

Proletarian Era

Volume 37 No. 19
May 17, 2004

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

Price : Rs. 2.00

Private Military Industry **Latest fascist menace to humanity**

With the growing and increasingly widespread resistance by the brave Iraqi freedom fighters that has been inflicting soaring casualties on the US-UK occupation army, the beastly savagery of the imperialist invaders on the civilians and captured Iraqi people, in flagrant violation of all international norms, has been raving wild. No more could the US-UK rulers keep it a secret that there has been inhuman torture including sadistic sexual abuses on the Iraqi prisoners on an unprecedented scale that has hardly any parallel in history. It has been revealed in a number of video

cassettes released by investigative journalists as well as through statements released by international organizations like the Red Cross and Amnesty International that such wanton tortures have not been in the notorious Abu Ghraib prison of Iraq only. There have been going on such abuses in other jails as well. In the face of worldwide condemnation, mounting protest and public outcry, Bush and his defence secretary Rumsfeld were forced to tender apology for "commitment of such excess" by the invading army.

Contd. on page 3

Criminalization of Politics

On Patna High Court's direction to EC on 'jailbirds'

On April 30, when the recently concluded 14th parliamentary election had already been through its second phase of polling, the Patna High Court passed a verdict, welcomed by media as a landmark one. On petitions concerning role of jailbirds in the Lok Sabha elections, the Patna High Court Division Bench including the Chief Justice observed: "...over the passage of years the body politic is getting immune to the presence of criminals in politics, and a person who should have been behind bars and could neither be a voter nor an elector, is on the election scene, as large as life." It added "Criminality is certainly a DISQUALIFICATION." And "These persons ('jailbirds' or

criminals in custody: note added) have been disenfranchised by the law..... those disenfranchised by law should not have been permitted in the arena of elections." It reprimanded the Election Commission for not going beyond "a half-hearted submission that criminality should be kept out of elections" and directed it to immediately take "appropriate remedial action", going even to the extent of countermanding the elections of such candidates before the declaration of results. In a Special Leave petition filed to the Supreme Court, the apex judiciary, the Election Commission appealed against this order submitting :

Contd. on page 6

Central Committee on 14th Lok Sabha Polls

The Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Centre of India (SUCI), which has been in session since 14th May last, in course of review of the 14th Lok Sabha election results, has issued today (on the 17th May, 2004) the following statement :

The results of the elections to the 14th Lok Sabha are out. The deep resentment and anger that accumulated in the minds of the people of the country against the oppressive anti-people rule of the BJP-led central government, the unthinkable suffering and ruination that it brought in the name of so-called reform, globalization, liberalization etc., the manner in which it pursued its hate-minority

campaign, found powerful expression through this election, despite many odds and massive rigging resorted to by all parliamentary parties not excluding the CPI(M), CPI where they have been in power and as a result the BJP-led government at the centre stands dislodged.

At the same time the Central Committee notes with pain that in the absence of strong and sustained democratic mass movements centring round people's burning problems, caused by the CPI(M) and CPI's persistent refusal to adhere to the path of developing powerful resistance movement against these attacks of the capitalist

Contd. on page 8

**SUCI wins Joshipur (Orissa)
Assembly seat braving all obstacles
and media blackout.**

SUCI denounces sadistic torture on Iraqi prisoners and demands immediate stopping of deployment of Indian mercenaries in Iraq

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in a statement on 5 May, 2004 strongly denounced the inhuman, sadistic, and criminal treatment meted out to the Iraqi freedom fighters detained in the jails of Iraq by the US-UK occupation army, that has stunned and shocked the whole world. Comrade Mukherjee appealed to the people all over the world to rise in arms against these barbarous atrocities of the US-UK imperialist combine and demanded their immediate withdrawal from Iraq.

Comrade Mukherjee also severely condemned the reported deployment of several hundreds of Indian mercenaries recruited at the behest of the US imperialists to quell the Iraqi freedom movement and charged the BJP-led central government for its connivance with such a criminal act. Comrade Mukherjee demanded that such deployment of private army should be stopped immediately and those already sent to Iraq as a part of this nefarious design of the US-UK imperialist pirates be recalled at once.

BPO — Modern Variant Of Neocolonialism

Among the operative parts of globalization-liberalization, the latest design of the crisis-ridden moribund capitalism-imperialism to perpetuate its exploitative rule, the most talked about today is Business Process Outsourcing (BPO). An impression is sought to be created that this is a boon of the capitalist-market economy because it creates a lot of job opportunity in the developing countries. Particularly there is an overdose of optimism about India making a fortune out of it since it is one of the most sought after destinations for BPO jobs. Indians have primacy to English language and the requisite intellectual as well as technical capabilities to adroitly deliver to their BPO clients.

Row in US over BPO to India

Earlier Indians were being hired by the big US corporates and MNCs to work in the sophisticated IT related jobs. There was already a murmur against such immigration of Indians and expatriates from other countries as the US workers found in it a threat to their job security and access to modern white collar jobs. But soon they found that the US big business had already carved out of their job-list a sizeable chunk for being outsourced to Indian firms. This caused serious resentment among the US workers who threatened to come out in the open and resist such large-scale migration of jobs overseas. With the presidential election in the offing, the US rulers could ill-afford to face such public outcry on job loss in white collar sector. So the Bush administration resorted to a clever ploy. The US Senate gave consent to an omnibus spending bill of \$ 328 million with a provision that seems to hit the Indian IT firms directly. It says, "... an activity or function of an executive agency that is connected to a contractor performance under office of management and Budget circular A-76 may not be performed by the contractor at a location outside the United States except to the extent that such activity or function was previously performed by Federal government employees outside the United States." Although it appears that the US government is talking against sourcing job out to India, the fact is that the above legal provision would affect only contracts that are outsourced by the US Federal agencies. It would not impact private sector outsourcing. Gregory Maxview, the chairman of Bush's Council of Economic Advisers clearly said that outsourcing by American companies was "just a new way of doing international trade" and that it "is probably a plus for the economy in the long run". So it is obvious that the US rulers have neither abandoned nor even temporarily kept on hold

outsourcing of jobs. What they want is to quell the mounting discontent till the time the elections are over.

What is BPO

But before we proceed further, it is necessary to have an idea about the BPO phenomenon and the perspective in which the US working people are so vociferous against it. Outsourcing refers to jobs done by people other than the full-time employees or workers of the concerned organization. In other words, the owning class, big business and MNCs strive to divest themselves of those elements in the production process which according to them, are entailing 'otherwise avoidable' cost to them. So they hand over these jobs to private contractors to be done at a much cheaper rate. To show that these activities do not form part of the core function or manufacture, they call them peripheral jobs or simply periphery. Their argument is that this arrangement simplifies the procedure, sheds the "flab" (read reduction in regular manpower), makes it more time and cost efficient. Simultaneously, the outside agencies entrusted with the responsibilities of handling such periphery would develop adequate expertise in such jobs, would turn out to be more efficient and generate substantial revenue at their scale of operation. Of late, regular functions in the support area of a company like accounting, maintenance, security, routine processing, etc., are also being categorized under periphery.

What the owning class desperately tries to suppress is the fact that this sourcing out of peripheral activities to outsiders is not out of any love or affection for the needy or any generosity or popular gesture. This is purely to cater to the motive of capitalist production that seeks to peg down the cost of production at the bottom by increased exploitation of labour to augment the profit margin to the maximum. More the crisis of

capitalism, more cut-throat is the capitalist competition in a rapidly squeezing market on account of rapid fall in the purchasing power of the people. So more is the need of the capitalist class to prune down cost of operation. In such a milieu, getting the jobs done in-house by regular workers in the organized sector proves to be costly for the owning class because regular employees have to be ensured a definite wage and other social security related benefits hard-earned through the process of collective bargain. So the owning class surreptitiously takes out such jobs from the ambit of organized sector, deprives the regular employees of the company of both job and due compensation, resorts to retrenchment and lay off under the garb of downsizing because of non-availability of adequate number of in-house jobs and quietly transfers these jobs to outside agencies on contract. These private contractors, taking advantage of severe unemployment, hire people at much cheaper rate, make them work on contract basis for longer hours, deny them all legitimate facilities including job security and deliver the order to the assigning parent company at a much lower cost. Through this switch of job from the organized sector to the unorganized sector, labour in either of the groupings, stands robbed and exploited at a much higher degree. Thy name is outsourcing.

Even in this process, one could find inherent contradiction of capitalism so vividly manifest. While the capitalist owners are desperately seeking market to sell their produces beating the competition, they themselves, through denial of the legitimate dues to the labour and making employment redundant, are squeezing the purchasing power of the people and thereby causing shrinkage of the market. So is the crisis of the capitalist class indissoluble, whatever it may try to stave it off.

Offshoring — globalized outsourcing

Hitherto the business outsourcing was confined within the country. With globalization, the strategy of outsourcing created a global movement of jobs both ways — outsourcing of services and offshoring both production and services. When outsourcing

involves shift of peripheral jobs, as defined above, whether in manufacturing or in assembly line or services, to countries overseas, it is called offshoring. Lenin, in his celebrated work, 'Imperialism the highest stage of Capitalism', had shown, "The exportation of capital, one of the most essential economic bases of imperialism, still further isolates this rentier stratum from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the whole country living on the exploitation of the labour of several overseas countries and colonies."

This phenomenon of offshoring, as could be seen, in a modern version of neocolonial exploitation as explained in the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism.

Flight of job outside US

In this perspective, we need to see why the working people in the US are up in arms against outsourcing of jobs to India. They are totally justified in their protest. US companies started offshoring hundreds of thousands of jobs to Mexico after signing NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) close on the heels of Uruguay round of GATT in 1996 subsumed into the WTO as the agreement enabled them to obtain jobs from an Mexican worker for \$ 1 to \$ 1.5 per hour without any other benefit or compensation. For the same job, a US worker was entitled to receive \$ 15-20 per hour with health-care and retirement benefits. So millions of US workers in the manufacturing sector, or in other words, belonging to the blue collar segment, were laid off. In the past three years around 15% of the US's manufacturing jobs have moved out of that country. But the haemorrhage of jobs did not initially raise that big an alarm among the US workers. The ruling imperialist class had its propaganda machinery adequately nurtured to camouflage the rot. It said that the US always prided itself of being a land of upward mobility and it was nothing but beginning of a movement from blue collar jobs to white collar jobs, from workers to professionals, from the assembly line to the office suite. When the first massive migration of jobs took place in the labour intensive low pay works like textiles and shoe-making forming sizeable chunk of the manufacturing sector, the affected

Contd. on page 4

US surpasses fascist Hitler

Contd. from page 1

But in the course of such blatant revelation, another heinous crime of the US and British military operation has come to light through a 53-page US army report about the "sadistic, blatant and wanton criminal abuses", divulging that private security contractors running the coalition prisons and interrogation procedure were involved in such abuses.

While torturing and killing of Iraqi civilians on suspicion were going on by the US forces in Fallujah, four American 'soldiers' were ambushed by an infuriated mob and brutally killed. Later on it has been revealed that those ambushed 'soldiers' actually were not members of the US occupation army, but were private contractors hired to provide private military forces for the service of the US army. They were contractors supplying 'soldiers' who work for the US army like their own soldiers without being actually part of the US army. Thus some private company or companies supply these 'soldiers' on contract basis to the US defence department and these men are paid by these private companies for working as soldiers in the US army. It has come in the media that at present 27,000 such private contract soldiers are employed in Iraq, which equals more than 20% of the official military presence of 1,30,000 soldiers. These hired soldiers are paid out of \$ 18 billion budgeted for reconstruction of war ravaged Iraq, and it makes one fourth of the total sum. This means, one fourth of the money budgeted for building schools, colleges, hospitals, roads, etc. are being paid for hiring soldiers employed for butchery and destruction! Then again, this money for reconstruction has been allocated out of the sale proceeds of Iraqi oil! This is the real face of American democracy and the UN's role as handmaiden of US and

world imperialism. For UN Security Council has okayed realization of cost of reconstruction of Iraq from the sale proceeds of Iraqi oil now under US control.

As a fallout of the Fallujah incident it has also been revealed that there are many private military firms supplying such soldiers on contract basis around the globe and that thus a regular privatized military industry has been built up around the globe with over \$ 100 billion in annual global revenue. In Iraq the major supplier of hired soldiers is US Vice-President Dick Cheney's company Haliburton and its subsidiary Brown and Roof. Be it mentioned that Dick Cheney is one of the largest US oil sharks who was instrumental in influencing Bush and sponsoring the war of aggression on Iraq.

Be that as it may, it is an accepted fact that private contract soldiers' industry has developed as a phenomenon. It has been said that by sending private contract soldiers, or hired troops instead of regular army to other countries for committing war crimes, the invading country's government wants to protect itself from its own people's wrath against rising casualties in these foreign countries.

Secondly, it is said to be 'cost effective' also. For example, US Defence Secretary Rumsfeld considers that 'it makes no fiscal sense to keep and pay for a well-trained standing army'. For these hired contract soldiers can do and are doing any sort of job, from torturing and interrogation of the captives, terrorizing and killing unarmed civilians to actual fighting in rapacious imperialist armies simply against a contractual payment by the contractor company supplying them, and the official army of the state has no responsibility to bear.

With the changing world situation the nature of imperialist warfare, particularly of the warmonger imperialist states, is rapidly changing. It is now slipping into the domain of corporate investment. Imperialist states or their lackeys are hiring private army from corporate military industry and carrying on predatory wars. Predatory war and private military

industry are going hand in glove where men and individuals are being hired by the state for getting all inhuman and nefarious work done by them simply paying out money. Warfare has become a field of corporate investment for their growth and control. We know that crisis-ridden capitalism resorts to militarization of economy as a mean to stave off crisis of market. But now, through the above process warfare itself has become a field of direct investment of the monopolists for making super profit. They are now verily the merchants of death.

Long back, to help monopoly industries tide over their crisis the US at first opened up the production of military equipment to the private sector. But now they have gone a step further by opening up the training, recruitment and supply of manpowers to private sector. A similar development has taken place in other countries also. For example it may be mentioned that in India, too, such private 'Security Agencies' hiring out soldiers to other countries have developed. Some security agencies are supplying Indian ex-servicemen to Iraq to fight under US command with full knowledge of the Defence Department of the previous, i.e. the BJP-led Indian Government.

Thus this privatized military industry is in a sense a type of contractorization of job as part of globalization, liberalization — a job that entails killing and sadistic torture of men and women under most dehumanizing conditions. What worst kind of fascist practice is this when the state power in collusion with corporate world systematically dehumanizes man for their class interest in this way! But it should also be noted that reciprocally the euphoria of liberalization globalization is helping emergence of this private military industry.

This kind of emergence of corporatized military industry and armed forces is a serious world phenomenon with far reaching consequences. Before, defence and war were exclusively the preserve of state activity. With the development of civilized norms, particularly during the rise of bourgeois democracy certain laws

and conventions regarding both peace and warfare emerged and certain covenants were adopted by different nations as a deterrent to excess brutality and for protection of civilians at wartime. State controlled armies of different nations, were expected to abide by those rules and regulations even during war and the defaulting states or government, notwithstanding certain cases of violations, were generally accountable to the international community in case of violation of the same. Similarly the government and the army were also answerable to the Parliament or people's representatives for excess or wrong-doing if any. Thus there had been some sort of restraint on the army of the state. Now with the establishment of private soldiers industry, legitimized and used by the state, can it be expected that these private and hired soldiers shall have any accountability to both the international norms and conventions or to the people of the country? Definitely not. In foreign countries they will act freely and in their own country too these hired soldiers may be freely used by the rulers and owning class to suppress and repress any legitimate movement of the common people. And how would there be the guarantee to the safety of the life and property of the common people at the hands of these private soldiers? So, if allowed to get entrenched in the country, this private army industry will surely be used to suppress the legitimate aspirations of people, to suppress their mass movements or revolutionary movements against the ruling class and despotic rulers. In this sense even Hitler could not conceive of creating such hired private "soldiers" as substitute for regular army which today's imperialism in this unipolar world under the leadership of US fascists have done. So people of all countries have to seriously see through this new and portent danger to mankind. They have to come out to generate sufficient mass resistance against it and develop mighty people's movement as a part of militant peace movement throughout the world to thwart this sinister design of the imperialists against humanity and civilization.

Corrigendum

In our Issue No. 18 Vol. 37 the last word of the heading of page - 5 was inadvertently printed as 'Pampers' in place of 'Paupers'. We regret the mistake. — Ed. Proletarian Era

Vested interest vending 'BPO dreams' to cheat workers

Contd. from page 2

workers were told that they could always switch to better paying jobs in automobile industry, construction work and government services.

US citizens were sold a dream that their children would make big bucks in a new knowledge and information based economy driven by advanced digital technology. But it took no time for the balloon to burst.

To their dismay, the US working people found that not only the blue collar workers, even the sophisticated service oriented white collar job positions are equally vulnerable to offshoring. A major financial publication predicts that as many as one third of the US jobs could disappear on account of offshoring. Estimated 33 lakh white collar jobs would shift out to low cost countries. According to many economists, the rate of unemployment in the USA has touched 10 %. For 43 consecutive months, manufacturers have cut the number of workers on their payrolls. The US is stated to be in the longest employment slump since the great depression of the 1930s. (Source - Huck Gutman's article in *The Statesman*, 23.3.04)

This has shaken the people of US. According to experts, "caught in an economic squeeze - real wages have been flat for 30 years and the middle class is shrinking ... there are three ways an American family can maintain its standards of living. One is to work longer hours; Americans now work longer hours than workers in any other industrialized country, even Japan. Another, so widespread it has become the norm, is for all adults in a family unit not just the husband, to work. The third is to subsidise the cost of necessities by importing low price goods... For Americans, globalization's main benefits have gone to those who own and run MNCs and international banks, but some of its benefits have underwritten the economic stability of American families." (*The Statesman*, 25/3/04) This stability is now doubly imperiled. If offshoring is not curtailed, jobs will perish and the US workers would have to settle for a progressively lowered wage to keep pace with the downward movement of wages in the world capitalist economy. Otherwise the American people would have to reconcile to withdrawal of all

subsidies that would invariably trigger off soaring rise of prices of daily necessities. When the US people were in a stage of delusion, the US rulers, the architects of death and devastation, were carefully working their stratagem to ensure that the future of the US middle and working class ebbs away, their jobs quietly land on foreign shores more and more. This is the cruel ugly face of moribund imperialism-capitalism which castigates socialism and communism day in and day out and tries to pose itself as the best system for welfare of the people. It has not even the least of obligation to the people of its own land. Big US corporates and MNCs pour huge money to fund the politicians and parties subservient to their class-rule. So most of the elected legislators pay more attention to underwriting the corporate drive for super profit than to the needs of the working people of the country through a surfeit of deceptive measures and overtures.

The Indian Scenario

When such a spectre looms large on the life of the working people of the US, the servitors of the vested interest have been vending dreams to the Indian people reeling under appalling unemployment and wrenching poverty. As already mentioned these dream merchants are creating a hype that since the Indians have good proficiency in English and appreciable expertise in handling white-collar jobs, the direction of offshoring is bound to be towards India. Moreover, the Indians are much "cheaper" than their US counterparts. While a software engineer in the US makes an average of \$ 66,100 a year, in India she or he makes \$ 1000 a year. Mechanical engineers : \$ 55,000 in US, \$ 5,900 in India; IT managers : US \$ 55,000, India \$ 8,500. Accountants: US, \$ 410000 ; India \$ 5000. (Ibid). Business Week, in a recent report has predicted that, "By 2008 in India, IT work and other service exports will generate \$ 57 billion in revenue, employ 4 million people and account for 7 per cent of GDP". So this significant sum of money flowing into the country in the form of wage bill would improve the economy, a sizeable section of the Indian middle class would earn at a level quite high in comparison to domestic standards.

So there would be more spending, more demand, more supply in keeping with the "multiplier" effect of adding money to the system as propounded by John Maynard Keynes, the well-known bourgeois economist, who made last attempts to stave off the crisis of decadent capitalism by suggesting certain fanciful measures.

So-called advantage of BPO destinations

Before we proceed to examine the politico-economic aspects of such a "BPO craze", let us see what has been the fate of the countries having received such "outsourcing order" and how prosperous the people there have been. As we have mentioned, the offshoring of US jobs started with Mexico. But soon the US owners found that Mexican labour at \$ 1 an hour was a lot more expensive than labour in China. In fact a Chinese labourer was being available at 1/5th of the cost. So the shift was immediately towards China. With the capitalist roaders in China shifting away from the socialist mode of production to bring back capitalist production-relations, there was over 15% loss in jobs in manufacturing industry in that country between 1995 to 2002. 25 million Chinese employees lost jobs in the public sector between 1998 and 2002. This made China the new destination for outsourcing manufacturing jobs by US and some other Western imperialist countries. There emerged a new owning class in China who began to operate sweatshops for the larger corporations or in other words run the "contract service firms" to supply labour for outsourced job. And at that cost this so called "disposable income" accrued to the Chinese workers ! It is reported that "huge numbers of Chinese workers are labouring at starvation wages, often locked in factories to keep them working long hours at difficult tasks, they are disproportionately female (being more easily bullied into following the orders of the management, being more patient at doing the endless routine tasks of production) and are among the lowest paid labourers on earth" (*The Statesman*, 23.3.04). Of late, Indonesia and Malaysia are found much more cheaper in making shoes, assembling computers and making electrical appliances. So such jobs shifted from Mexico to

these countries in no time because the big monopolists and MNCs are not providing the jobs to the selected countries out of any love or affection but from pure business consideration that seeks to amass super profits through lowering cost on labour.

Similarly, it was a decade ago that the first great offshoring of service jobs occurred with a sizeable portion of back office functions and call centres going to Northern Ireland as the Irish, like the Indians, were available at low cost and with English speaking ability. But now the advantage is posed to be with India. The first influx of US jobs to India, as it is seen, would consist of lower level low paying service jobs like answering calls in call centers and may be a moderately professional job at a higher salary like providing technical service over phone. But today, with advanced technology that is capable of converting a call or answer to a call in any language, it might well negate the importance of English. So if a call centre in Indonesia is found to provide workers who could do the job at half the salary that an Indian is paid, Indian workers would either see the work migrating to Indonesia or be forced to accept reduced wage. For example, a giant MNC like Proctor and Gamble employs 650 employees in Manila to assist in preparation of its global tax-returns. Such is the kind of insecurity both in terms of money and continuity when one speaks of receiving BPO orders. The BPO is a shifting proposition and nothing fixed or absolute.

Rosy picture of job creation in India

In this perspective, the rosy picture being created about the avalanche of job opportunity in India following the proposed shift of US white collars jobs is to be understood. Thomas Donahue, President and CEO of the US Chamber of Commerce during his meeting with Shri K. C. Pant, the former deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, said that India should "catalogue its skilled manpower available so that US could plan its requirement". Arun Shourie, the former Union Minister of disinvestment, communication and IT of the BJP while speaking at the World Summit of the

Contd. on page 5

Outsourcing to accentuate economic stratification

Contd. from page 4

Information Society in Geneva last December, said that 85% of the IT and IT enabled service (ITES) sector of India caters to overseas demands and the 600,000 work force engaged in the Indian IT industry have been responsible for creation of wealth running in the region of \$ 16 bn. While Shourie had been over enthusiastic in presenting such statistics he of course, did not dare to refer to the millions of jobs that are vanishing in the manufacturing and other industries everyday. Moreover, what is the prospect of employment in the BPO sector either! According to International Data Corporation (IDC) IT services expanding in 2002-03 is estimated at \$ 349 bn; in the same year as the share of Indian IT services exports is placed at just 2.8% of worldwide market and 3.9% in the North American market. Further worldwide ITES - BPO spending in the 2001 amounted to \$ 712 bn with \$ 451 bn of it by the US firms. So even now India's share of the world market of outsourcing is just 0.3% and that of the US market is 0.5%. Forrester Research, a leading firm in technology impact forecasting predicts that BPO market would grow to only \$ 148 bn by 2008. (Source — *Frontline*, Dec. 19, 2003). Where does in this background, the claim of the Indian government to raise its share of world BPO market to 6% stand out? How much the international market rather than the growth of domestic market would generate employment potential in the Indian IT industry? Migration of personnel or digital transfer of jobs, however limited and uncertain, may be the perception of the developmental strategy of the government but its fragility is beyond question.

On the other hand, proliferation of limited opportunity of high paying jobs to handful of IT professionals and related experts vis a vis increasing impoverishment of urban and rural working people who constitute nearly 75% of the total populace would further widen the gap between the affluent and the pauperized, bringing to the fore the stark stratification in terms of wealth distribution. Already more than 10 lakh white collar jobs in the government, banks, insurance and other financial institutions have been lost. More losses are in the offing. The Indian Corporates

including PSUs are also contemplating outsourcing of their jobs. So there could be more retrenchment, lay-off in the domestic industries. On the other hand with the BPO sector coming in, long working hours, contract and part-time jobs, and service with no social security in the form of medical or retirement benefits as well as no legal protection to job security and service conditions would become the "order" in the employment market spelling disaster to the lives of the common working people, whether in US or in India or in any other part of the world.

Offshoring a sophisticated ruthless exploitation of labour

So it is clear that this offshoring is a higher stage of outsourcing, typical of exploitative capitalist system, and a modern variant of neo-colonialism that seeks to exploit cheap labour power abroad through export of capital. Labour power, turned into a commodity in the capitalist market remains to be so despite educational technological and intellectual advancement of a section of the work force following advent of IT and ITES industries. Globalization has opened up the opportunity for imperialism to search for low cost labour in other countries for undertaking a sizeable portion of the production job. So outsourcing has crossed national barrier to assume a globalized character in the form of offshoring. Apart from increasing economic stratification in both the country, requisitioning the cheap labour and the country accepting the BPO job at the lowest quote, it has been seen that though through BPO route, money initially flows in from the "developed" to the "developing" country, such is not at the end of the process. When the total account is tallied in respect of interest charges, repatriation of profits, cost of technology etc. more money is found to flow back to the centers of imperial financing indenting for BPO than that flows out of their coffer at the beginning. Imperialism-capitalism does not exist to enrich and support "periphery" in the poorer countries. It lives for maximum profit, a swelling coffer through ruthless exploitation of labour.

This is nothing surprising to the Marxists who are aware of the historic course of social progress

and direction of the movement. Karl Marx wrote in his epoch making *The Capital*, "Within the capitalist system, all means for the development of production transform themselves into means of domination over, and exploitation of the producers; they mutilate the labour into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work, and turn it into a hated toil; they estrange from him the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power. ... It follows therefore that as capital accentuates, the lot of the labourer, be his payment high or low, must go worse." (*The Capital*, p. 645) Elaborating further Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, our leader, teacher and guide and a foremost Marxist thinker of the era, had shown "In spite of all its crises before the first world war, the world capitalist market enjoyed relative stability till then, there was yet room left for some development of the capitalist economy. Even that is over in the present third phase of crisis of the world capitalist market. Capitalism is plagued today with daily and hourly crises" (Speech delivered on 24.4.1974). Comrade Ghosh thus also showed that "colonial exploitation, without territorial occupation and direct rule of the colonies ... is what is known as neo-colonialism." In a desperate bid to come out of the crises, it is trying to innovate newer ways to yet more ruthlessly exploit labour through export of capital, destroy the old productive force and instal a new productive force in its place. BPO is one of those.

Working class solidarity must resist BPO menace

So the working people of the world, irrespective of the country they belong to, must understand that this BPO is another design of the decadent corrupt imperialism-capitalism to fleece them. With the accentuation of the crisis, the contradiction between labour and capital is getting further intensified. So the ruling imperialism-capitalism, suffering from the fear-complex of anti-capitalist proletarian revolution is also working overtime to drive a wedge among the working people of the world through various ways. To create a rift between the working people of the developed countries and the developing countries, like the US and India, the hoax of BPO is being drawn upon. Unemployment is bred by this capitalist system itself and there is no way to resolve this problem within capitalism. BPO will not obviate the unemployment problem but would further threaten the existing employment in all countries; USA or India alike, since the ruling capitalist class everywhere will look out for BPO opportunities. The workers must foil this conspiracy. They must build up in their respective countries strong anti-capitalist movements preserving and strengthening the international working class solidarity to fight and resist the menacing anti-working class measures like the Business Process Outsourcing and Offshoring. It is only by the pressure of movement that they can defend their trade union, employment and democratic rights and thwart the imperialist attacks on their life and livelihood.

Bhagat Singh Martyr's Day Observed

Gujarat State Committee of All India DSO observed 73rd Martyr day of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh at Nyaymandir in Vadodara. Jayesh Patel, All India Vice-President, Nitin Prajapati, President of AHMEDABAD UNIT, Raghunath Bagul from Ahwa unit, Mukesh Semwal, Jayanti Chawda from Vadodara unit garlanded the statue of BHAGAT SINGH. Eminent citizens Shri Kirit Bhatt, Manzoor Saleri, Naginbhai Patel also paid floral tributes.

Revolutionary songs were sang,

badge wearing was done and an exhibition on the life of Bhagat Singh was displayed. Jayesh Patel, President of Gujarat Unit spoke on this occasion and said that dreams of martyr like Bhagatsingh are yet to be fulfilled and it can be possible only by revolutionary transformation of society. Slogans like "Inquilab Zindabad", "Long Live Bhagatsingh, Rajguru, Sukhdev", "Down with capitalism-Imperialism" were in air on the occasion. Programme ended with spirited note.

Decadent social system depends on muscle power

Contd. from page 1

“Under Article 329(b), no election to either House of Parliament or either House of the Legislature of the State shall be called in question except by an election petition presented to the authority and in such manner as may be provided for by or under any law made by the appropriate legislature.” And so it contended that the High Court order was contrary to the constitutional mandate contained in Article 329(b). It further held that the Section 33A of Representation of the People’s Act, 1951 “does not prescribe any disqualification by persons who have criminal antecedents from contesting elections but only requires them to furnish such information at the time of filing nomination papers.” The Election Commission also added that the election being at an advanced stage when the Patna High Court issued the judgement, to “interdict ..., the entire process by prescribing a new disqualification for contesting, and seek to apply it retrospectively, would cause tremendous chaos notwithstanding the submission that it is impermissible in law.” The Supreme Court allowed the Election Commission appeal on both the grounds of the Article 329(b) and practicability and immediately stayed the Patna High Court order, although it left the issue open for future consideration of the Election Commission.

No right-minded person would disagree on the necessity to fight against menacingly increasing criminalization in politics. But centring round the chain of events involving the judiciary and the Election Commission, there is developing afresh a whole range of ideas-understandings-conceptions, that is only adding confusions to how the said fight should be fought. It would not help in solving the problem. Rather, the steps suggested or hinted at, have some serious danger inherent in them. All this has prompted us to add this note on the issue.

Before we enter into our main discussion, we make a brief scan of the comments of the Patna High Court that criminals or ‘jailbirds’ are ‘disenfranchised by law’ and are thus ‘disqualified’ from elections. We find this comment made from utter confusion. Who are disenfranchised in this country : only the foreigners. All citizens,

barring a few like mentally disabled, are enfranchised by law in this country. Even ‘jailbirds’ or persons on trial do not lose their citizenship or, thus, franchise. The convicts, that is those ‘sentenced to imprisonment’ too, have the right to vote or seek election; at most they may only have their right temporarily suspended, rather ‘reasonably restricted’ under the Representation of the People’s Act, 1951 for not less than two years from the date of conviction and for a period of six years since his release in case of being an MP or MLA, and for a period of six years from the date of conviction for voting in any election. In other cases they may seek election or, for instance, if they are members of state legislative assemblies or the Parliament, may be released on Parole to cast their votes in, say, a no-confidence motion tabled in the house. These are well-known legal provisions. In spite of these being prevalent, we wonder how people supposed to be the masters of legal affairs can pass such a verdict on disenfranchisement or disqualification or how people in the highest echelon of society and intelligentsia could welcome the verdict uncritically! Even the Supreme Court too leaves the issue open and thus appears to be reluctant to get at the root of the problem.

Under the circumstances, with a number of measures being suggested or thoughts coming up in regard to the fight against criminalization, we submit that racking our brain for simple legal remedies would not be enough for a solution.

It is well nigh a fact now that a nexus of politicians of all the parliamentary political parties wedded to this system, police and administration, moneyed people and finally criminals themselves, is the breeding vat of corruption and criminals. The capitalist society stands perforate with crisis and decadence; it has nothing more to offer to the common toiling people; even its political system, the parliamentary democracy, stinks of rot and decadence, of corruption and total lack of morality and ethics. The rulers are increasingly unable to conceal these facts from toiling people. In such a situation, the rulers, the capitalists-monopolists, and their henchmen bourgeois politicians are continuously isolated and alienated from the masses. To sustain their rule and system, to

make their seat of power unchallenged, they are under compulsion of depending on money power and musclepower. The criminals, a part of the musclepower, find it the best choice to play subservient to the rulers, administration and police; they provide them shelter. Thus it is the capitalist system that produces, uses and sustains a continuous inflow of criminals. The process has come to such a pass that criminals who were once serving their masters, have now made deeper inroads and have risen to the highest rungs of power in different spheres. They are even becoming party bosses and holding the leash of power. It is thus becoming more and more difficult for the system to get out of the clutch of criminality and criminals. In the face of mounting popular pressure or in situations running out of hand, this or that ruling party or the court or such other instruments of the state, may be compelled to try framing laws against criminalization. But even under such circumstances, we will find enough instances of the real hard core criminals having link with or grip on the ruling or other powerful political parties roaming about at large without punishment, whatever crime they may have committed or may be accused of. Further, if and when it is possible to get rid of a few criminals by legal measures, the system remains in tact, capitalism thrives on in full glare; the politician-administration-criminal nexus reigns supreme only to produce a fresh spate of more and dreaded criminals.

At this point we would like to raise one more important aspect of the Patna High Court order. We reiterate that fight against criminalization cannot be fought successfully through laws and legality alone. Those who would promulgate laws are themselves in the nexus that produces, uses and survives on criminals; the capitalist system to which they all belong is itself the breeding house of criminals. The more the system plunges into crisis, the deeper and wider is the resentment of people against its rule; the stronger becomes the possibility of democratic and revolutionary movement. And the more the rulers face movement, they become more ruthless to suppress it. Thus we see it every day that the ruling party

uses administration and police to nab leaders and cadres of opponents raising any voice of protest to harass them on different scores, even branding them as criminals or we see that innocent people and particularly cadres and supporters of democratic and revolutionary movements are implicated with false charges. All the black acts promulgated with avowed purpose of fighting this or that crime, have been used against political opponents. MISA, TADA and the latest POTA, to name a few, are glaring examples. On this background, we must submit, that the provision the Patna High Court has asked for is seriously fraught with this danger. It asks for disqualification of criminals; but with this crisis-ridden capitalist system prevailing and itself incessantly generating criminals and the society stinking with ‘wholesale, all pervasive and total’ corruption, how can we be sure that this provision will be used against criminals only? On the other hand, how can we guarantee that this provision will not be used as a dragnet to falsely implicate the leaders, cadres and supporters of democratic and revolutionary movement and debar them from the slightest chance of contesting elections to represent people in the parliamentary fora, that they still enjoy as a hard-earned right?

So we hold that it is left with the people to realize that criminalization in politics and social life cannot be fought back simply by laws. Pinning all hopes on laws and legality will lead us to nowhere. Even laws promulgated in this society will not touch the system. Rather the crisis-ridden system will keep on generating criminals and use them to sustain it, only in shameless violation of laws. It is the consciousness of people that can only identify the root of the evil; only their mighty movement under correct leadership of those parties and forces that really stand for them on every issue of life, may build up the ambience to compel political parties to shred apart their nexus with criminals. This is also the path in which people can really build up the resistance against this heinous process of producing criminals for power and the power of criminals. Short of it, fight against criminalization will remain verbose and self-defeating.

SUCI's Election Campaign

Some reports from the states

Election to the 14th Lok Sabha is over and the results have just been declared. Our party, the SUCI, the revolutionary party of the Indian proletariat, viewing this election as a political struggle conducive to building up mass movements on the burning problems in people's life, fielded 56 candidates spread over 13 states of the country. In course of the ideological campaign conducted by our party spread over a large part of the country as the election battle were on, it has become discernible that it is gradually dawning upon all sections of the poor exploited masses that SUCI is their own party, fighting for their cause, and honest, right-thinking persons, honest workers from various political parties have started gravitating towards the SUCI, attracted by the noble cause it stands for and by the higher morality, ethics and culture that the SUCI workers reflect.

Reports about this are coming in from the states, reports that are enthusing and inspiring. We give below only a few indicative excerpts from the reports received so far from there.

West Bengal

In the East and West Midnapore districts, the SUCI contested 4 parliamentary seats. A special bulletin of the Bengali organ *Ganadabi* was issued containing an appeal by the SUCI West Bengal State Committee explaining the outlook and stand on the basis of which the party was contesting the elections in the present political situation. The party workers carried the bulletin in thousands from door to door, to market places and shops and side by side with it, conducted a mass signature campaign in support of the charter of demands on the basis of which the SUCI proposes to build up mass movements, appealing to the students and youths to join the movement as volunteers and to the people for monetary contributions to fund their own movement. The response and support from the people have been unprecedented. In many places, workers and sympathizers of various parties have come forward to work for the SUCI. They include some veteran CPI(M) and CPI workers in Nandigram who have been politically inactive for quite some time, a large number of people in Mahishadal, Chandipur, Tamluk and Nandakumar who were earlier supporters of Congress, Trinamool Congress or CPI(M) but have already participated in the anti-Electricity tariff hike movement conducted by the SUCI, some CPI(M) workers in Chaitanyapur, some CPI(M) youth workers in Narayanganj, some Trinamool youth workers in Patashpur and a number of CPI(M) workers in Contai, Bhupatinagar, Bajkul and Bhagabanpur. A retired teacher in Midnapur town said: "Only this party is fighting in the interest of the poor in India, there is no other party that can be supported." Bibhutibabu,

a 71 year old veteran CPI worker said: "I had become dejected, thinking there is no true communist party in the country. The movements conducted by the SUCI have dispelled that mistaken notion of mine." A number of leading CPI(M) workers in Jhargram town have said: "Our party has bid good-bye to leftism. You go ahead with your work. Leftism will be saved if you gain in strength, the poor will have the strength to raise demands." In Egra, in Contai constituency, an old CPI(M) worker formed a committee with his associates and started working for the SUCI candidate. In many a village, the villagers have called SUCI workers into their homes to hold sittings and requested them to build up a strong movement against the proposed new Panchayat tax. A wave of enthusiasm had been generated among the poor Adivasi masses centring round the SUCI in far-flung areas of Belpahari, Gopiballavpur, Nayagram, Salbani and Goaltore.

In Nadia district too, the SUCI's political and election campaign evoked tremendous response. Numerous meetings were held, which turned into large gatherings even without prior preparation in many cases. When the SUCI workers approached the common people for bulletin sale, signature campaign or fund raising, the common people responded enthusiastically by saying: "Now we have somebody to vote for, some party to rely upon. There is none else to fight about our problems, you are the only hope." In many places, the villagers promised to enrol themselves as volunteers, spontaneously organized group sittings for more discussions even after the public meeting was over, subscribed to the *Ganadabi* and took

initiative to form people's committees as the instruments of mass movements.

Even in Bardhaman district, a CPI(M) stronghold, the SUCI's campaign generated good response. In Kalna town, some local youth arranged a room for the SUCI workers and helped them to conduct election and party work. In Manteswar area, a leading CPI(M) worker purchased Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's booklet "*Keno Bharatbarser Matite SUCI Ekmatro Samyabadi Dal*" (*Why SUCI is the only genuine communist party in India*) from SUCI workers and said: "Many honest CPI(M) workers are disillusioned with the activities of their party. Go ahead with the work of your party here. Many are silent here being afraid of the CPI(M), but many are thinking about you." In Kusumgram, Manteswar, a poor boy who somehow makes a living selling shabat, has started working for the SUCI assuming responsibility on his own. A veteran CPI(M) leader of Manteswar has said: "I have come to know you at such an old age. My strength is failing, I feel sad I cannot move about helping you. I want to have a sitting of my acquaintances with your leader." Some CPI(M) workers of the Kalna area, a retired headmaster of a primary school in Ausgram and some members of a "democratic platform" formed by disillusioned CPI(M) workers of Ausgram have all expressed support for the SUCI.

Delhi

The SUCI campaign in East Delhi has been received with enthusiastic public support and praise. Despite very limited resources of finance and manpower, and complete lack of media publicity, the Party has made a favourable impression on the people, who see its political line and style of work as clearly distinct from the bourgeois parties in the fray.

Local people familiar with SUCI and its candidate Comrade Harish Tyagi through many movements enthusiastically welcomed the party's decision to contest and joined the campaign. Party workers have worked tirelessly to cover the huge constituency, distributing leaflets, holding street-corner meetings and door-to-door campaigns. A satirical

street-play is a major highlight of the campaign.

While the candidates from the Congress, BJP, BSP and others are openly making use of casteist and regional sentiments to woo the electorate, the SUCI campaign has projected working class outlook. In a constituency where bourgeois parties bribe poor voters to make up numbers, the SUCI campaign has provided the electorate the new experience of a higher culture of working class politics. This has been greatly appreciated by the people and attracted them to the party.

Many instances of warm and generous support from the common people can be cited. Party workers have fanned out all over the constituency simultaneously propagating the party's line and requesting voters for financial contribution to the campaign. Working class and lower middle class people have generously contributed, many have provided food and shelter to party workers campaigning in far-flung areas of the constituency. Women in colonies have taken the initiative for house-to-house campaigning on behalf of the party and its candidate. In one instance, about 25 industrial workers took leave and undertook a well-decorated cycle rally through a large swathe of the constituency. Impressed by SUCI's leaflets and posters, and door-to-door campaigning, and recognizing that the party was voicing their own feelings and demands, in 3 localities local people arranged public meetings entirely on their own initiative. Following its public meetings in street-corners and colonies, impressed hotel and stall owners have provided free tea and food to SUCI activists and volunteers. The party office has received calls from people who have volunteered to work for the party in the elections.

Despite holding a Press Conference and issuing frequent press releases, the media has chosen to black out the SUCI campaign and provide publicity mainly to the Congress and BJP candidates. In one locality, SUCI activists found local women readying a garland of chappals for the Congress and BJP candidates; they talked to SUCI volunteers and appreciated the party's line and campaign. Therefore, despite the media blackout, and because of the correct political line and higher culture of the SUCI campaign, people of the

Contd. on page 8

Central Committee on 14th Lok Sabha Polls

class and the BJP-led government which, if properly handled could also give birth to left-democratic alternative to fight parliamentary battles as an ancillary to these democratic movements, the Congress(I), another faithful defender of the capitalist class, more than once dethroned by the people from power, who authored this infamous policy of globalization, liberalization and privatization and who is still firmly committed to this policy, exploiting this tremendous anti-BJP feelings among the masses succeeded in staging a come back.

What is more shocking is to find that in this criminal endeavour to misdirect the mounting discontent of the people against the BJP, the Congress(I) got all-out support and assistance from the CPI(M) and the CPI. Both the CPI(M) and CPI, in their bid to appease the ruling capitalist class and improve their electoral prospects using the strong feeling of people to combat communal BJP as the smokescreen,

raised the slogan of installing a secular government at the Centre and forged an alliance with the Congress(I) to fight the elections together notwithstanding the fact that it is the same Congress(I) who as the most trustworthy custodian of the capitalist class, never practiced secularism during its 45 years of rule. On the contrary, guided by the hated policy of divide and rule, the Congress(I) went on inciting and fomenting alongwith the Sangh Parivar communal conflicts and conflagration. The Central Committee of the party is therefore of the firm opinion that it would be a height of mistake to construe this electoral reverse of the BJP as a victory of secularism and a defeat of communalism-fundamentalism that has made a significant inroads into the Indian body-politic as this menace of communalism-fundamentalism can only be fought and wiped out only through a sustained ideological-cultural movement it being a component of class and mass struggles.

The Central Committee of the party is, therefore, deeply concerned about the nefarious and nasty game being played by these pseudo-leftist parties which tantamounts to nothing else but helping perpetuation of the oppressive capitalist class rule that would inevitably result in yet more ruthless exploitation of the people of all categories. At the same time the Central Committee also wants to strongly emphasize that in the absence of a united powerful mass movement embracing all sections of the toiling people, which alone constitute the most effective bullwork against the Sangh Parivar's rabid communalism, the danger of spread of communal virus would not lessen but on the contrary with the frantic effort by the BJP to regain lost ground, assume more alarming proportion.

Viewing the situation from another angle, the Central Committee also notes with deep concern that with the formation of a Congress(I)-led government at the Centre, the long standing desire of

the ruling class to foist a two-party system to sustain its exploitative class rule and eventually pave the path towards bringing in administrative fascism, is going ahead. Clearly the CPI(M), CPI, by extending support to the Congress(I) are becoming instrumental in working out this sinister design.

At this grave juncture, with all these dangerous portents looming large and a Congress(I)-led government supported by the CPI(M), CPI and their allies about to be installed at the Centre, the Central Committee of the party would like to remind the people of the country that let alone expecting any relief from this government, to secure irreducible minimum condition for living, they will have to once again fall back upon the course of powerful democratic mass movements centring around the burning problems afflicting their life and therefore they need to be on a constant vigil and keep themselves prepared for joining the course of democratic mass movements.

AIDSO on Supreme Court's consent to introduce Astrology

Reacting to the Verdict of the Supreme Court in the Special Leave Petition filed by eminent scientists against the introduction of Vedic Astrology courses in the universities by University Grants Commission (UGC), Comrade Pratap Samal, All India President and Comrade Debashis Roy, General Secretary of AIDSO, have issued the following statement:

"It is a matter of deep regret that a Division Bench of the Supreme Court headed by the Chief Justice has rejected an SLP filed by eminent scientist against the introduction of Vedic Astrology courses in universities by the UGC. It is regrettable that the Court has declined to intervene in a policy decision of the government, which is so obviously against public interest. The arguments of the scientists that Vedic Astrology is completely against modern science and 'a giant leap backwards' are correct and powerful. Vedic Astrology is nothing but superstition and blind belief falsely presented by its promoters as science. The introduction of Vedic Astrology in the university curriculum is detrimental to the growth of faculties of reasoning, obstructs the development of science itself, leads to blind faith and regimented thinking, and thereby creates ground for growth of fascism. Unable to establish that Vedic Astrology is a science, the government, to defend its weak position, could only say that it is optional and that some western university departments teach Astrology. We fail to understand how the Supreme Court could accept these weak and defensive arguments over the most convincing and compelling ones presented by eminent scientists.

AIDSO appeals to the students community to develop movements against the attempt of the government and UGC to introduce Vedic Astrology courses that promote obscurantist views, blind faith and speculative attitudes in society. Education is supposed to equip the students with scientific outlook and reasoning. That is what our society urgently needs.

SUCI's Election Campaign

Contd. from page 7

constituency acknowledge the strong presence of the party's candidate.

Gujarat

The SUCI workers made intensive campaign for almost two months. There were door to door campaign, street corner meetings, street collection, streetplays, Prabhhat pheri etc. About 200 street corner meetings were held, 2 lakh hand bills were distributed. More than 50 street plays were performed. The main plank of our campaign to defeat BJP and Congress and turn the election into an instrument of struggle drew the attention of the people. The people were eager to listen to us and appreciated our stand. They were contributing to our election fund taking the leaflets and reading them then and there. Many senior citizens, veteran freedom fighters were emotional and expressed their best wishes. They said, "You are the hope of the future". During the public campaign and in the street corner meetings many were giving their addresses to help the campaign and form people's committee. When they were contacted afterwards they felt

spirited because they thought no one would take them seriously. Our political campaign provided the breathing space for the concerned people and made the election campaign a serious political battle. A serious political debate took place and people's questions made the centre stage in the campaign.

It is noteworthy that the SUCI candidate Comrade Tapan Dasgupta, being in the forefront of the struggle for rehabilitation of the earthquake victims for long, braving police torture and being implicated in false cases, received wide acclaim. Thus some notable citizens of Baroda, Ahmedabad, Surat supported Comrade Tapan Dasgupta. They came out with a joint appeal in favour of our candidate. A citizens' meeting was held in Baroda in support of Tapan Dasgupta under the presidentship of Gandhian Sri Jaddishbhai Shah. The meeting was addressed by Sri Parkashbhai Shah, Sri Kiritbhai Bhatt, Sri Jaggu Belani, Sri Mansoor Saleri, Dr. Maya Valecha, Sri Jashwant Singh Chauhan, Sri Dilip Chandulal, Ms. Sudhabehn Boda, Sri Nariman Contractor, Bharat Meheta and others.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE