel economy but virtually playing a determinant role in the economy contributing to pushing up prices beyond the sky by fuelling inflation and depriving exchequer of its legitimate tax dues. It was also clear that black money operation and accumulation is at the end of the top industrialists, big business and corporate sector, unscrupulous politicians, corrupt bureaucrats, smugglers, speculators, shady stock market dealers and real estate promoters and such other murky characters. Also it was apparent that but for tacit approval and covert indulgence of the government and administration, such a horrendous crime could not have been committed with such alacrity. The issue came in sharper focus when one Hasan Ali, a Pune-based businessman was suddenly nabbed by the police for evading tax to the tune of Rs 74,000 crore. This precipitated a roar among the people whose lives are among other things devastated by this menacing rise in black money operation. Under public pressure, the Supreme Court, while responding to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) rapped the government for not taking initiative

to haul up black money holders and unearth huge black money that has been stashed in Swiss Bank and tax havens abroad. This created a commotion and seizing an opportunity to pretend their concern for the people, the bourgeois opposition in Parliament as well as self-styled Gurus like Baba Ramdev, also added pitch to the din. But the problem that has generated with the enormous amount of black money being continuously accumulated and thus posing a veritable threat to the people of the country, is, by no means, mitigated on the count of Ramdev's raising the issue or parties like BJP screaming over it in media glare or even with constitution of investigating teams. People have experience that in the past, the so-called belligerence of bourgeois opposition died down once there was change of incumbent in the government. Likewise, constitution of several committees and commissions by the government obviously to hoodwink people ended in fiasco and black money simply grew stronger and stronger. Finding that black money is wreaking havoc in their life, people are now restive to seek a remedy from this scourge. So it is necessary to understand the issue in the context and determine the task of the suffering masses.

What is Black Money

Shortly after an independent capitalist state was established in India in 1947, the government of India sought advice from Prof. Nicholas Kaldor, a well known British economist on the structure of Indian taxation. In 1956 he submitted a report to the government of India. He observed that as in many less-developed countries, massive tax avoidance and evasion was a grave malady in India. He also observed that the wealthy elite (read capitalists) were active in blocking tax reform putting pressure upon the government. Most significantly, he noted and expressed that the tax avoided and evaded is giving rise to a volume of black money which was as big as to a run a parallel economy. Naturally, the government of the capitalist state did not find Kaldor's suggestions palatable; they were diluted and eventually rejected. But the fact remained that people of the country got acquainted with the idea that black money was running a parallel economy even as far back as that time.

Now, what is black money, how is it formed and how strong is it now? Everybody knows that income is taxable beyond a limit. Everybody is also aware that in a

capitalist state like ours income or wage invariably keeps back the surplus value the labour creates, to make room for the profit of the capitalists. So profit is always a sum born out of exploitation. Over and above that, the government fixes tax in various forms, direct or indirect, to earn revenue avowedly for the welfare of people or governance. While direct tax is levied straightaway on the income earned, indirect tax is what the owning capitalists need to directly pay to the exchequer either as excise duty, import duty or sales tax, wealth tax or even stipulated corporate tax on profit but recovers in turn from the end-consumers of goods and services i.e. the common people by loading the price. People are aware that of late, Value Added Tax (VAT) which the selling organization is supposed to bear is straightaway added to the listed price of goods and taxes and recovered from the consumer. But, when the direct tax on any such income or any financial transaction, is evaded, it accumulates as an unaccounted wealth. For example, when a seller of property receives part of the sale proceeds in cash, and doesn't show it in its tax accounts, when a company shows fictitious expenses by way of

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Decadent Moribund Capitalism is the root of Black Money

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floating non-existent vendors or such other illegal means to pay less taxes and thereby jacks up profit, when a businessman under-invoices sale, unaccounted wealth is generated. To put it in simple terms, undisclosed income or wealth on which tax is evaded is black money. Unaccounted illegal wealth or black money also gets generated through criminal means, be it through smuggling, for instance of drugs or arms, through ransom paid to kidnappers, bribes, cut-money taken by politicians and bureaucrats, and so on. While black money is stamping around with impunity in the domestic market fuelling inflation, fostering black-marketing, hoarding and rampant indulgence to unlawful money transactions, a good part of the same is also being stashed away overseas through dubious means for netting further illegal gains.

To and fro journey of Black Money

It may be pertinent to know, how does black money go out from India and then recycled back to India? They are normally routed through countries or territories known as tax havens where certain taxes are either not levied at all or at best at a low rate. There are two routes — one internal and the other external. The internal route can be explained in the following way. Let us assume that a capitalist owner has siphoned off Rs 10 crore from his company. He sets up several shell companies and opens many bank accounts in their names. He then starts depositing the said money in cash in these accounts in small instalments. Since the size of the deposits is small, it escapes regulatory attention. Then this money are transferred or in technical term 'wired' to accounts opened in the tax havens. The other route is known as external or hawla. The capitalist owner would give the entire Rs 10 crore to a hawla operator in India. The said operator has links with other operators stationed abroad. On receipt of confirmation of payment of the sum in India, the operators in other countries through a series of shady transactions ensure deposit of equivalent money less hawla commission in the said capitalist's bank accounts in the tax havens.

The money so lodged in tax

havens is then invested in India, either in shares, real estate, business or other assets. This is how the circle is completed. Going by the current rate, the capitalist would have to pay 30 to 35% tax. This is straightway evaded. Moreover, black becomes white and tax even on subsequent earning on this backdoor investment is not paid because most of these tax havens have a double tax avoidance agreement (DTAA) with India which means such earning can be taxed only in one country, either India or in the tax haven. Obviously, the capitalist owner gets this accounted for in its resident tax haven, where the tax rate is, typically, zero and thus a further tax ranging between 10 to 35% is avoided. In effect, he pays no tax either on creation of black money or after its conversion in white. Further, since the money has been made white, it can be freely repatriated to other countries. Since India has a DTAA with among other countries, Mauritius which is a tax haven, most of such transactions take place through Mauritian route. Moreover, there is a system of speculative trading on Indian Stock Market from abroad without direct ownership of the shares listed on that through a financial instrument known as Participatory Note or PN. Foreign Institutional investors (FIIs) mostly registered in tax havens having DTAA with India create a pool of funds through creation of what is known 'sub-accounts' of PNs and massively invest in Indian Stock Market. Since, FIIs are not supposed to divulge the names of the sub-account holders, it is a rampant carrier of black money. Last year, FIIs invested as high as 35 billion US dollars in Indian Stock Market through these nameless addressless PNs.

Accretion of Black Money

The estimation of actual quantum of black money is as nebulous as writing on the water. Nobody has an accurate estimate of how large the black economy is. In 1955, a study conducted by Nicholas Kaldor showed that the black economy accounted for 4-5 % of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) amounting to roughly Rs 600 crore. In 1969, a panel headed by Justice Wanchoo recommended several measures to streamline the taxation system and estimated the size of the black

economy at Rs 7,000 crore. A study conducted by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy under the chairmanship of Raja Chelliah in 1980-81 showed that the black economy accounted for 20% of GDP which would now translate to about Rs 15 lakh crore. A study by S B Gupta in 1992 put the figure at 42% of GDP for 1980-81 and 51% for 1987-88. Professor Arun Kumar of Jawaharlal Nehru University estimated its size in 2005-2006 to be 50% of GDP which would translate to roughly Rs 39 lakh crore. He also said that about 10% of this has gone out of the country through different channels such as hawala and trade under and over invoicing. Of late, Swiss bank authorities have revealed that as high as 1456 billions or 1.4 trillion US dollars or Rs 72 lakh crores of money are lying in the personal accounts maintained by Indian industrialists, politicians and bureaucrats. This is highest in the world. Next to India are Russia and UK with deposits of 470 billion and 398 billion US dollars respectively. Calculation shows that if this huge amount of black money could be brought back to India the entire foreign debt of the country can be repaid in 24 hours. Even after clearing foreign debt, there will 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. So even if all the taxes are abolished, then also the Central government will be able to maintain the country very comfortably. With this amount a few tens of crore of poor people of the country can get Rs 1,00,000 each. It is widely felt that only small fractions of this money can help solve the problems of water treatment, sanitation, waste management, renewable energy, health, education, urban infrastructure and allied fields in the country, can give effect to Universalisation of Public Distribution System (PDS) and bring all Indians out of the hunger trap, can fund higher education, scientific and social research institutes and exclusive scientific projects, all taken together and all at one and the same time.

Devastation caused by Black Money

What devastation this monster of black money can bring to people of the country, may be gauged from

the recent reaction of the Supreme Court itself. At a stage when the issues of corruption and black money have taken the centre stage in regard to the performance of the present Union government, and when there is mounting pressure of people's protest against these, the Supreme Court, too, could not but take that into count. While reprimanding the Union government for not being active in regard to unearthing and recovering the black money stashed away into the European banks, the Court has expressed worries "with regard to the nature of activities that such monies may engender, both in terms of the concentration of economic power, and also the fact that such monies may be transferred to groups and individuals who may use them for unlawful activities that are extremely dangerous to the nation, including actions against the State."

Added to these worries of the Court, it may be worthwhile to add a few lines on how the black money may affect the money circulation in the country thereby bringing disaster to the country's economic life and how the government can and should intervene effectively to curb this menace. It might help understand the point if a brief mention is made about the theoretical aspect. We know inflation denotes price spiral of essential items and generally explained in terms of increased money supply in the system. There are three measures of money supply as defined in bourgeois economics. First one (M1) includes currency in circulation or to be exact, represents all money that can be spent or readily converted to cash for immediate payment. Second one (M2) includes all in M1 plus savings account and time deposits, repurchase agreements and money market deposit accounts. The third measure (M3) technically called broad money includes everything in M2 plus large Certificates of Deposits and money market balances held by big institutions and corporates. Inflation or rise of prices brought about by increase in the quantity of money is determined by the rate of growth in money supply which is mostly captured in M2. But M2 takes into account legal tender money plus chequeable deposits. Huge black money in circulation is not captured in M2. So, the official measures do not reflect the actual

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Hypocrisy and shamelessness mark government's role against Black Money

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position and therefore distort reality. The country's central bank takes steps like increasing interest rate, repo rate or amount of compulsory deposits commercial banks need to keep with it to contain money supply but that yields no result as official figures are far outnumbered by black money. Black money or unaccounted money along with accounted white money chase the number of goods and services. So inflation multiplies at astronomical rate though role of black money remains ever hidden. It is for this reason black money is stated to be running a parallel economy and practically determines price movements.

Trashes advanced by bourgeois apologists

Since, thumping around of black money is no more a secret and people are increasingly taken umbrage at the unabated rise of the menace, the apologists of the capitalist system are now out to prove certain utilities and inevitability of generation of black money. So they dish out a plethora of trashes in the name of arguments in media and elsewhere: 'No one likes to pay taxes' and so vexed with the high tax rates and other duties etc., of the pre-liberalization days, industrialists and businessmen had 'very good reasons', to 'generate the necessary surplus for their legitimate activities' by siphoning their money underground, even abroad 'hardly suffering from any sense of guilt'. Moreover, high taxes did not diminish the demand for speed money or bribes, for which, again, the black, unaccounted money was the alternative. Besides, industrialists and businessmen 'seeking to bring the state-of-the-art foreign technology or to explore potential market overseas,' needed to travel abroad. And the permissible limit of granted foreign exchange was just enough for food and lodging for a couple of days leaving 'zero for entertainment and networking'. So the 'poor' businessmen and industrialists, facing high taxes, bribe payments and having no provision for entertainment in foreign lands, their defence counsel argue, had no option but to keep some money overseas a lot of which obviously is unaccounted.

It is obvious that such are

nothing but a bunch of trashes advanced in the name of economic reasons only to shield the real cause of generation of black money. More is the decadence of capitalism, more it is seeking to prolong its moribund mutilated existence by flouting, trampling and subverting each and every canon of law and is thereby mired in corruption. The capitalist system which lives upon the motive of earning maximum profit, is fast shedding out all scruples, all shades of fairness, legality and accountability. Amass wealth and conserve it, in any way conceivable, without caring for any scruple, any fairness, legality or accountability—that has become motto of life. And it is this greed for money, typical of the decadent capitalism that is giving birth to and egging on generation of black money. And whoever chooses to serve this system for power and pelf, be it a politician in power or opposition or a bureaucrat or an industrialist or businessman, becomes a part and parcel of the process that generates and protects this devil of black money. So the ruling oppressive capitalist class and its subservient politicians, bureaucrats and other associates are merrily resorting to every illegal, illicit or criminal act to amass wealth by deceiving and depriving the myriads of toiling masses. While dishonest industrialists and businessmen, scandalous politicians and corrupt IAS, IRS, IPS officers have stashed away about 1.5 trillion US dollars of ill-gotten money in foreign banks, 77% of the countrymen are doomed to sub-human living condition. This is the murky face of dying capitalism today.

In fact, the problem of black money plagues the entire capitalist world (including the former socialist countries now turned capitalist). In some estimate, a trillion dollars a year, with corporations on one side, heads of state on the other, thrives as black money. Some time back, in March 2005, the Tax Justice Network (TJN) published a research finding which demonstrated that \$11.5 trillion of personal wealth was stashed away by rich individuals across the globe. The findings estimated that a large portion of this wealth was managed from some 70 tax havens. It is further estimated that one per cent of the world's

population holds more than 57 per cent of total global wealth, routing it invariably through these tax havens. That in this scenario of the entire capitalist world, which is now identified with worst corruption, India holds a unique position, will be evident from the fact indicated above in regard to the volume of accounts of unaccounted money in European banks. On the other hand, the erstwhile socialist countries could do away with the problem of black money and had gone a long way towards eradicating corruptions, till they were eclipsed with the modern revisionism.

The situation has become even worse once capitalist globalization has been introduced as with more of liberalization, the black money seems to have gained in momentum to grow. This proves that high tax rates or stringent controls were not the real factors behind generation of black money. We have been through several decades into liberalization; controls are eased; imports are easy; 'laws are much more relaxed now – tax rates are comparable to the lowest in the world'. However, the practice of bending 'the absurd laws' adopted by the businessman and industrialists persists even in the days of liberalization. Despite the concessions, importers still under-invoice their shipments, while exporters over-invoice, generating unaccounted money. Unaccounted money is merrily used to pay off speed money, cut money or bribes. The recent boom in real estate industry has also brought in a boom in the process of accumulating and using black money. For almost any industry or business maintaining a second accounts book with fictitious accounts, has become a rule because transacting in black money and shielding it through either suppression or window-dressing of accounts has become a way of conducting business in moribund capitalism.

Abominable role of bourgeois government

With capitalism turning yet more reactionary, oppressive, cruel and corrupt with every passing day, the government and administration defending bourgeois class interest are further getting devoid of all their responsibility and accountability to the people. Same is true in the case of dealing with the menace of black

money. Without taking any effective step to curb the growth of black money, the successive bourgeois governments, irrespective of political hue, took to a heinous method of voluntary disclosure which is only meant to deceive people and distract them from against black money. If the government wants, it can easily identify the culprits through its intelligence wings, take them into custody and mete out stringent punishment for such criminal offence thereby deal serious blow to the unholy nexus of corrupt corporate sector-politicians-police-administration-smugglers. It can also take administrative steps like demonetization of currency notes i.e. the process of ceasing to produce and circulate particular forms of currency. Instead, the black money holders and operators are offered the scope to gloss over their deplorable crime and are thus rewarded. But it cannot do that, not even give a threat to do that because the government itself is of the monopolists, industrialists and black money holders. Only what it does is making periodic appeal to these fraudsters to disclose their illegal money, obviously to the extent they would wish and then make it white. The successive governments launched six voluntary disclosure programmes intermittently since the 1960s. Though the amounts of such disclosures have been few decimal fraction of total accretion of ill-gotten wealth, the shameless governments rejoiced and painted it as a success to bring money out of those hidden coffers of black money sharks. It only showed how strong and nonchalant black money has become. And the tiny amount of illegal money so disclosed was formally made white by the government to show increased revenue collection. Incredible indeed! A bunch of robbers and thieves who embezzled people's money through illegal means and used it for self-aggrandizement are fervently called upon to voluntarily disclose their unaccounted wealth and then indirectly applauded for responding to the appeal. Moreover, it is obvious that these lawbreakers and criminals do not disclose all their earnings, but may be only a fraction of it as per their own choice. Next, hitherto accumulated tax over the years even on that small

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Fight against Black Money necessarily linked with fight against Capitalism

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fraction and the deemed income on the same is also waived. Such rogues and ruffians who had traded and continued to trade on the hungers of millions were made overnight heroes for their 'good conduct', 'amenability to the government's call' and 'patriotic intent'. What could be a greater mockery than this!

It is also noteworthy that the government has reached such unassailable a height of hypocrisy and shamelessness that recently the 'Economist' 'Gentle' Prime Minister of India himself held brief in public for the corrupt offenders of his Union Cabinet and spitted out venom and ire at a section of the media for giving exposure to the issues of corruption and black money. Surely the money launderers, swindlers of public fund, tax evaders and criminals would find in him and his

government a 'saint saviour' for them!

People must assert through movement

So we iterate once again that in this capitalist state of India, or for that matter to more or less extent in any capitalist country, black money and capitalism have become intertwined. All the agencies of the state, the government in charge of governance and the big parliamentary oppositions which wait in the wings to take entry into the seat of power as and when possible, the bureaucracy, the powerful section of the media and academia, such as the economists, political and social commentators have all huddled together and joined hand to see that this process of swelling up of black money is not disturbed in the main. In fact, black money, capitalist class, bourgeois government—all is now

merged into one entity. Even the bourgeois parties in opposition who are now yelling against black money and demanding of the government to immediately take action for seizing the black money secreted overseas neither mean that seriously nor are themselves free from it. One would remember that a former BJP President was caught red-handed while taking bribe in cash. Same is true for the self-styled Marxists like the CPI (M), CPI who have now become totally subservient to the ruling capitalist class, pay lip service against black money as and when they sense people's wrath, or drag feet to avoid the issue. Neither they took any initiative to build up any effective people's movement nor even raised any powerful voice inside Parliament on the black money issue save and except certain occasional venomless fuming to play to the gallery purely from

narrow sectarian electoral angle. There is no reason to pin too much hope on the judicial activism either as Judiciary too, being an integral part of this corrupt bourgeois system no more enjoys its previous position of esteem and in fact is itself not in a position to remain insulated from corruption.

It is thus clear that so long capitalism is not overthrown, there will be no riddance from the menace of black money. But that does not mean that people have to remain passive onlookers. The only course left to the people is to close their rank and develop countrywide powerful organized democratic movement under correct leadership against all these vices, evils and oppression of capitalist rule and compel the ruling nexus under pressure of movement to exercise some restraint on their misdeeds and wrongdoings including unbridled generation of black money.

Prime Minister virtually holds brief for Corruption

People of the country are extremely perturbed and shocked at the incidents occurring one after another, unveiling rampant looting of government money and property. Anxiously they wait to see what effective steps the government is going to take to stop this looting and punish the politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen, involved in these criminal incidents. Right at this crucial hour, what the Prime Minister of the country spelt out made it clear that the Congress government at the Centre has no intention at all to stop this virulent spate of shameless corruption and looting through clean, accountable measures and to mete out exemplary punishment to the culprits. Not only that, the way the Prime Minister has pleaded for the incidences of corruption, so far exposed to the hilt and has given out his ire at the CAG (Comptroller and Auditor General of India), a government institution, as well as the media for giving out public exposure to the corruptions, is simply astonishing, even deplorable.

On 29 June last the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met a few selected editors of print-media to exchange his views. There he challenged the authority of the CAG of addressing a press

conference to bring open corruptions and malpractices in the government to the public. Referring to the CAG report that made open the cases of graft and embezzlement of government money in different deals and contracts by the government itself, he said: In all those cases, decisions were taken on 'good faith' and in a 'world of uncertainty' and 'that is the perspective the Parliament, the CAG and our media must adopt if the nation is to move forward.' He is the best person to judge what he meant with these words. But certainly they went against his vain attempt to refute the allegation that the Congress government failed in every respect and that he was a 'lame duck'. What he further said, added more to his lameness: If three decisions out of ten taken by the government prove to have gone wrong and the rest seven are right, it must then be considered as a glaring case of success. Mind that, the decisions are taken by the government and pertain to the entire people of the country. Any wrong affects people and the country adversely. Besides, were the wrongs genuine mistakes or deliberate wrong-doings? In the first case, they speak of incompetence, the second ones are sheer crimes. The offender is none

other than the government itself, the allegations are grave and so, they cannot be glossed over simply with an excuse of having done wrongs or mistakes.

Now, coming to the concrete cases, first, the 2G Spectrum scam. The plea that the PM or the government could not apprehend anything, is a plain travesty of truth. The very decision of bidding for auction of the 2G Spectrum license was amply dubious. The PM himself had put forth his difference with this decision of A Raja, the Telecom Minister. Even at the said meet he recalled that he had written to Raja that the auction route should be reconsidered. But neither did he clinch the issue, nor did he act to stall implementation of this dubious plan, when Raja went ahead with it in spite of his objections. The question is, why and in whose interest. Was it really difficult for a pundit of economics of Manmohan's standing to comprehend that by selling government license at far below the market price, the Telecom Minister was allowing the licensee to transfer the same at much higher price earning a lot from the deal and thereby was arranging for his own cut-money from the licensee? Was it difficult to see that the giant telecom business houses were involved in

this game? As the Prime Minister, he owned the responsibility to nip this bid of corruption in the bud, then and there. But he did not do that. Thereafter when news of transfer of telecom licenses at fabulous price leaked out in the media, it was already late for the CBI to act. But even then, after raiding the telecom department, the CBI could not find any 'substantial' evidence to frame charges upon. They kept silent for a few months and the government dragged feet. At last the government found it impossible to push the scam under the carpet, only when the CAG in its report publicly exposed it on the strength of authentic documents. Naturally the Prime Minister has every reason to be annoyed with the CAG! Even at that stage, the Congress party, to which the PM himself belonged, charged the CAG for crossing the limit of their jurisdiction, in the same manner the PM does it later. Hence the PM and his party, obviously with all the open or behind-the-curtain centres of power, knew it well what had been brewing up. Without stalling the dubious deal and instead allowing it to run through, without taking on the culprits, the PM and his party thrust aspersions on none but them, who exposed the scam

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Comrade Khalequzzaman on Bangladesh : Freedom struggle, leftist movement and emergence of BASAD

[Requested by our party SUCI(Communist) during his visit to India, Comrade Khalequzzaman, General Secretary of Socialist Party of Bangladesh (also referred as BASAD : Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal) spoke at length on the political situation of Bangladesh, present as well as past, at the University Institute Hall in Kolkota on December 13, 2010. We published the first instalment of the English rendering of the speech in the last issue of Proletarian Era. This is the second instalment. Responsibility for inadequacy in rendering, rests upon the Editorial Board of P Era.]

Since you have with you the elaborate discussion made by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh on the role of the Communist Party of India, you know much about it. I don't think I need to discuss any more about it. I would confine myself only to the discussion of the trend of the left movement as it took shape in the post-1947 Pakistan in continuation of the trend set in the 1920s. Those days the leftists remained steeped with confusions. First, they were confounded as to whether Pakistan, even India had attained independence at all. They were unable to reach a conclusion on it. And they raised the slogan "yeh azadi jhuta hai, lakho insan bhukha hai" (this freedom is fake, as millions of people are starving). Secondly, they failed to arrive at a decision as to whether they should work as a branch of the Communist Party of India or act independently. Thirdly, whether there should be an all-Pakistan Communist Party, or only the East Pakistan based one, that question also they were vexed with. These confusions prevailed throughout 1947, 1948 and 1949. At one stage, they formed the Communist Party of Pakistan with Sajjad Zaheer as the Secretary. But the attempt failed. Later the East Pakistan Communist Party tried to activate itself with Moni Singh as the General Secretary. It became the main party. However, as Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had showed that since inception the CPI lacked in acquiring genuine Marxist approach, analysis and methodology of party formation and party activities, the same problem persisted with the Communist Party of East Pakistan too. Though admittedly it was the initiative of these leftists, that was behind all the mass movements organized and developed in our country. They put in tremendous effort, they made unbound sacrifice for that. Their countless leaders and cadres embraced martyrs' death. They underwent intense tortures and repressions. Leftist activists were

gunned down inside Khapda Ward of the Rajshahi jail. The fact how inhuman barbaric persecution Ila Mitra, the women leftist leader, had been subjected to, betrayed the savage tortures used to be brought down upon the leftists. But they could not provide correct political guideline and leadership to the people, nor could they develop any trend of correct revolutionary movement. And what great blunders they committed, could be guessed from the following instance.

Leftists played the main role in developing the language movement in 1952. But they failed to keep their organizational identity while conducting the movement. The student front of the Awami League, Student League was formed on 4 January, 1948, while the Communist Party formed its student wing named 'Student Union' only after the language movement of 21 February, 1952. Before that, they used to work under the banner of Student Federation, without exposing any identity with the Communist Party. This was in spite of the fact that it was they who played an immense role in the language movement. In the elections of 1954 which the leftists fought under the banner of United Front, they had a personality like Moulana Bhasani with them. But they could not utilize him properly. The task that the communists were supposed to carry out, was performed by Moulana Bhasani despite his so many weaknesses, limitations and confusions. It was Moulana Bhasani who popularized the slogan of socialism. He was also the man who, during the elections of 1954, raised the slogan "Some have food, others starve: No! Down with it, Say no to it!" and spread it across the length and breadth of the country. At the same time he emphatically advocated for socialism as well. Of course, according to him there was socialism in Islam also. He would say, one who did not believe in



Comrade Khalequzzaman delivering his address in Kolkata

socialism, could never be a genuine Muslim. When he started campaigning this way, the fundamentalists raised hue and cry stamping him as the most harmful element to Islam. But the fact remains that it was Bhasani who popularized the concept of socialism in the country. It was true that the Communist Party was then facing tortures and repressions. It was also true that they were forced to go underground. But it was also a fact that had the Communist Party decided to contest in the 1954 elections with their separate independent identity, Moulana Bhasani and Fajlul Haque would have agreed to it, even if Hossain Shaheed Sohrwardi might have raised his objections. They should have fought the elections on their own organizational identity and strength. In that case, it might have been that they would have won only 5 seats, in place of the 10 they actually had won at that time. But they refrained from bringing out their identity to the masses, did not introduce themselves to them, rather contested the elections as included within Awami League. They might argue that in the situation that prevailed, under the repression they faced, they would not have been able to stand ground independently. But a careful and correct analysis of history would have brought out that it would have been really possible, in which case they would have come out to the forefront with their own independent political identity. But they failed to do that. And by that, they went to the point of wiping out their own identity.

On winning the Tangail by-election, Moulana Bhasani was elected a Provincial Council member. In the then parliament, he raised the question of discrimination between the east and the west.

Congress member Dharendra Nath Datta, a martyr of 1971, raised the issue of language and submitted that it was necessary that along with English, Bengali be made a medium in the parliament with a view to involving the majority Bengali-speaking people of Pakistan in the government and administration. Retorting, Liaquat Ali characterized them as agents of India and held that all they said were Indian conspiracy and so on and so forth. Thereby he tried to add communal tone to the issue. Some Congress members were still then living in East Bengal, they even had won in the previous elections. Many members including Moulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish raised debate on various issues in the parliament. And again it was Moulana Bhasani who was the first to utter that the way the British rulers ruled and exploited India, the West Pakistan too was ruling and exploiting East Pakistan in the same vein. At the Kagmari Conference of 1957 he bade adieu to the parliament, saying *assalamu aleikum*.

Anyway, such was the situation when the demand of autonomy or self-governance came to the surface. People of East Pakistan demanded autonomy. However, following the 1954 elections, when Sohrwardi rose to the chief minister's chair in 1956, he announced that East Pakistan was already enjoying 98% of the autonomy. And from the same platform, Moulana Bhasani added that this 98% autonomy had gone to the pocket of Sohrwardi, the Bengalee people had had a big zero. They got nothing out of it. It was clear to people that they represented two trends – one compromising, the other uncompromising. At that time, at the instigation of the US imperialists, Pakistan was getting into the military blocs of CEATO, CENTO etc., combining with Iran, Turkey and such other countries. Moulana Bhasani steadfastly stood against it. He said: we must not join any military bloc at the instigation of the imperialists. In his own style he stated that Pakistan attained freedom not for joining such military blocs. He delivered a historic speech against imperialism at Stockholm in Sweden. The occasion was attended by many

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eminent personalities of the world, in whose presence Bhasani raised the issue of military blocs. On this issue, Awami League was split ultimately in 1957. Moulana Bhasani founded National Awami Party (NAP), intending to largely depend upon the left forces. But the leftists themselves were then extremely confused.

After 1957, the Awami League leader Hossain Shaheed Sohrwardi passed away; also many of their top leaders deserted the party. In such a situation, the leftists with Bhasani at the helm, ventured an organizational expansion. To start with, the Awami League did not have any workers' organization, nor any peasants' organization. Even its student front was not much powerful; besides a handful of four or five colleges, in all the colleges, student unions were controlled by the leftists. The whole industrial belt was also under the control of the same leftists. Hundreds of thousands of peasants would gather at the call of Moulana. Such was the situation. Over and above that, Moulana was performing the tasks, that the leftists were supposed to do. A single example would suffice to make it clear. On the eve of a farmers' conference, Moulana Bhasani asked the organizers to arrange for several thousands of red caps and the same number of sticks. At the outset, the organizers did not realize its purport. They questioned the necessity of such a huge number of caps and sticks. Bhasani asked them to precisely arrange for 50,000 of each of the two items to distribute among those attending the conference; each of them would have to have a cap and a stick. He had a manner of addressing these conferences; he used to pause and resume his words, if necessary, time and again. In the breaks, he took tea and snacks, chatted with people around and then resumed his address. This even might last all through the night. In the said conference, he rose and with extreme excitement asked the audience: Would you only raise your hands, shed tears and pray to the Allah for his favour? Or would you fight, would battle against oppression? People were invigorated and roared to fight for their cause. He said: You won't get anything begging of these imperialism-feudalism, these jotedars- mahajans (landlords-

users). Would you fight? Everybody roared back: Yes. Then he said: To fight you need a fighting attire. Throw away the caps you wear. Put on the red cap and hold stick in your hand. Frankly, we did not realize at that time that this was sort of a cultural revolution. Because, the caps people wore, were meant to cover their head during the *Namaz*, the prayer to *Allah!* And the red cap, the stick were the icons of struggle, a fighting attire. The Conference reverberated the slogan: "*Some have food, others starve: No! Down with it, Say no to it!*" "Down with imperialism-feudalism". I refer to this incident to show that he was not a communist, nor could he lead a socialist revolutionary struggle. And who was he? He was a man, a leader, who enjoyed support and confidence of people from the entire country, who attracted people, who felt for them. Even a man of such a stature, stood firm for socialism.

When the Pakistan government banned socialist and Marxist literatures in the country, Moulana, back from China, delivered a speech at a gathering at the famous Paltan ground of Dhaka. He had his own style of putting in his ideas. He said: Allah! Since childhood I strongly desired to go to the *Behest*, the paradise, after death. The Muslims believe there are eight *Behests* and seven *Dozokhs* (hells). Of all these *behests*, the best is the *Jannat-ul-Ferdous*. Bhasani said: I vehemently longed for going there. But returning from China, I no longer wish to go there. I have seen the paradise created by man! So I would advise you, after death you may go to the *Behest*, well and good! But before that, turn this world into a *Behest!* And that *Behest* is the world of socialism. This was the manner, in which he carried on his fight, on one side the fight of the working class against exploitation by the 22 families of the west, and on the other the fight for autonomy and self-governance of the Bengalee nationality; both struggles, he fought simultaneously with equal vigour.

So the situation was like this. The rulers chanted 'Muslim brotherhood' on one hand, while they incited communal riots to turn the river Buriganga red with workers' blood; to massacre workers inciting riots in the Karnafuli Paper Mills. At the same

time, the 22 families thrived merrily. In their own eyes, people witnessed all these discrimination and exploitation. On face of it, resounded Moulana Bhasani's slogan "*Some have food, others starve: No! Down with it, Say no to it!*", the slogan which at its base had a nascent consciousness for socialism. Coupled with these, swelled up the surges of students' movement, peasants' movement and workers' movement. Taken together, it made a tremendously eruptive situation, an explosive ambience. But then came the great debate between Russia and China during 1960 to 1962, which cropped up particularly after the demise of Comrade Stalin, with Khrushchev assuming power in the then USSR. It caused disintegration of the Communist Party of East Pakistan. But none of the contending fractions of the party could provide any ideological or theoretical analysis on different issues involved, such as what was the contention of Khrushchev-led Russian communist party, why should one support Russia or why should not, where was Khrushchev's contention correct or why was he incorrect, why should he be held revisionist and so on and so forth. Rather largely mechanically, with a few scrappy phrases or uttering, some fraction turned into supporters of Moscow, some others became supporters of China. The Student Union, student wing of the party, which at that time overwhelmingly controlled all the universities and colleges of East Pakistan, split into two in 1965. In a year's time, in 1966 the Communist Party of the country split into two— one pro-Moscow, another pro-Peking (Beijing). Till to date, in our country they are referred to thus, as pro-Moscow or pro-Peking. But why should it be so? Why should they be referred to as 'pro-' some other party? By this, what lessons did they leave for people of the country? At that time, the comprehensive analysis and evaluation of what was the root or source of this revisionism, what effects it could have on revolutionary struggle and such issues, which Comrade Shibdas Ghosh had presented to the communists of the world, were yet to reach people of this country. The Communist Party, too, did not have those thoughts and teachings. So, they preferred to take sides and to become pro-Moscow, pro-Peking or

such others. The Awami League took advantage of the situation and rejuvenated itself. When war between India and Pakistan broke out in 1965, Moulana Bhasani raised question in a meeting at the Paltan ground. He asked: Had India invaded East Pakistan this time, what would have happened to our country? There were no armies posted here. Stationed in West Pakistan, they were engaged in protecting that part of the country alone. The Pakistan rulers had no concern about East Pakistan. These words of Bhasani had their effects on people of East Pakistan. They found truth in those. Yes, what would have happened to our country, had India attacked us? There was no army here to save us. In that case what do the words 'our freedom', 'our sovereignty' signify? We have been repeating these words for years together, but for what? Do freedom or sovereignty pertain only to West Pakistan? Was there no need to protect freedom of East Pakistan, no need of sovereignty for this part of the land? Why should we be left in this manner without any security? All these questions, Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman too raised later, obviously even more loudly.

Concerns Moulana gave expression to were of no effect, because leftists totally deserted him. In the mean time, Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman placed a 6-point demand charter before the country. As soon as it was announced, the 6-point charter carried a message to people. People felt that it upheld the interests of the Bengalees, herein was embedded the aspiration for their freedom. Gradually students, youths, workers and peasants of the whole country started joining the file with the Awami League. This would not have happened, had there been a genuine revolutionary party providing right political direction to the people and leading them to the desired object of freedom. History would have been different then. Reality being the contrary, the leftist movement collapsed in consequence. It could not advance any further. And support of people to the Awami League slowly increased culminating at one stage to an upheaval in 1969. Even behind this upsurge, the leftists had a great role to play. The leftist student leader Asad was one of the martyrs, who laid their life in that movement. So

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Comrade Sankar Saha's note to ILO Conference

(Due to serious indisposition, Comrade Sankar Saha, General Secretary, AIUTUC and Member, Central Committee, SUCI(C) could not attend the 100th session of International Labour Conference of ILO held at Geneva from 1st to 17th June, 2011. He, therefore, sent a note communicating the views of AIUTUC particularly on the 3rd Global Report on Discrimination and requested the Chairman of the conference to circulate the same among the participants. The same note is published here for information of all organizers of working class movements round the globe.)

The Report under discussion presents an objective picture on the subject. It is also a sordid revelation of facts pertaining to and persisting in various forms of discrimination discernable all over the world. Precisely it shows that although out of 183 ILO member states 168 and 169 countries have ratified "Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No.100)" and "Discrimination (Employment and Occupation Convention 1958 (No. 111)" respectively, even a respite, not to speak of decrease in incidence of discriminations is hardly visible anywhere in any continent. It is a fact that many a legislation against discrimination has been enacted in many countries during last decade. Evidently there has been increase in number of legislations and action-plans but simultaneously there has been increase in number, form and area of discrimination. It is of concern indeed. Most alarming is gender discrimination. Discrimination against women is continuing unabated while slogan of women's liberation, dignity of womanhood and equality between the sexes are heard all around and when particularly the developed countries boastfully claim that they have put an end to all sorts of discriminations against women. Available data shows that 829 million women are living in poverty while the number of males is 522 million. It has been estimated that women's wages are on average 70-90 percent those of men's. But this is an estimate based on optimism. The reality is that in many countries working women get much less than that. In our country which is developed among the developing ones and where the Equal Remuneration Act has been enacted long ago, the female workers particularly in informal sectors get sometimes even a half of those of male workers.

It is also seen that after the outbreak of latest global financial crisis that emanated from worldwide irreversible economic

recession, discrimination has aggravated further. The crisis that 'turned into employment crisis' claimed much more jobs of working women than men's. Increasing loss of job, downsizing of government services and shrinkage of job-opportunity are most adversely affecting the women job seekers. Glaring instances of discrimination are demonstrated on job opportunity of women. On the ground of being married the womenfolk are discriminated and treated as ineligible for employment. This has appeared as almost a global phenomenon as witnessed in most of the nations-developed or developing, defeating the principle of gender equality besides constituting a violation of rights enunciated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The situation has gone to such a pass that a thinking is being patronized and rationalized to restrict working area of women for their reproductive role. Dismissal for pregnancy and withdrawal of pre- and post-natal benefits are very often heard today. Probably the world is being pushed to a situation when we will once again hear the much discarded fascist slogan 'go back to kitchen'.

Democratic revolutions once brilliantly fought against communalism, racism, religious fanaticism and various slurs on humanity but today long after those glorious revolutions when world civilization as it is claimed is advancing in galloping speed, we observe with pain and agony that those poisonous ills are eating up many advances and achievements. Consequently, discriminations on the grounds of racism, religion, casteism and social origin are increasingly affecting unity and cohesion of the working class. Discrimination against migrant labour, both in developed and developing countries, in various forms including sexual harassment is taking worst form of exploitation. A wearisome feature is

gradually coming to the fore in the field of industrial relations during last 15 years i.e. in the period of globalization this engenders a dangerous form of discrimination leading to fratricidal animosity among workers endangering working class fraternity to the glee of corporate sectors. Collective agreements on pay, allowances and other service conditions of workers at industry, department and national level are being replaced by the plant level and individual level agreement apart from massive contractorisation, casualization and out-sourcing. This exercise is indeed a heinous attack on hard-won rights of working class and strikes at the very root of Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining. Further this is giving birth to thousand and one different and discriminatory service conditions to the benefit of employers. This will also aggravate perilous competition amongst individual workers causing immense damage to the working class movements.

In the above backdrop it may be concluded that it has been rightly observed in the Third Global Report that discrimination by now has become a rule than exception. In fact it cannot be otherwise too, particularly when the capitalist economy the world over is suffering from irrecoverable ills. It may be recalled in this connection that capitalism is never fair, and it is most unfair, uncivilized, inhuman and

discriminatory in its moribund stage when it undertakes a futile exercise to extend its lease of life. Hence, it is being observed that despite increase in legislations, campaign for policy of non-discrimination and various initiatives taken by ILO at International and National level, and notwithstanding sincere desire expressed by many quarters to put an end to disparity and discrimination, the problem is increasing rapidly and assuming a serious dimension causing concern of the entire humanity. This is the time when we need to go into the deep of the problem, identify the root of the problem dispassionately and launch bold initiative to eradicate the same. But at the same time all-out initiative must be released by all well-meaning persons in general and working class in particular to uphold and protect Philadelphia Declaration which inter alia states "all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, have the right to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity". With these words and thanks to you all on behalf of All India United Trade Union Centre, I conclude.

Sankar Saha

General Secretary

All India

United Trade Union Centre

(AIUTUC)

Santhal Revolt Day observed in Ranchi

Under the auspices of the Basti Bachao Sangharsh Samiti to mark the 156th Anniversary of Santhal Revolt or Hul, Malikana Haq Divas was observed on 30th June at Ranchi. On the occasion an effigy representing the State Government was burnt, also to protest against the heinous act of demolition of slums in the name of anti-encroachment drive, keeping the High Court's decision at the fore. The effigy was lit up by Shri Sidheswar Singh. A meeting was held after that with Shri Singh pointing out that Sidhu- Kanhu had fought against inhuman atrocities

unleashed by the British Government and the money lenders on the tribals. Thousands of tribals had joined the fight under the leadership of the former and sacrificed their lives too. He said today also land should be protected even at the cost of our lives. He went on to warn that the law and order situation in the state will be disturbed if demolition drive is effected in HEC areas. At the meeting demands for the rehabilitation of the people of Pahari Tola and Rugrigarha were also raised. Vinay Kumar presided over the meeting.

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vital was the role of Moulana Bhasani in this movement that he became familiar in different countries as the "prophet of violence". Through this mass upsurge Sheikh Mujibur Rehaman emerged as the singular leader of the movement to people of the country. Before that, Sheikh Mujib had never figured as a leader. At this stage, Awami League emerged as the single majority party in the 1970 elections. But the Pakistani ruling clique denied transferring power to Mujib and, in turn, hatched a conspiracy. The outcome

was the fierce and blood-shedding freedom movement of 1971.

In the annals of freedom struggles world over, the boundless sacrifice that the people of Bangladesh made in just a 9-month long fight, is one of the rarest instances. The 6-point demand charter that the Awami League raised contained compromising elements too. But the way nationalist awareness bloomed since 1948, in the manner in which people's struggles developed in later periods, there was left no scope to the leadership for coming into compromise; in fact they failed in

such attempt. So, it was becoming inevitable, that the end must have to be reached through a fierce blood-shedding battle.

Here it must be recognized that there lay a difference between the ways in which independence was achieved in India or Pakistan and was attained in Bangladesh. And it was in the fact, that despite a long history of so many intense struggles, and so much of sacrifice, in the end, independence of India was attained through compromise and understandings. Whereas, we had to wave our banner of independence only after a battle of 9 months, in

which 3 million (thirty lakh) people laid their live and the country went through a bloodbath. Consequently the nation's expectation too, became sky-high. The immense pledges with which our independence struggle grew up, it was not possible for any bourgeois force of these days to fulfill them. At this juncture of history, it is impossible for the bourgeoisie from their philosophical limitations and fear-complex of revolution, to give effect to fulfilling the huge pledges and the dreams and aspirations of people.

(to be continued)

Prime Minister raps Media for exposing Corruption

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and brought out the unthinkable dimension it had reached. More shockingly, the PM attempted to warn the media and the CAG, alleging that such hyperactive attempts at exposing corruption would be detrimental for the 'nation to move forward'. What a preposterous argument! If exposure of corruption within the government obstructs 'moving forward', what is that kind of 'forward' or development the government envisages and to whose interest? In any case, all these are enough to vouch for the fact that the PM of the country is not at all a 'lame duck'; he can aptly guard corruption, even within his government. Only that these do not

attest to the success in carrying out the responsibility he and his government were given to.

After hurling such baseless allegations of 'crossing the limits of propriety' by the CAG, the PM even went further to warn the media and the CAG, that their act would practically lead to turning the country into a police state. Another gem of an outrageous argument! None of the governments nor any top leaders of the ruling party, ever express the least concern when, days in and days out, the police and the intelligence harass innocent people simply on suspicion, throw them behind the bars, torture them, even kill them in this or that corner of the country; the country does not become a police state at that. But

the moment telephones tapped reveal the Tatas' complicity with the telecom corruption or the Ambanis being favoured with the license for extracting oil from the Krishna-Godavari basin granted to them at a throw-away price, or some CEOs or such personalities of this or that leading corporations being involved in grabbing bribes and cut-money to the extent that they need be arrested, the government including its PM raise hue and cry for propriety being breached upon. Now the capitalists, the representatives of the corporate houses would surely welcome the PM's words at the said meet with some chosen editors; they would be assured and elated to see that the scholastic PM is adequately

conscious of his own class position and that he is unwavering in his faithfulness to the real rulers of the country, the capitalist class. But majority of the countrymen who demand that unhindered loot and plunder of public money be stopped, the culprits be meted out with proper punishment and transparency be brought to governance, need also to realize that this Congress Government is corrupt from top to bottom and is totally subservient to the cause of the monopolists of the country and abroad. There is nothing to expect from it and only a powerful surge of mass movement can put pressure upon it and force it to take any effective measures towards curbing corruption.

Protest against commercialization-privatization of drinking water



March in Delhi to the Chief Minister's Office on 6 July in protest of commercialization-privatization of drinking water; Justice Rajinder Sachar addressing the protest rally, to his left Delhi State Secretary Comrade Pratap Samal. Present on the occasion were Dr Tarun Mandal, SUCI (C) MP and Delhi State leaders

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Edited & Published by Asit Bhattacharyya from 48 Lenin Sarani, Kolkata 700 013 and printed by him at Ganadabi Printers and Publishers Private Limited, 52B, Indian Mirror Street, Kolkata 700013. Phone : 2249-1828, 2265-3234 E-mail : suci_cc@vsnl.net, proletarianera@gmail.com, Website : www.suci-c.in