

# Proletarian Era

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## Calcutta Holds Historic Rally And Conference Against Imperialism

In the backdrop of the looming threat of war, as countries fall prey to the imperialist design and occupation, as the sovereignty of nations is repeatedly threatened, and as in the same backdrop, imperialists launch not only the military attacks, but renewed and fierce neocolonial economic and cultural attacks dishing out slogans of 'unipolar world', 'globalization' or 'free trade' since the collapse of the socialist camp, the All India Anti-Imperialist Forum (AIAIF), was founded in an anti-imperialist convention held in 1995 in Calcutta with a view to coordinating anti-imperialist movements of common people, that were arising and gathering strengths and momentum in different countries. The Forum reaffirmed its pledge to build up international militant peace movement and fight imperialist aggressions and machinations by calling an Anti-Imperialist

International Conference against 'globalization, imperialism, Zionism and imperialist occupation in different countries' in Calcutta. The Conference was held at the Mahajati Sadan auditorium, Calcutta on 28-29 November, 2007 amidst tremendous enthusiasm, discipline and determination, earning unstinted appreciation from the attending delegates and observers. It registered over 1200 delegates and a few hundreds of observers coming from different walks of life and different sections of society. They included important personalities of the global anti-imperialist movement like Ramsey Clark, former Attorney General of USA and founder of International Action Center, Nina Andreeva, General Secretary, All Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Russia, Ali Akil Khalil, Mohammad Kassem, Abdulhalim Fadlallah,

Mustafa Haj Ali, Mohammad Tay and Kassem Ezzedine, representing the Hizbullah fighters of Lebanon and Ahmed Chahine, representing PLO, Palestine, Sara Flounders, Member of the Central Secretariat, Workers' World Party, USA, Steven Kirschbaum, Vice-President, US Steel Workers' Association, Michael Opperskalski, Journalist and Editor, Top Secret Magazine, Germany, Ameer Ahmed al Mukharreq, Democratic Progressive Tribune, Bahrain, Violette Daguerre, representing Arab Commission of Human Rights based in France, Sonia Boshki, representing Northstar Compass magazine of Canada, Barish and Ainur of MLCP, Turkey, Ninu Chapagain of CPN (Unity Centre- Masha) of Nepal, from Socialist Party of Bangladesh, Comrades Khalequzzaman, Convenor and

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## Assam Carnage Condemned

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI in course of a statement issued on 25 November 2007 vehemently condemned the bestial incident on Friday last (24/11/07) in Guwahati centring round the demonstration of All Assam Tribal Students' Association in which at least 12 *adivasi* boys and girls are reported to have lost their lives and many more sustained grievous injuries women having been mercilessly beaten and molested. Comrade Mukherjee also strongly deplored the role of the police who all along remained mute spectators to this dastardly act perpetrated by anti-social gangster organizations the premeditated nature of which has brought to the fore the possibility of involvement of dark forces and in this regard serious questions have seen raised about the role of the Congress and NSUI, its student wing. While appealing to all sections of people of Assam to maintain peace and harmony, Comrade Mukherjee strongly indicted the Government of Assam for its criminal negligence in undertaking necessary measures to prevent such a naked violence by interested quarters inspite of having intelligence report about such possibility. Comrade Mukherjee demanded immediate constitution of a high powered judicial inquiry to probe into the whole incident including the serious allegation that it was a premeditated attack by the NSUI and bring to book all those involved in this criminal violence. Comrade Mukherjee also demanded adequate compensation to the victims.

Comrade Mukherjee once again made fervent appeal to the people to preserve peace and unity ignoring all sorts of provocations and incitements from the quarters of vested interest.



Leading the historic rally from the front (L-R) Nina Andreeva, Mohammad Kaseem, Sara Flounders, Manik Mukhopadhyay, Ramsey Clark and Ali Akil Khalil

# What makes imperialists suddenly whip up eulogy of Gandhi and Gandhism

This year one hundred thirty eighth birth anniversary of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, more widely known as Mahatma Gandhi or Gandhiji, was marked by two incidents. The United Nations declared the date, October 2, as the World Non-violence Day and the top officials of the Nobel Foundation, such as The Executive Director of the foundation and the Nobel Museum Curator regretted for their not awarding the peace prize to Gandhiji; "We missed a great laureate and that's Gandhi. It is a big regret", such was their submission.

Undeniably, Gandhi, who had started his social activism through a bold protest against colour apartheid in South Africa, ultimately emerged as a fore-ranking leader of the anti-British imperialist freedom struggle of India. As shown elaborately by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era and founder General Secretary of our party SUCI, there were two distinct trends in Indian freedom movement. Gandhi belonged to and represented the trend which was compromising towards both imperialism and feudalism and thus played a reformist oppositional role in the independence struggle. It was upheld by the rising national bourgeois class of the country which fought against the imperialist rulers to gain independence and establish its own class rule in the country. At the same time, mortally afraid of revolution, lest revolution wrested the leadership from their hands and thus completely shattered all possibilities of establishing a capitalist rule in India, the national bourgeoisie was keen to anyhow grab the political power through compromise. Further, the compromising attitude of the national bourgeoisie towards feudalism prevented it from freeing the Indian masses from the bondage of religion and from democratizing the society on the edifice of secular humanist values by carrying out the tasks of social and cultural revolutions. Rather it took up, on the contrary, religion as a vehicle of propagating nationalist ideas. Indian nationalism, therefore, became basically religion-oriented.

This compromising trend led by Gandhi was the dominant trend for a long time in the freedom movement. But as its compromising character was coming out in course of the independence struggle, the other trend, namely the one which stood for uncompromising revolutionary struggle against imperialism and feudalism and which was upheld by the

revolutionaries like Kshudiram, Bhagat Singh, Asfaqulla, Bagha Jatin, Chandrashekhar Azad and many others, culminating in Subhas Chandra Bose, gradually made its mark in the movement. The upsurge of revolutionary activities even in face of tremendous repressions from the British rulers, the militant mass movement of the August movement of 1942, and finally the countrywide emotion behind the Azad Hind Fauj or the Indian National Army of Subhas Chandra Bose were making their deep inroads into the mass mind. The British rulers unable to contain the rise of militant nationalism, hurriedly handed over the power to the compromising force of the national bourgeoisie, to the Congress led by Gandhi. Gandhism was rewarded, though the man, Gandhi was brutally assassinated and wiped out from the scene.

To get into this apparent paradox, we may have to look at what Gandhism really meant. As the leader of the Congress, all along his life Gandhi earnestly professed and practised his doctrine of non-violence and Satyagraha, based on the thoughts of class harmony and religious belief as well. No doubt he was an honest bourgeois humanist and idealist. The appeal of bourgeois humanist democratic moral values stirred up in him great compassion for the common people. But his humanism was peculiarly and firmly based on spiritualism and religion. His creed of non-violence and Satyagraha emanated from the spiritual belief that in the kingdom of almighty God man is 'originally good'. But the Satan eclipsed this inherent goodness in man and was the root cause of exploitation, tyranny and all other evils like greed, meanness, cowardice in human society and want of love of man for man. Gandhi himself believed in this thought and held that man can fight out all these evils through Satyagraha imbuing the society and man with

'magnanimity', 'moral courage' and 'love for man'. So there is no necessity of violence or bloodshed even in self-defence, not to speak of class struggle or revolution at all to resist the attack and exploitation by the oppressors, exploiters, imperialists or the power that be in an independent country. To him, Satyagraha was the panacea of all the evils and ills of society.

Howsoever fanciful his idea may seem to be, Gandhi was naturally and inherently drawn towards it, as he never accepted the fact that the human society was historically class divided, whether we wanted it or not. He could neither accept the inexorable law of social progress through class struggle, through resolving the contradiction between the handful of exploiter ruling class and the vast majority of the exploited common toiling people, the workers, peasants and the other downtrodden masses. Nor could Gandhi think that it was class exploitation which begot all the maladies in human society which he was sick of. Rather, the fear complex of workers' revolution worked in him as he was a man of profound bourgeois thought process.

Thus, albeit without any motive, he preached class harmony when he contemplated welfare of all people of the class divided society, i.e. welfare of people of both the exploiter and exploited classes with diametrically opposite interests. It also meant maintaining the prevailing order, that is capitalism. And with him, the novelty was that he preached this idea, coated with spiritualism. Making use of Indian traditionalism and spiritualism he even advocated that owners of industry and business should act as the 'trustee' of the wealth and treat the workers as their sons. According to him, this would be the basis of his much cherished Ramarajya or ideal governance.

But Gandhi was unaware that, in spite of his best wishes to do good to the country and its entire people, his thought process was unscientific and the method of struggle based on that and hinging on Satyagraha was also wrong. Inevitably, Gandhi's dream of Ramrajya through Satyagraha did never come true. To quote Comrade Ghosh, "...his was the condition of

an affectionate but superstitious mother believing that her sick child would die if administered a foreign medicine. To save its life she would be having to please her God through rigorous fasting, devotion and self-sacrifice for she believed that her God had become displeased with her, her soul had been polluted – it required to be purified, and her moral character to be raised through fasting and self-renunciation" (Gandhism : Ideological Prop of Capitalism – cum – fascism in India, Socialist Unity, Vol.1, No.9, 1951).

Instead of Gandhi's dream of establishing Ramrajya for all through the means of Satyagraha coming true, Gandhism remained a clear advocacy for continuance of the existing exploitative capitalist rule of the owners. Naturally it helped the exploiters, it only went to the interest of the bourgeoisie. Thus though unknowingly, Gandhi merely helped Indian capitalism consolidate and served bourgeois class interest through his thoughts and activities. From their class instinct, the capitalist class also sensed it and so helped him in all possible ways to build up his image as the supreme leader of the freedom movement and even a superman, 'the father of the nation'.

For a better appraisal of this phenomenon, we may further bring in an analyses of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh where he said, "In a class divided society, every person (in conjunction with one class or another) knowingly or unknowingly defends the interest of one class or another directly or indirectly. To think a character or an idea above or independent of a class is not only impractical and illusory, but an evil design motivated to exalt before the exploited people and instill into them the ideal of a superman possessing super-human talents and not inhibited in any way by the barriers of class interests. This idea of superhuman serves only to bewilder and misguide the masses and exploiting classes of almost all countries have always been on the lookout for such supermen in their attempts to blind the vision of the broad masses." (*ibid*) Many of these characters in history lived austere life of saints identifying themselves with the common man's life in such

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# Fight for democracy by brave people of Myanmar demands revolutionary leadership to lead them to real success

Since August 15 last, Myanmar witnessed a massive upheaval of its people. Although the upsurge had started against the government's decision to give effect to a huge price rise (83%) of fuels, the movement in no time turned against the military rule of the country. People poured out in thousands onto the streets vigorously demanding restoration of democratic rule there. What was unique in this movement was that the Buddhist monks who so long and so far though lending mute support to people's movement for restoration of democracy, had not been vocal and active against the military junta of the country, came forward this time and stood against torture of the military junta. Hundreds of these religious people were out on the streets in one voice with people, even leading them.

Myanmar, formerly Burma, a small South Asian country has been under the brute rule of military junta for more than 47 years (from 1958-60 and 1962 till now). The country became independent from the British imperialist rules in January 1948, through an anti-imperialist independence struggle. Historically, people of that country were divided into so many communities and ethnic groups, the society being dominated by the local war lords, insurgent groups, military officers and criminal gangsters. The anti-British nationalist movement saw emergence of the nationalist leaders like Aung San who fought for independence under the broad platform of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) attempting to unite all divisive forces, all the insurgent ethnic groups under one umbrella of that platform. They also tried to organize and absorb the pocket armies of the rival ethnic groups into the fold of one and single paramilitary organization called People's Volunteer Organization (PVO). Their attempts were only partially successful. Even while attempting to forge unity under a common platform, the AFPFL leadership, however, decided to tolerate the different divisive social forces. Even Aung San himself was assassinated in July 1947. It is to be taken note of here, that the national independence struggle of Myanmar was taking place in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, when the bourgeoisie as a world force had become reactionary, with fear-complex of proletarian revolution compelling them to assume a compromising reformist oppositional role against both feudalism and imperialism. Thus, as in the case of all countries under the British imperialist rule in the Indian subcontinent, the independence struggle and the nation building process of Myanmar were also left at half-baked and

truncated state. Political independence was attained; an independent national sovereign capitalist state was established, but political instability haunted the country. Instead of being united into a single whole of nationhood, politically, socially and culturally, people of Myanmar remained divided into communities and ethnic groups, often warring as before. Besides, different contending nationalist forces had their own militias or "pocket armies" which were regular feature of political life in prewar Burma. Ethnic insurgencies continued to remain common in the countryside of Myanmar. During Japanese occupation between 1942 and 1945, the already weak colonial administration collapsed further and entire. Private individuals particularly those with armed followers or connections to local Burma Independence Army (BIA) units assumed authority in many areas. When independence came the central government had relatively little control over countryside and only a limited capacity to govern. After Aung San's assassination a vacuum was created further in the process. Though the independence was achieved in 1948, 'a series of ethnic insurgencies massively complicated the territorial politics'. Local chiefs, landlords, bosses, rich peasants, and clan leaders were also at play in the anti-national activities to achieve their own end. All these forces put up tremendous resistance through their various social organizations against integration into powerful state. This way the state became weak and quite naturally the democratic regimes became vulnerable, and essential conditions for democratic governance in Myanmar went missing, while the nation remained fraught with many fissiparous and divisive forces, hindering unity of people. While the capitalist class in

political power tried to consolidate capitalism on that soil, instability, anarchy, ethnic strife and insurgency haunted the newborn state. It was in this situation, the military captured the state power finally through a coup in 1962. (Source: Asian Survey, Vol.XLV, No.4, July/August 2005) Obviously, the move suited to the interest of the ruling capitalist class, which felt it necessary to carry forward their agenda of consolidating capitalism, as smoothly as possible under a stable, strong government. It was the class desire that brought the military in power and helped it remain there.

## Military rule only created disparity and deprivation in Myanmar

The military rule over these long subsequent years has, however, destroyed people of Burma or Myanmar, as is presently called, in all their economic, political, social and cultural sectors. It was a capitalist rule without any shade of basic democratic rights. Economically, this rule has led the people to bare impoverishment. In the mid-50s, of Burma, South Korea and Thailand, Burma was "the potential economic and political leader of the three". It was already exporting food and fuel and had considerable natural resources, good transport infrastructure, high literacy rates, widespread use of English, and modern legal system (David I. Steinberg, Burma: The State of Myanmar, p.33). The same Myanmar today has turned one of the least developed countries mired in sub-Saharan levels of poverty and famine, one of the hungriest countries of the world with roughly 90% of the population living near or below the poverty line, even though it is blessed with lucrative resources like natural gas and timber. More than half-a century after independence, Myanmar ranks 132 on human development index of the UNDP. Among the 10 members of the ASEAN, its place is just below Cambodia (130). The country's poor state of economy is reflected in its (imports falling 4.8% to \$1.99 billion from \$2.09 billion in the year 2003-04) exports dropping 8.3% to \$1.44 billion from \$1.57 billion. IMF projected GDP growth rate is at about only 3.6% for the country during 2003-04. The average per

capita income in Myanmar is just \$225 per annum. Most of the people cannot spend even a dollar a day. The only business flourishing is gambling. When the common people are dying of starvation in the country, the junta rulers have resorted to a massive increase in the military budget by 40% of the nation's annual budget to be spent on the half million strong army. Inflation is presently running at more than 30%. The exorbitant fuel price hike (83%) that caused the August turmoil leads to a tripling of transport fares, leaving many of Rangoon or Yangon's estimated 2.4 million commuters unable to afford their ride to work place. The prices of basic foodstuffs like vegetables go up 50%-200%, chicken 83%, fish and pork 10-20%, palm oil 80%. Rice and eggs also skyrocket in such a way that even a meal everyday becomes a luxury to millions of common people whose income has drastically fallen but who now are to spend 60% of their salaries on their daily commute to their work place owing to steep rise of gasoline prices. Pure water is a luxury to a vast number of people, a bucket of water to be obtained after queuing for an hour. The middle class people are literally disposing of their properties for survival. When this is the plight of the common people, when they are groaning under hardships, when difference between the rich and the poor is continuously increasing, widening gap of earning of the country's military leaders, their swelling of wealth, vulgar reality of the rich becoming richer, is all the more conspicuous. These military leaders are living ever more ostentatious life. Corrupt as they are, their coffers have kept ever fattening by gas-pipeline deals with China, Thailand and India. They are spending millions of dollars to build a new administrative building, their seat of power, with blazing lights, whereas the residential localities of common Myanmar populace remain plunged into darkness shorn of electricity. Coupled with this is the vile corruption of the junta rulers. Their smuggling of drugs, bribery, extortion and other illicit activities have increased disproportionately during these years. On the other hand, the working class in this junta

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# Disunity brought Myanmar nation into military rule

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regime has been made the worst victim of forced labour compelled to render service according to the will of the rulers and the capitalist class. Added to these, inhuman child labour is one of the main components in the labour market of Myanmar.

As is usual, like all the military rulers, the rulers of Myanmar's junta also had close connection with the imperialist powers, however ostensibly isolated from them. Those imperialist powers in the name of 'constructive engagement' a coinage of the US imperialists to find plea to enter into and capture market, for plundering natural resources and cheap labour of Myanmar, have already penetrated through their multinational corporations (MNCs) into this country. Apart from China and India, both having enormous investment in Myanmar, a report of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar reveals that as on December 31, 2002, 367 MNCs from five countries had invested a total of \$7.46 billion in Myanmar. The countries to which these MNCs belong are Singapore (71 enterprises with \$1.57 bn), the UK (37 with \$1.40 bn), Thailand (49 with \$1.29 bn), Malaysia (32 with \$0.64 bn) and the US (16 with \$0.58 bn). Another 436 companies as reported by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions from foreign countries are also doing business in Myanmar. Of these companies, US have 45, Japan 43, Singapore 33, and Thailand and UK 31 each. In the late 1990s, 15 international NGOs advancing interests of their respective countries are active inside the country (*Asian Survey*, Vol.XLV, No.4, July-August 2005).

## Real face of US attitude

The present uproar for democracy in Myanmar vented out by the US imperialist rulers and their allies, as well as their concern for the oppression of people by the military junta, have to be judged on this background. One can never overlook that it is the same US imperialism, proven to be the number one enemies of democracy, that have been savagely ravaging democracy and freedom of one country after another of the world since the end of the second world war. It is the same US imperialism now feigning the champions of democracy supported and still

supports the military regimes of countries like Pakistan, or Chile, Uganda and many others, where democracy was and is butchered wildly. Aided and abetted by their allies like the British imperialists or the Zionist Israel and others, it is the same war-monger US imperialism that have devastated even very recently countries like Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine, killing and maiming hundreds of thousands of innocent people including women and children. And now they are shedding crocodile tears for the people of Myanmar and democracy in that country. And that too, keeping every possible link with the oppressive military junta and the ruling capitalist class of that country in absolute power to serve their economic interest. Their threat for sanction against the junta is then a mere act of some tightening of screw upon the Myanmar rulers for more lucrative advantages, for penetrating more and more into its market and loot the natural wealth, at the same time posing as champions of democracy to befool people of the world. This is why, in the same breath of announcing imposition of sanction against Myanmar, the US imperialists proposed "constructive engagement" there, implying compromise for good relation or in other words, participation in internal activities in Myanmar including business of their MNCs. Hence it is seen, while keeping pretension of stringent sanctions in place, 'it pledged a measure of support for EU economic incentives developed through a long dialogue process mediated chiefly by the UK, France and Germany.' (*Asian Survey*, *ibid*) The US rulers also hope that without dismantling its sanction regime, the US could begin by signaling support for diplomatic initiatives through the Asian allies. 'If progress were made, Washington could, over time, replace sanctions with a robust form of constructive engagement.' (*Asian Survey*, *ibid*) The present military junta of Myanmar also is quite aware of it. This is why they ignore the US imperialist roars with extreme indifference. They don't feel concerned against the warning of the so-called US sanction, let alone be frightened. They do not feel any shade of fear from the US imperialism, while they dare to brutally smother the last August protest demonstration led by the

monks.

However, the US-led imperialists could get hold of this opportunity of posing a champion of democracy, thanks to the role of India and particularly China. These two immediate neighbours of Myanmar have refused to impose any sanction on Myanmar, even to take a critical stand against the oppressive junta. Rather, they are in favour of persuading the country's military rulers to restore democracy there gradually, although the latter have cocked a snook at such persuasion. Instead they are romping home with their autocracy. Now why do these two countries behave like this? Both China and India have huge investment stakes in Myanmar with China comparatively more. Before going into those details, we may recall that the socialist People's Republic China under the leadership of Mao Zedong was a fore-ranking force to render every possible support, moral-ideological or material to people's movement for freedom, democracy or socialism, anywhere on this world. Korean and Vietnam liberation struggles, among others, were glaring cases in point. But now with counter-revolution completed in China and the Chinese capitalists assuming power, the Chinese rulers are behaving nakedly in their petty hegemonistic economic and political interests shamelessly supporting the ruthless military junta of Myanmar. In effect, this has given the US imperialists to play hero and pose as the champions of democracy. China, in its turn, views furthering of its economic gains from Myanmar and keeping it within the ambit of its sphere of influence. Since 1993, China is engaged in building major naval and military bases at Hainggyi Island, Akyab, Dheduba and Bassein ports of Myanmar to host large number of Navy vassals' military personnel. In Myanmar is mushrooming China's electronic intelligence system with a listening post on the Great Coco Island which can monitor all Indian shipping from Port Blair, Visakhapatnam, Kolkata, Paradip etc. Besides, China has signed MOU on March 14, 2007 to construct pipelines between Myanmar and China to be completed in 18 months with agreement of sale of entire gas to China. It was a reward to China from the military junta for their blocking a UN Security Council resolution against Myanmar in January last. (*Hindustan Times*,

23.10.07) Not only this, Myanmar market is flooded with the Chinese commodities. Chinese companies are already engaged in exploiting Myanmar's forest resources, their promoters in building infrastructures, real estates, office buildings, factories etc. So much so that, Myanmar is considered to be the 24th province of China. To protect all these capitalist and commercial interests in Myanmar, Chinese capitalist rulers are not opposing the junta's autocratic rule, rather they have a tacit support to it under tricky argument.

The Indian monopolists present a comparable position. In course of its development, the Indian capitalism has attained the character of imperialists, which not only exports its goods, but even its highly grown surplus finance capital to the markets of weaker and smaller countries of Asia and Africa to exploit their raw materials and cheap labour power. The acute internal market crisis is driving this Indian imperialism to seek for market abroad. Coupled with that, is the aspiration of the Indian monopolists to emerge as at least a regional superpower in the southern Asia, clearly to ensure its economic interest. It vies with China on that question of expanding its sphere of influence in this part of the world. It comes into contradiction as well as collaboration with the US and other powerful imperialist forces on the issue of wresting concessions for its growth and expansion. Myanmar is obviously one of the soft targets in its bid for expanding its sphere of influence. Before 1990 India supported Suu Kyi's democracy movement loudly. But since mid-1990s it shifted its support to junta. Why? The reasons were obvious. It grew more aggressive, more adventurous with its imperialist aspirations. At the same time, the Myanmar military junta, from their own interest, prevented Indian business community from entering into Myanmar's market before 1990. Hence India stood in opposition to the junta rule and for movement for democracy. Later the junta rulers allowed Indian monopolists the opportunity to do business in Myanmar. Since then, India has entered into so many agreements with the junta on petroleum, oil and gas, has invested in sectors of superstructures including roads, ports, roadways etc. It has been selling military

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## Gandhism a fusion of bourgeois humanism with spiritualism

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a way that the latter often took them as their saviours. Their life as it appeared and their thought processes, had the class instincts adroitly camouflaged within them. So much so that in absence of a proper scientific analysis they themselves, in most cases, remained uninformed and unaware of the reality of their bearing class thoughts hiding in the depth of their mind. People, on the other hand, often tended to accept unquestionably the leadership of one who has transcended personal interests.

Consequently, even though Gandhi wanted welfare of the common people honestly and sincerely, his ideology, Gandhism, in reality served the class interest of the capitalists. Seeing this, Saratchandra Chattopadhyay the great litterateur of the Indian Renaissance, once remarked that Gandhiji was actually afraid of socialism; he is surrounded by the big businessmen. Brilliantly analysing Gandhism, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh also concluded, "Gandhism is a sublimatic transformation of the bourgeois class instinct, originating through a process of fusion of the sense of bourgeois moral values and fear complex of revolution of Gandhiji." (*ibid*)

With all sincerity and honesty in his life struggle, Gandhi stubbornly renounced the logic behind the historical and materialist view of development of human society and stuck to his theory of establishing Ramrajya for all, through Sastyagraha, 'non-violence' and class harmony. It was a theory of belief originating from the dictum of "Thinking is the contemplation of God". And this latter, most unscientific, reactionary and notorious dictum, which Gandhi happened to share through his adherence to the theory of belief, emanated from none other than the fascist philosopher Gentile. In fact, as laid down by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh in his penetrative analysis of Fascism, "Fascism is a peculiar fusion of spiritualism and science. ... Fascist culture is .. a queer admixture of scientific or truthful and illusory elements. ... The aim is to turn the mental process of people from the scientific path of causality to the mystic alley of blind faith, preconception and obscurantism, ultimately developing contempt for

social action. In keeping with its unscientific, illusory social outlook, fascism rejects the socio-scientific law of class struggle as the motive force of development of society and, in its stead, postulates the theory of class harmony and class collaboration. As such, non-class or supra-class ideas dominate the fascist culture." Gandhism, with its characteristic fusion of bourgeois humanism and spiritualism, with its typical foundation of class harmony, thus assumes the status of "Ideological prop of capitalism-cum-fascism in India". It is because of this the Indian capitalists-monopolists did never fail to avail of the opportunity to hail Gandhism, as they usurped the state power from the hands of the British imperialism or after it. But the man Gandhi's deep patriotism and honesty could have proved to become causes of annoyance for the ruling capitalists, who based their rule on exploitation, yet concealing it hypocritically behind the appeal for national reconstruction and progress for all. Gandhi was eventually brutally assassinated and eliminated from the scene.

The present capitalist-imperialist world in face of and suffering from acute and all-out crisis totters with the apprehension of crumbling down. In its frantic bid to avert the crisis and retain its hold over the human society, the capitalists-imperialists are taking recourse to fascism in one and all capitalist-imperialist countries. India, a part and parcel of the world capitalist-imperialist system has also not failed to tread the same path. Fascism in ideological cultural planes has remained alive even though fascism was defeated militarily in the Second World War. Over and above that, administrative fascism, has been rearing its ugly head in almost all capitalist countries of the world, developed or developing, under the garb of parliamentary democracy two-party, multi-party or any other type. Side by side, in this era of moribund capitalism, bourgeois democracy as its superstructure has sunk into the abyss of decadence in the realm of culture, ethics and morality and with its putrid condition has lost all appeal to any well-meaning people. To circumvent this crisis in the field of philosophy and ideals, the capitalists of one country and all are frantically trying to promote such philosophies that carry all

ingredients of fascist culture, particularly the religious revivalist tendencies that can swamp mass mind with blind faith and fanaticism. Such are the ideological weapons to the ruling class, since they break the backbone of people to judge on the anvil of rationality, science and history their problems of life, the root cause of the exploitation pressing upon them. Blind faith and religious bigotry can only lead people to accept their plight as fait accompli, helping the exploitative system to continue.

In this bid of theirs, the capitalists-imperialists of the world often refresh their assessment of Gandhi. They find in the austere sage-like image of Gandhi, in person, as well as in his philosophy based on the admixture of appeal for class harmony, Satyagraha and non-violence, the perfect revivalist ingredients to fit their design. It is because of this that they have suddenly chosen the bodies like the UN and Nobel Foundation to serve their purpose of whipping up a campaign in favour of their design.

Unfortunately for them, to the right-thinking people of the world both the organizations have proven themselves by their recent activities as handy tools for the capitalists-imperialists to serve their purpose.

It is the UN that have been repeatedly used as rubberstamp for approving the war policies of the US imperialist brigand and others unleashing cruel, devastating wars on weaker countries of the world. And now they speak for peace and non-violence to promote the image of Gandhi. The other one, namely the Nobel Foundation, has been well known to the people of the world, as a body whose decisions are dominantly controlled by the imperialist lobbies. They thus seem to be keen to reward personalities particularly in the field of literature, economics and peace prizes, who could come out with proposition that would help imperialist-capitalist class interest. Recent instances amply testify this, be it in the case of Gunar Mirdal of Sweden, or Amartya Sen of India or Md. Yunus of Bangladesh. Now they have suddenly come out of their slumber to be all praise for Gandhi and Gandhism.

In such a situation, well-meaning people of India as well as of the world should see through this gameplan of the world capitalists-imperialists and come forward to unmask this design of projecting Gandhi and Gandhism, the latter being a fusion of bourgeois philosophy with spiritualism, and nothing beyond that.

## Myanmar People's Movement

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wares and equipment to Myanmar like 105 mm light artillery guns and T-55 tanks agreed upon in an announcement on June 21, 2007, to expand military cooperation. ONGC's Videsh Ltd.,(OVL) and GAIL together hold 30 per cent stakes in exploration and production of gas in the offshore A-1 block of Myanmar. OVL is trying to enter A-3 block also with three gas fields of considerable reserves available in it. In September 2007 India signed a production sharing contract for three deep-water exploration blocks (AD-2, 2 and 9).[HT, 23.10.07] Thus Indian monopolists are keen to increase its commercial and economic relations with the junta further. It is this hegemonistic capitalist compulsion that made the Indian government takes a complete turn around with support to junta. Further as mentioned, the Indian imperialism intends to arrest China's growing influence on

Myanmar for protecting its own interests. It is, therefore, that both China and India are, from their respective interests, opposed to condemn Myanmar's junta rule and more particularly its last August brutal crackdown on the democracy movement.

### Myanmar people fought repeatedly, yet to no avail

Taking advantage of all inherent instability within the soil and disunity among people, and in the international background outlined in brief above, the military junta has been driving steam roller of brutal suppression on the people of Myanmar since 1962 after they had seized power by toppling a democratic government through coup. Hundreds of people were killed. Thousands of them mysteriously disappeared and were feared murdered clandestinely. Hundreds of thousands of protestors

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## India and China helped war-monger US imperialists pose as champion of democracy

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including leaders, and cadres are still languishing in jails. Let alone democracy, even freedom of life in this Myanmar is denied. A suffocative situation shorn of any civic rights, liberties and democratic rights is prevailing there.

People of Myanmar never accepted this inhuman autocratic rule of the military junta lying low. They rose in protest and for restoration of democracy again and again, strikingly in 1962, 1974 and finally culminating in the biggest ever movement of 1988. It was primarily a students' upsurge that began against the demonetization of Myanmar's rupee done by the military rulers. This demonetization measure rendered hundreds of thousands of people pauper and penniless. It was this movement in which Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of the assassinated valiant nationalist leader Aung San, emerged and soon came to the leadership with her brilliant fighting zeal. Under her leadership the movement assumed a massive character. Although started with the economic demand the movement turned into one for democracy the wildfire of which engulfed almost the whole land of Myanmar. In fact, the people of Myanmar for the first time poured into the streets creating waves of stir with unprecedented grit venting out their pent up resentment dauntlessly to protest against extreme economic distress, corruption, disastrous lack of healthcare, education, civic services and above all against snatching of their democratic rights, flagrant violation of human rights, ruthless trampling of freedom of expression, reckless murder, rape and repressions at the direct or indirect instigation of the military rulers. The heat generated by the movement sent chill of fear down their vein. Mortally afraid, the military junta swooped down on the movement and crushed it brutally killing three thousand students, maiming innumerable and throwing hundreds of protesters into the prison. The junta did not stop here. They promulgated draconian martial law throughout the country in 1989. Ultimately, however, at the pressure of the people's stir the military government was forced to declare general election. In this general election of May 1990 the National

League for Democracy led by Suu Kyi posted a landslide victory winning 392 out of 489 whereas the junta backed National Unity Party despite resorting to rigging could obtain only 2 per cent seats. The military junta could not digest this mass verdict. They refused to accept it, and brought down severe repression. Suu Kyi was put under house arrest that continues till date. Simultaneously they imposed more ruthless and fascist rule on people. It is since this time people were stripped off all their basic rights. Ban was clamped on all the political activities. The country was put in total suffocative situation, as said. But repression is not the final word. People again burst out in August last after the government hiked the fuel prices three times more. In this massive protest that finally converged and culminated to democracy movement, as we have mentioned at the beginning, people from all walks of life including even the Buddhist monks took part. The protest movement shook the junta rule this time also. And they left no time to crush it in the same brutal fashion as before. Officially 11 monks fell to the junta bullets. Unofficially the number is much more with common people included.

### Question of correct leadership

Thus, for last 45 years, a dictatorial military regime in the aggregate interest of the ruling bourgeoisie has been bristling Myanmar like a dead weight. Against this ruthlessly exploitative rule, the people of Myanmar have burst forth in movement on several occasions in demand for restoration of democracy. Many of these movements had spiralled to a heightened pitch. There was no less sacrifice or shedding of blood, no dearth of sincerity or fighting zeal on the part of brave Myanmar people. Even desperation also wrought large on their faces. But sooner or later, the military rulers succeeded in smashing all these movements bringing a temporary lull. A kind of despair also gripped the people who came in thousands to plunge into the movements. However, this period of gloom and frustration was short-lived and unable to bear the brunt of escalating oppression and systematic subversion of all

democratic rights, the people once again came out to the streets and another spell of spontaneous agitation ensued. But cruel suppression under the boots of the Military junta was what the end has been of each of these surges. Thus periodically, upheavals came like tides only to peter out after a while. Had the movement grown without such periodic interruptions, gained more strength with every passing day, organized in such a way as to brave all odds and overcome all impediments including the brutality and coercion of the military rulers, there was every possibility of the people of Myanmar achieving victory by this time. But that has not happened because these movements, as it appears, erupted sporadically without being conducted under an appropriate leadership. Rudderless, these struggles could not sustain beyond the point of eruption with all tumult and fizzled out once the state machinery bared its claws.

Hence, in order to build up necessary fighting mentality among the masses for continuing the movement on a prolonged basis and steer the legitimate struggles of the people to their logical culmination, the question of leadership assumes so supreme an importance. In the phase of democratic mass movement, there are many forces that join and try to come to the forefront of the movements. But not that every force has identical interest or objective while being in the vortex of the movements. A genuine revolutionary force wants that in the course of each of the democratic movement with a specific democratic demand, a measure of political consciousness of the people grows and to an extent a political leadership of the people develops. Hence, true revolutionaries in order to give birth to political power of the people emphasize on developing people's committees right from the grass root level as instruments of struggle so that along with the fervour of the movements, the masses also get equipped with the political consciousness and wisdom to discern themselves as to how to conduct the struggles along the right track to conduce to the final battle for emancipation of all exploitation of man by man. On the contrary, the bourgeois parties and social-democratic forces do not possess the

same attitude towards the movement. While some of them do bungling with people's agitations, most of them jump into the fray to usurp the credit of the movements for fulfilling parliamentary aspirations. That is why these forces never allow the requisite political awareness to dawn on the people and try to drag the movements along parliamentary line and keep them arrested within the narrow confines of parliamentary vote politics. It is the people who suffer brutal repression, die in police or army firing but the aforesaid forces of compromise instead of pushing ahead the cause seek to capitalize on such sufferings and sacrifices during the hustings, score electoral victories, become ministers and occupy positions of power. One more thing has to be taken into account. As we have stated above, it is the decadent moribund capitalism which is breeding all malaises and miseries, privation and deprivation in the people's life. Hence parties and forces wedded to the capitalist system and bourgeois class politics can not lead the movements up to the stage of fight to finish. Goaded on by the same innate understanding stemming from the same bourgeois class instinct, these forces abandon the movements midway or seek to terminate the same after certain time so that the capitalist system is shielded as also there is for the time being a kind of indirect relief to the incumbent bourgeois government facing people's wrath.

So it is incumbent on the people to identify these forces of compromise and the agents of the bourgeoisie within the movements, isolate them and free their struggles from their clutches. At the same time, it is imperative on their part to either duly recognize or give rise to genuine revolutionary force within the movements and ensure that such force in the process of the struggle could ultimately take the reins of the movements, protect them from all kinds of misdirections and deviations, consolidate them on the correct base political line and deal decisive blow to exploiting capitalism in power. This has been the invaluable teaching of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the founder General Secretary of our Party and one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the era. In course of his penetrating

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# Historic Protest Rally Against Imperialism

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Mubinul Haider Chaudhury, Comrade Manik Mukherjee, Vice President, AIAIF and Central Staff SUCI, Comrade Ranjit Dhar, Observer and Central Staff SUCI and Dhrubajyoti Mukhopadhyay, the General Secretary, who assumed the office after the demise of the former General Secretary Prof. Sushil Kumar Mukhopadhyay in November 2006, were also present in the Conference. Detailed reports of the Conference will be covered in coming issue.

The Conference was preceded by a procession on 27 November last. For months together, the preparatory campaign for the Conference was taken up during which display of streamers and graffiti and postering campaign were conducted throughout the country and meetings and group discussions were held. On huge streamers were painted anti-imperialist soldiers planting firmly the flag of victory over imperialism,

the flag that is fluttering high – signifying the ultimate doom for the enemy of mankind. Even amidst several immediate and burning issues confronting people's life, toiling common masses took immense interest in the programme and extended their support and cooperation in all forms as the preparatory campaign picked up its momentum.

On the 27th November the city of Calcutta witnessed the historic procession and rally of unprecedented dimension against imperialism in this country. The distinguished foreign and Indian delegates of the Conference as well as over thirty thousand people representing determined soldiers of anti-imperialist struggles and common people of different sections of life, from workers, peasants, middle class people to eminent intellectuals and professionals of the country, took part in the protest rally. They reaffirmed their resolve to fight and

resist the machination of the imperialists, headed by the warmonger US imperialists and aided and abetted by their allies like the Zionist Israel, posing serious threat to civilization, threat to the life and livelihood of common toiling people of the world.

Starting from the statue of the great humanist of the Indian renaissance Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, located at the College Square, a site of many historic occasions itself, near Calcutta University, the procession with slogans rending the air went through the streets of the city of Calcutta. It passed along the College Street past Subodh Mullick Square and turned right on S. N. Banerjee Road to approach Esplanade, the historic spot of legion anti-imperialist and democratic movements, where countless valiant fighters laid down their lives, and which still continues to be the hotbed of militant struggles including those in support of Singur

and Nandigram movements of the present time.

A thunderous proclamation of the protest march and its message emerged from a tableau that headed the anti-imperialist protest march and filled the air. Following the tableau marched on the delegates of the Conference coming from different parts of the world and different states of India along with Comrades Manik Mukherjee and Dhrubajyoti Mukhopadhyay, Vice-President and General Secretary respectively of All India Anti-Imperialist Forum and Ranjit Dhar.

Many of the delegates from India and abroad carried photographs and posters depicting gruesome imperialist brutality. Behind them marched on hundreds of thousands of masses of protestors with a number of well-decorated tableaux at intervals condemning imperialist savagery, barbarity at

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## Braving repression Myanmar people must prepare for sustained and higher struggle

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analysis of such setbacks of people's agitations in all capitalist countries, he had repeatedly pointed out that unless the fighting people imbibe the imperativeness of conducting the movements under correct revolutionary leadership, logical culmination of their struggles would always elude them and might well strengthen the hands of the capitalist rulers.

On analyzing the situation from all the sides, it seems that at the current stage of the struggle, it is necessary that the brave Myanmar people try to build up a United Front of all forces who support the democratic demand of ending autocratic military rule and establishment of bourgeois parliamentary democracy. This is an objective necessity. If such a United Front is developed on the basis of common minimum programme and common code of conduct, it can provide leadership to the movement on a sustained basis, intensify it day by day and ultimately compel the military rulers to yield to the most legitimate demand of restoring democracy in bourgeois sense. From the turn of events and all indications

available so far, it appears that bending before the fighting zeal of the people and under pressure of rising world public opinion, the military junta of Myanmar might soon yield to the most legitimate demand of restoring democracy in bourgeois sense and a government led by Suu Kyi might well be installed. But fighting Myanmar people must also take cognizance of the fact that even if a government in the capitalist system under supervision of an honest bourgeois leader takes over, it can not remain insulated from the aberrations of the system. The form of governance will change but not the class rule of the bourgeoisie or the exploitative bourgeois state. Sooner or later, cracks will start appearing. Because, it will not be anything other than a government under the capitalist system and hence it can not but subserve the class interest of the ruling bourgeoisie. As a caretaker to the capitalist system, it will have to pursue rabid anti-people policies worsening the situation. Judged in the back drop of this objective reality, whatever may be the personal honesty and credibility of Suu Kyi, a government under her

leadership would not bring an end to the sufferings and miseries of the Myanmar people. So long as capitalism is in power in their country, there is no respite from this all embracing attack. Hence after restoration of bourgeois parliamentary democracy, a new chapter of struggle will unfold. People will again have to wage mass and class struggles to free themselves from the yoke of capitalist rule. These struggles can develop on the correct base political line of anti-capitalist revolution only if conducted under correct revolutionary leadership. Hence it will be prudent if the process for evolving the correct revolutionary leadership is initiated right from today. While organizing all the forces ready to fight for the common cause of bringing back democracy on a common platform and develop the same as a fighting United Front which would steer and guide the movement on a protracted basis along the right track till the objective of bringing back democracy is attained, necessary struggle needs to be released to build up genuine revolutionary leadership on the soil. If the

cherished movement led by a United Front of all democratic forces and organizations does develop with tested and tried soldiers of democratic movement entrusted with the responsibility of conduction through formation of people's committees and volunteer corps and if the genuine revolutionaries, work as the core of the fighting front, it would act as a guarantee for realizing the immediate goal. Moreover, if the movement does develop in the said course and achieves the objective of restoration of bourgeois democracy, it will be a great leap forward not only in fulfilling the democratic aspirations of the people at this hour but in paving way for the next phase i.e. revolutionary struggle for overthrow of capitalism by exhausting whatever little role various forces have in the current struggle, isolating the compromising and vacillating forces and establishing the revolutionary leadership. We urge upon the fighting people of Myanmar to take due cognizance of these vital questions while conducting the legitimate movement for restoration of democracy.



## Historic Protest Rally

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Singur and Nandigram and exhorting the exploited people to rise up in protest. They were holding anti-imperialist banners and waving anti-imperialist placards raising thunderous slogans all the while. In the procession there was a band of youth from Nepal tuning music with their traditional instruments creating rhythm that added a rousing emotion.

The protest marchers moved ahead evoking admiration of and generating enthusiasm among the multitude who thronged the roadsides witnessing the historic march. Many of the onlookers joined the procession on their own. Thousands and thousands of protesters marched on in four, five or even six abreast filling the whole roadway with a solid phalanx of tumultuous humanity. Roused by the vastness and discipline and zeal of the participants of the procession, people around who stood in thrall passed inspiring comments.

Finally the vibrant massive rally reached the American Consulate after a two-hour trek covering almost four kilometers of journey. The scheduled meeting began although the tail of the rally was kilometres away from the venue. The meeting was chaired by Manik Mukherjee and was addressed by several foreign and national delegates. This huge rally-turned meeting was described by Ramsey Clark as "a sea of humanity", while Sonia Boshki exclaimed that she found only heads in front of her so far as she could see. Visibly emotionally roused, the different speakers described experiences of

anti-imperialist struggles in their own countries. Barish from Turkey declared that Calcutta has again proven that however may the imperialists try, the streets of cities belong to 'us' the people! Hussein Sukur from Lebanon submitted how he saw on TV, while he was in Canada on a mission, the Zionist Israel warplanes bombing his country, including his own home, with his family including children brutally killed. However, that did not make him waver in his resolute stand against imperialism-Zionism. A memorandum to President Bush demanding immediate withdrawal from Iraq was read out by the General Secretary, AIAIF. The meeting ended with an anti-imperialist poster drama on the hanging of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, putting Bush in the dock as war criminal and murderer and staged by the delegates from Karnataka, India.

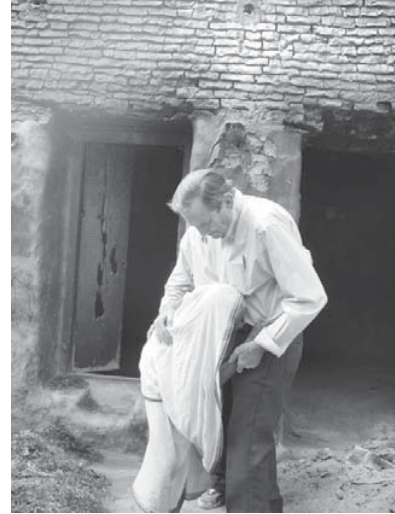
The days' programme stirred up lively questions among the onlookers as well as common people of the city of Calcutta in particular: How many of such international processions has Calcutta seen in the recent times? And why was such a mammoth and historic rally treated with a virtual black-out by the print and electronic media of the city?

The procession added a new page to the chapter of anti-imperialist struggle in India, now being developed as an integral part of the same throughout the world, a chapter that has begun since the formation of the AIAIF and the anti-imperialist International Convention in 1995.

## Ramsey Clark meets carnage-victims at Nandigram

As the sessions of the Anti-Imperialist International Conference 2007 were on, on the 29 November morning Ramsey Clark the veteran anti-imperialist fighter and one who is organizing massive protest movements within USA and world over, especially against military occupation in Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon and Afghanistan, went to Nandigram accompanied by Sara Flounders, Member of the Central Secretariat, Workers' World Party USA and Steven Kirschbaum, Vice President, US Steel Workers' Association along with Comrade Somen Bose, Member West Bengal State Secretariat, SUCI and Comrade Manab Bera, Midnapore District Secretary, SUCI and others to have the first hand experience of the victims of March 14 carnage and subsequent grievous attack of November by the police and CPM led goons on the poor peasants there.

On their return, Ramsey Clark shared his heart-rending experiences with the delegates of the Conference. He made it clear that Nandigram revealed the design of imperialism. He held that language failed to describe what happened in Nandigram. It was particularly pathetic to see the poor peasants were attacked and killed in masses by police and party-supported goons



let loose by none other than their own government in the interest of multinationals. He clearly stated that he was forced to compare Nandigram incident with the police atrocities in USA in 1961. It was a gross violation of human rights. At the same time, Clark added that Nandigram has come out as a symbol of protest. Nandigram people have defied the brute power of the state at heavy human cost. They have proved that power lies with the people. The question is whether there is the will and the intelligence to exert that power.

He pledged that he and the other foreign delegates who attended the International Conference would go back to their countries to convey the message of Nandigram people to the world. He also pledged to raise the issue in international court. He warned that there should be no more Nandigram.

Sara Flounders, who had accompanied Ramsey Clark also said that Nandigram once more confirms that people's movement is the only force that can change history. She, at one with Ramsey Clark, hoped that the delegates from abroad will take the message of Nandigram back to their countries to show that, be it in Mexico or El Salvador, people all around the world face the same experience, the same attacks and exploitation from imperialism.



*E DITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE*