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MULAYAM REPLACES MAYAWATI

Politics of opportunism reigns supreme

In the politics of vote, what matters is parading in opportunism to creep into the corridors of power as and when such a chance comes knocking at the door. At that time, the political affiliations, espousing or denouncement of Hindutva, so-called demarcation between right and left, friend and foe, upper caste and lower caste — all take the back seats. The crucial question then is how to secure a berth in power. Sheer opportunism with an eye on self-aggrandizement is the name of the game by these vote beggars of all hues — Mayawati, Mulayam, BJP, Congress and even CPI(M)-CPI. The latest venue of a demonstrative exercise has been Uttar Pradesh which saw yet another reshuffle of the ministry — not by any turn of events concerning people's interest but orchestrated by the characters who pooled the electorates' consent to corner the title of people's representative in the legislative assembly and are licensed to cross floor or realign at will to anchor at power notwithstanding what the people think, need and expect.

The BJP-BSP coalition which was worked out 16 months back to capture
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Protests Against Butcher Sharon's Visit

SUCI Delhi State held a protest demonstration against the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Tuesday, 9th September 2003. Demonstrators assembled at Jantar Mantar at 11:30 AM with banners and placards saying, "War criminal and US imperialist stooge Ariel Sharon go back". They marched in procession towards Parliament Street shouting slogans denouncing the growing US-Israel-India

nexus. A meeting was held at Parliament Street which was addressed by SUCI leaders Comrades Girijeshwar Singh, Pratap Samal, Hari Prasad, A.K. Majumdar and Rajesh. The
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SUCI Condemns Israel's Sinister Move to Expel Arafat

Strongly condemning US backed Zionist Israeli government's move to expel the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat from his homeland, Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in course of a statement on 13 September last, called upon the people of the country to come forward to denounce this dangerous move, real intention of which was to throttle Palestinian people's just and legitimate freedom struggle. He also called upon the freedom loving people of the world to raise their voice of strong protest against this fascistic move so as to stall it.

Facing attacks of goons and police Jute Workers' Strike in West Bengal Creates History

UTUC-LS, BMS and four other central trade unions gave a call for indefinite strike in the jute mills of West Bengal starting from 18 August last. The strike was called to demand that the mill owners accept the workers' charter of demands pending for the last four years. The demands were for equal wages for similar jobs, repeal of the policy of production-based wages, repeal of the agreement to reduce wage to

Rs.100/- by breaking up the old salary structure, enhanced dearness allowance, bonus, PF and gratuity as per law. It may be recalled that the jute workers' dearness allowances are pending since February, 2002, bonus for the last four years and annual increments for the past 23 years!

Fifteen trade unions including the INTUC and the CITU dominated by the
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BSP, SP, BJP all deep in horse trading

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power was split for the third time. Earlier in 1995 and 1997, these apparently strange bed-fellows, one with rabid Hindutva as the main plank and the other riding on Dalit card, came together to rule the state. But on both occasions, it did not last long as vested interests and acute group conflicts pulled down the opportunistic combination. Yet after the last elections when no one could muster enough number of MLAs to stake claim for government formation, the arithmetic to stretch the number beyond the half way mark to decide the treasury bench was again on the centre-stage. Burying the hatchet, the BJP again joined hands with Mayawati to keep Mulayam and his friends at bay. Mulayam with maximum number of 142 MLAs made every effort to romp in Congress and others to grab the chief ministerial seat. His trusted friend in the CPI(M) leadership made hectic parleys to Sonia. Some lollypops were promised to "like minded" parties and splinter groups. But all failed and Mayawati outwitted them to make it to the throne with the communal BJP whom she once castigated as *manuwadi* or party of the upper caste.

The combination started to rule. But soon cracks began to surface. A section of the BJP leaders did not veil their discontent in secrecy. There was rebellion within the ranks of the ruling parties. Mayawati quickly swung into action putting some of the rebels including Raja Bhaiyya, an MLA with host of criminal records behind prison bars. While the common people of the state were dying in biting cold and scorching sun, farmers were screaming for water and seeds, retrenched workers and unemployed youths were crying for jobs, Mayawati and her BJP friends were making merry at the cost of public

exchequer. Mayawati, dressed in diamond jewellery, was spending crores on her birthday celebration. Mayawati favoured the BJP by refusing to issue notices to L K Advani, Murli Monohar Joshi and Uma Bharti on Babari Masjid demolition case. But alas! The BJP did not reciprocate as expected. The BJP leadership did not bail her out in the controversial Taj heritage corridor case. The project, as revealed by the facts including arrest of the central environment secretary, took off with the tacit approval of the BJP-led central government who did not make it an issue till now. Mayawati earlier pleaded ignorance about the matter but later was compelled to admit her consent to the project. But the BJP leadership, cunningly shifted the burden on her and moved out of the scene. Mayawati had to eat the humble pie, felt ditched and laid down her office. So the temperature ran high and suddenly the fissure took place.

Mayawati alleged that some BJP and NDA leaders owing allegiance to Prime Minister Vajpayee have dislodged her. She identified the plotters as George Fernandez, Promod Mahajan, Rajnath Singh and Lalji Tandon (whom she branded as 'Lalchi', meaning greed, although she herself tied a Rakhi on his hand the other month to reaffirm her sisterly affection). She also informed that there are two groups within the BJP: one belonging to Vajpayee and the other to Advani. She threatened to expose the BJP leaders at the right time.

Immediately Mulayam Singh fighting for power jumped into the fray to seize the opportunity. And like Mayawati, Mulayam too found support among his one time staunch opponents Ajit Singh of RLD and Kalyan Singh of RKP. Ajit Singh,

who was a constituent of NDA till the other day and used to discourage any reference to Mulayam, in an act of somersault found in the same Mulayam a "stabilizing factor". Kalyan Singh, incidentally, was the BJP chief minister in UP when the Babari structure was brought down. The Congress who was hesitant to back Mulayam earlier lest it loses his 'left over' pockets of vote, also blinked positively. And the CPI(M), of course, was a step ahead from the very first moment in ensuring that such a "secular" coalition takes off in no time. Yet the desired number was wanting. But Mulayam was not worried as the BJP was not expected to come in his way. Moreover, Mayawati like many other bourgeois parties, too could not retain the support of her flock when bereft of the trappings of power, and such was inevitable this time as well. Already, 44 BSP MLAs have joined Mulayam's SP. It is learnt that 37 MLAs who defected from the BSP wanted to sit in the Assembly as a separate block. But Mulayam forced them to merge with his SP so that number of his MLAs goes upto 182 and to engineer a split in his party, at least 61 MLAs needed to dissociate and hence the BSP-defectors would fall far short of that number if they subsequently, for any other petty consideration, contemplate any such move. On the other hand, Mulayam did not consent to take some Congress MLAs who sounded to join him as because he preferred not to annoy Sonia at this juncture. The CPI(M) leaders who are up and busy in working out a fence between Sonia and Mulayam might well feel elated at this.

The BJP sponsored governor of UP, who earlier, in disregard to constitutional provision, did not invite Mulayam, the leader of the single largest group in the

Assembly, to form government, obviously to pave the way for the BJP-BSP combine to take shape and take over, did not hesitate to hand over the reins to Mulayam seemingly because the BJP High Command desired so.

Then started the dilemma of the Congress, whether to join Mulayam's cabinet or to support it from outside. The reason was pretty clear. The Congress was hoping to combine with Mayawati in other states particularly Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in the ensuing elections, to improve its poll prospects. But then it was reported that Mayawati has been advised by the BJP top bosses to stay away from the Congress. Mayawati also mellowed down her attack on the BJP by saying that personally both Vajpayee and Advani were keen to have the BJP-BSP alliance to continue. Then she finally scotched all speculation that BSP would align with the Congress. A section of the press has reported that she is again trying to tie knots with the BJP, on the other hand, the Congress has still not been able to elicit any commitment from Mulayam in regard to supporting Sonia's candidature of prime ministership in the event of any such possibility in future.

While the BJP was trying to set right its house, already in disarray, in an important state like UP riding piggy-back on Mayawati, the BSP leader too, in similar manner wanted to consolidate her position making full use of the chief ministerial chair she could occupy courtesy the BJP. So it was a pact between two self-seeking political forces and the fissure occurred centring round the issues of sectarian interest only. The BJP has been very calculative in its moves. The nasty parliamentary politics of UP is heavily based on caste,

creed and religion. To free her from 'Dalits only' image, Mayawati indicated to confer a "Sarvajan" (for all and sundry) character to her party and as a first step fielded 37 Brahmins and 37 Thakur nominees in the election. This alerted the BJP who was traditionally playing this upper caste card to gain in the elections. Moreover, the Mayawati government miserably failed to address any of the burning problems of people's life. As her coalition partner the BJP was fast losing its grip over the people. In the meantime, the BJP felt encouraged by the so-called pro-temple findings of Ayodhya excavation and became hopeful of recreating a 1992 like atmosphere to muster ballot on Ayodhya. With Mulayam in power, this would be easier for it. So it prefers to have a clandestine power sharing arrangement with Mulayam and at the same time maintain a public posture to oppose it. Mulayam, on the other hand, is working his strategy to cling to power by withdrawing POTA against Raja Bhaiyya obviously to send a message to the snakes and scorpions to join him without hesitation, praising Sonia, whom he once torpedoed from prime ministership, as a true Indian having made sacrifices in saving UP from hurtling towards disaster, promising to restore "Thakur" pride to woo the upper caste segment and what not. Of late, some jargons have been culled to justify all such actions, defections, power-hunt and privilege seeking. The BJP covets Mayawati for the sake of office and calls it caste-engineering. Mulayam admits criminals and adversaries into his fold in the name of political management. The Congress weighs between Mulayam and Mayawati under the new buzz, pragmatism. The CPI(M) decides to join hand with the Congress to defeat

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Protests Against Sharon's Visit

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speakers pointed out that Sharon is the main architect of the racist policy of Israeli expansionism, reducing Palestinian towns and villages to rubble, terrorising the Palestinian population, establishing illegal Israeli settlements to grab fertile land and water sources, and assassinating Palestinian leaders. As a professional soldier, Sharon had personally carried out mass killing of Palestinian civilians and Egyptian prisoners of war. As Defence Minister of Israel, Sharon was responsible for the mass murder of thousands of Palestinian men, women and children in the Sabra and Shattila refugee camps by Lebanese armed gang. This massacre

forced Sharon to resign whose extremist right-wing politics always had the support of US imperialism. In order to divert world attention from the heinous imperialist attack and occupation of Iraq, to create divisions in the Palestinian political leadership, and to establish a puppet Palestinian state that will be submissive to American and Israeli interests in the region, the Bush Administration and the Sharon Government are enacting the charade of a so-called Middle East peace plan. The speakers said that the ruling Indian capitalist class is furthering its own imperialist ambition of becoming a regional superpower by purchasing advanced military equipment from

Israel with the blessings of the US imperialists. The ruling classes of the US, Israel and India are forging a military nexus in the name of counter-terrorism, but are in fact pursuing their own

Anti-Sharon Protest rally in Nagpur, Maharashtra

imperialist agenda under this guise. The imperialist ambition of the Indian capitalist class was leading to unemployment and misery for the people, and growing oppression of the working class. The speakers also cautioned that in view of the approaching elections in India, the ruling BJP, the perpetrator of State-sponsored genocide of Muslims in Gujarat last year, would use the Sharon

visit to create further communal discord by strengthening the bogey of Islamic terrorism. The speakers appealed to the people to identify and oppose the aggressive anti-people designs behind the growing US-Israel-India nexus, oppose the visit of Sharon, and support the Palestinian struggle.

Similar protest rallies were held in different states of the country.

Joint rally in Hyderabad against Sharon

Protesting the visit of Ariel Sharon, the Prime Minister of Israel, nine left parties viz., SUCI, CPI, CPI(M), CPI(ML)-New Democracy, CPI(ML), MCPI, ML-Committee organized a rally on 9th September which marched from old MLA quarters to Babu Jagjivan Ram statue (near LB stadium). Throughout the route of the procession the activists of the nine left parties raised slogans condemning the massacre of thousands of Palestinian people, children and women perpetrated by Sharon.

At the culmination gathering Comrades B.V. Raghavulu, Aziz Basha of CPI, Govardhan of CPI(ML)-New Democracy, G. Vijaya Kumar of CPI(ML), Ch. Murahari of SUCI and Chandra Sekahr of MCPI addressed.

Comrade Ch. Murahari, member, A.P. State Organizing Committee, SUCI condemned the Government of India for inviting this modern Hitler, the 'butcher' to visit India. He said, it is a shame on the peace-loving people of India to invite such a butcher and to honour him as a state guest.

He demanded of the Government of India and also A.P. State Government to cut off all trade, military, business relations with Israel. Respecting the anti-imperialist sentiments and tradition of Indian people he demanded of the Government of India to take a firm stand against the US imperialist machinations also.

At the end an effigy of Ariel Sharon was burnt amidst thunderous slogans denouncing "butcher" Sharon.

Students Rally in Hyderabad

The students of Anantapur district are in the thick of powerful movement. Under the leadership of AIDS O thousands of students have been participating in rallies, protest demonstrations, dharnas and rasta-rokos throughout the district for cancellation of all fees in drought affected areas.

As a culmination of one month long phase of movement, on 23rd August 2003 at the call of AIDS O, large number of students from different parts of the district took out a massive rally up to the Board of Intermediate Education (BIE) in Hyderabad. After the rally, there was protest dharna before the BIE. The Dharna continued for two hours until the Secretary of BIE had invited AIDS O

leaders for discussions. A delegation led by Comrade S. Govindarajulu, State President, AIDS O met the Secretary and deliberated on various burning demands of the students. The Secretary assured the delegation of extending the due date of payment of fees for two more months. He also promised to send the representation to the government for necessary steps.

Comrades S. Govindarajulu and B. Narasimhulu, Anantapur District President, AIDS O, addressed the dharna. Comrade D. Rahavendra, member, Anantapur District also spoke. Other AIDS O organizers Comrades C.L. Ramakrishna Reddy, Mallikarjuna and Devarajulu conducted the programme.

Nabbing CPI(M) leader-cum-goon — reveals what is underneath

He was the kingpin of the underworld in North Calcutta. A racket of all kinds of criminal activities, extortion, illegal operations in real estate, murders was under his supreme command. No one could dare to come in his way or refuse to heed his dictates. He goes by the name, Dulal Banerjee, a member of the CPI(M) Dum Dum local committee, a leader of the CITU, a close confidant of many a influential state level leader of the CPI(M) including ministers and MLAs. Under pressure of another group inside the party he was finally arrested by police on account of murdering two youths. Immediately, the local CPI(M) MLA and the powerful state level leader of the party, Rajdeo Goala along with his local secretary and others took to the streets, blocked the traffic, protesting against the 'errant' police officials who had the guts to haul him up. Electronic media covered all these incidents and even recorded interviews of Goala and others who made no secret of their ire at Dulal's arrest. But Dulal and two of his associates were not released, not even granted bail. However, five other followers of Dulal, accused of the same murders, managed to escape. The case went on for 17 long months.

Everyday during the trial, one could see Dulal's supporters flocking the court premises and scaring everybody. Even police officials were threatened of dire consequences once Dulal is 'acquitted'. Dulal himself taunted at the police saying that once he comes out, they would have to salute him again. While the criminal case was going on Dulal Banerjee was elected General Secretary of the

CITU controlled West Bengal Railway Hawkers' Union. Both the CPI(M) State Secretary, Anil Biswas and CITU State Secretary, Chittabrata Majumdar claimed that they did not know about it. Though the five absconding associates of Dulal could not be "traced" by the police, a newspaper report said that one of them, a health department employee, was marking his attendance.

All said and done, the verdict was pronounced and based on glittering evidences, Dulal and his associates were found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. Immediately, they CPI(M)'s State Secretariat met on the day of pronouncement of the judgement itself and expelled Dulal from the party. Asked what held the party leadership back in doing so earlier, Anil Biswas replied that he was expelled earlier but the decision was not made public for fear of influencing the court — a defence too weak to weigh and a pronouncement that could well be construed as an impertinence bordering on contempt of court. Anil Biswas also went on defending his state committee member Rajdeo Goala by denying his "softness" towards Dulal. Not only that, Goala was made chairman of the Calcutta Tramways Co Ltd. Also the party membership of three of Dulal's associates accused in the crime were renewed. Though there is a suppressed happiness among the traumatized residents of Dulal's personal fiefdom, they could not heave a sigh of relief because his followers are still at large, patronized by a powerful section of the party's state level leadership, and hence acts

of vengeance and retaliation are difficult to be ruled out.

Characters like Dulal constitute the main force of the CPI(M) today. A few days back, a police super of North 24-parganas district had to face punishment transfer for arresting Bulton, a notorious criminal under the CPI(M) fold. In the case of Dulal, a powerful section of the CPI(M) leadership opposed to Goala, wanted him to be in the hands of he police and punished. It is the inner-party squabble that brought the downfall of Dulal. These goons, criminals and anti-socials, protected by the CPI(M) leadership and the police, secure votes for the CPI(M), arrange finance for the party, mount assault on political opponents, threaten and terrorize common people, perform the job of strike breakers, and launch lethal attacks on the participants of democratic mass movement. The CPI(M) leadership can surely boast of having outsmarted Narendra Modi, Bal Thackrey and Vinay Kathihar in this regard. Politics of criminalization and criminalization of politics have become the main plank of their operation. In the face of severe public outrage and despise, the CPI(M) leadership admits infiltration of "unwanted elements" in the party and feigns remedial actions. But people know that these are all playing to the gallery and "feeds" for the media as facts enriched by experience go in exposing the reality. It is reported in the Press that in an internal circular the CPI(M), inter alia, has mentioned, "The party has become a conglomerate of self-seekers, promoters, contractors, middlemen and the people who sell workers' interest for their

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee condemns move to malign Urdu language

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, has issued the following statement on 15.9.2003.

"We strongly condemn the statement of Binoy Kathihar, BJP leader of UP, branding Urdu, one of the rich languages of India, as the "Language of the Terrorists".

"It is to be recalled that Urdu like other developed Indian languages served the Indian freedom struggle and the development of Indian literature which was used as a powerful vehicle by many nationalist leaders and eminent writers.

"Although, due to communal attitude of both the BJP and Congress, this language is being systematically neglected since long and relegated to the background, Kathihar's demand to stop use of Urdu in Governmental offices of UP is a further attack upon this language by maligning it. It is a sinister design to fuel linguistic conflicts and communal tension in order to boost up Hindutva zealots to reap harvest in the hustings."

Bandh is not a taboo to the Chambers of Commerce

After all, bandhs are not bad per se. But it needs to castigate a bandh call if such is a part of a democratic movement to seek relief from the mounting onslaughts on the life of the common people. The Chambers of Commerce, CII and all other bodies of the owner class cried so hoarse before the Bengal Bandh of 21st August called by the SUCI and made a runaway success by the common people through their whole-hearted participation. The captains of the Industry found that bandhs "impede development, create chaos and anarchy, disrupt

narrow gains." (*Times of India*, 1.9.03) Late Benoy Chowdhury, a veteran leader of the CPI(M) too, once said, in disgust, it had become a party of the contractors.

Most unfortunate part is that the party is still bracketed as left and the common people of the State who had once rallied behind

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normalcy" and above all have "sharpness as a form of protest". So far so good!

But now the Chambers of Commerce suddenly discover the enormous potential of bandh to realize demand. The Hyderabad-Karnataka Chamber of Commerce gave a bandh call at Gulbarga and Bidar districts on September, 5 to press the demand for setting up a High Court Bench in Gulbarga. It is reported that the call, "paralyzed the normal life." We eagerly await the comments from the corporate bosses and industry barons.

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Banning cow slaughter for slaughtering human lives

With elections approaching communal agenda are being increasingly put forth in Indian body politic. On 20th August last the ruling BJP tried to table a Bill in Parliament banning cow slaughter but had to withdraw it temporarily facing opposition even from their NDA partners. They are now planning, as declared by them, to hold an all party meeting on the issue for consensus decision.

But why did the BJP take up such a sensitive issue at this moment? It is well known that banning of cow slaughter is a long standing cry within the Sangh Parivar and for the last two months and a half it has revived the issue with a newer zeal no doubt with a mischievous motive. First the central BJP government tried to dug up the dormant Ram Mandir Nirman dispute a few months ago with the Sankaracharya of Kanchi but could not drag it long. Thereafter the government in connivance with the Lucknow Bench of Allahabad High Court arranged for excavation of the ruins beneath the masjid by the ASI which submitted a most controversial and concocted report in the interest of the Visva Hindu Parishad that has been widely challenged by the most eminent historians and archaeologists of the country. The third attempt has now been the cow slaughter issue to incite anti-Muslim Hindu communal sentiment in the country before the elections.

The plea is cruelty on cow — the 'Gomata'. The concrete proposal in the intended Bill is to bring a central legislation under Entry 17 of the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. The proposed Entry is 'Prevention of cruelty to animals'. And these 'animals' are nothing but cows! But do they not know that the Gowalas, mostly Hindus, and the other owners of the cows sell the spent up cows when they cease to give milk and render services to the owners, knowing full well that those will be slaughtered for consumption as beef? Even the affectionate and unwilling owners are compelled to do it simply for monetary and practical reasons. And even if these are not sold out for the above purpose and the owners fail to feed them they roam as stray cows in the streets. Is that not cruelty to them? Should the urban Sangh Parivar and BJP fanatics who spearhead this obnoxious move bring these leftover hungry cows in their city flats to feed and give them shelter? Then why this hypocrisy? Moreover, when the Hindus and others also slaughter goats, sheep, chicken and pigs for meat is no less a cruelty than slaughter of cows. The protagonists of banning cow slaughter often dish out the lame excuse that cows render great service to the society than the other ones referred to above. Do not the buffaloes give great and equal service to the society like the cows? When the Hindus sacrifice goat and buffalo to the goddesses and dance with blood and shivered heads of those animals before the deities is not that act of barbarity and height of cruelty? Then why targeting only cow slaughter? Because these BJP,

Shiva Sena and other Hindu zealots in the government are actually targeting the minority communities — the Muslims and Christians — for committing 'cruelty' as they consume beef. The old Hindu sashtras like Vedas and Puranas bear ample testimony that the Hindus in the old ages used to take beef and *Munis* and *Rishis* used to offer beef in Yagnas in ancient times. Rajendralal Mitra, the great 19th century scholar and historian, who was neither an atheist nor a Marxist, had established it beyond doubt. In his celebrated source book of ancient Indian historiography "The Indo-Aryans" (in two volumes) there is a chapter "Beef in ancient India" where this great scholar had cited scores of literary sources with concrete reference to beef eating (along with horse, buffalo etc.) from old Sanskrit classics such as the Vedas, the Manusamhita, and so on.

The great Hindu religious preacher Swami Vivekananda was remarkably truthful to facts and history on this question. He clearly stated, "There was a time in this very India when without eating beef, no Brahmin could remain a Brahmin". (Speech at Madura, Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol.III, p.174)

The 'religious' BJP leaders have crafted sinister designs to banish all these truths and facts of history from the present generation by using government machinery. The HRD ministry has instructed the CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) to withdraw from curriculum the book "Ancient India" by D. N. Jha written basing on Mitra's "The Indo-Aryans" and has directed the teachers to delete by

indelible ink the name and reference of Rajendralal Mitra for those students who study the book. Falsehood, thy name is BJP and Sangh Parivar!

The think-tanks of the ruling lobby have been cautioning the BJP leaders that nothing is secured in the coming elections. The people are not happy with the BJP rule. Their political slogans and jargons are not carrying and their performances — despite enormous advertisements in all types of media — are far from convincing them. They feel cheated and robbed by their economic and other policies in the first five-year innings of BJP-led NDA. So something more positive and palpable is to be dished out. Hence is played this latest Hindu card — 'Ban the cow slaughter'.

This time the BJP rulers have resorted to a very tricky fail-gain tactics. The BJP high command knew well that the Bill would not be passed in view of the present algebra in the Parliament. They are also not interested in enactment of the Bill at the moment. All they are interested in is to relay the message to simple-minded Hindus that the BJP has not forgotten their feelings nor abandoned the slogan of prohibition of cow slaughter. They are trying to do all that they can, but if the others i.e. the opposition do not help them, they are helpless! Thus, even though formally not adopted, it will keep the religious agenda running and serve the purpose in the vote. The cry will be, 'Friends, you vote us back to power with enough margin in the respective houses so that we can do whatever we want to do.' This is the gameplan of theirs.

But, suppose, if the above Bill is passed and cow slaughter is banned throughout the country what will be the result?

First, if the Bill is enacted, it will enforce a statutory malnutrition on a vast majority, deprived of a cheap source of protein food, to satisfy the so-called religious sentiment of a handful of people. They will be divorced of their fundamental right to choose their food also.

Secondly, this will hard hit the leather industry in the country and throw hundreds of thousands of poor people out of job or profession. The country will have to import leather with valuable

foreign exchange.

The third and the most dangerous one is that this ban will trigger off fratricidal communal riots in the country which the BJP wants most for electoral gains by whipping up Hindu communal passion.

But it must not be missed that the BJP and Shiv Sena are not the only culprits — the Congress, apart from some other NDA partners silent simply for electoral considerations, is also a party of the mischievous game. It is the Congress Chief Minister of M.P., Digvijay Singh, who in the recent times before the ensuing elections in the state raised the demand for banning cow slaughter. While objecting the Bill in Parliament the Congress MPs boasted of their party's achievement in banning cow slaughter in some states earlier but protested against the proposed Central legislation on it on the plea that by this the BJP-led government was going to abrogate the right of the states through such move.

In this regard it should be reminded that in 1893, Bal Gangadhar Tilak established 'Goraksha Sabha' to boost up Hindu nationalism. He obviously did it not with any communal intention but to mix up Hindu religion with national freedom movement. But as a result, the Muslims boycotted Puna Congress session.

Not only this, centering round cow slaughter even communal riot broke out in Bombay and Bihar. Strongly decrying the riot on cow slaughter issue in Bihar in 1917 Rabindranath Tagore said, "We ourselves will kill animals in the name of religion — but if others do the same we shall prepare for human carnage. What else can be called atrocity on others?" (*Chhoto O Baro, Kalantar*). Just a few months back the upper cast Hindu fanatics led by Bajrang Dal savagely killed five innocent *Chamars* (cobblers and tanners) on the false charge of slaughtering cow, in presence of high ranking police officials like SP and DSP within a police station compound in Haryana. Do not the Congress leaders know these incidents and dangerous provocation factors involved with the cow slaughter ban issue in Indian communal body politic now much more vitiated by the Sangh Parivar dominance?

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Jute Workers' Strike

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Congress and the CPI(M) respectively, not only opposed the jute strike on such legitimate demands, but actively opposed it and launched attacks against it. But despite this, the jute workers responded to the strike call spontaneously and with great enthusiasm. Out of the total 59 jute mills in West Bengal, all-out strike was observed in 37. Even in the remaining mills, there was good response from the workers. The way in which the jute workers heroically carried on the strike defying the combined opposition and attacks by the 15 trade unions, by the police and anti-socials backed by the CITU, would remain a shining example in the history of jute workers' movement. The way in which the anti-socials, the armed hoodlums of the CITU dragged the workers out of their quarters and forced them to work under duress in some instances and threatened to kill the striking workers, evokes memories of the coercion and forcible break-up of the railwaymen's strike in 1974 under the notorious Indira Congress rule. Still, defying all terror and threat, the jute strike went on for ten days. Revealing an utterly undemocratic and repressive attitude, the labour minister of the CPI(M)-led state government did not hold any tripartite meeting during these ten days. On 25 August, the Union Labour Minister convened a meeting of the Industrial Committee of Jute and included this jute strike on the agenda. Naturally, representatives of jute mill owners and the CITU with its pro-owner leanings did not attend this meeting in a bid to ensure that it did not become fruitful. With the assurance that a committee would be formed with representatives of Union Labour and Textile ministries, West Bengal government, the unions and the employers to go into the problems of the workers and

the employers of the jute industry and submit a comprehensive report within three months and a tripartite meeting would be called on the basis of that report to thrash out and solve the issues, the central government appealed to the striking unions to postpone the strike. The owner-employers were also advised that none should be penalized for participating in the strike. On the basis of these assurances given by the Union Labour Minister Sahib Singh Verma, the strike was called off on 27 August and the striking unions decided to postpone the strike by three and half months. It is, however, to be noted that even after the announcement of postponement of the strike, several mill owners have closed down their mills by declaring "suspension of work" or by other means. Kamarhati, Ganges and Hooghly jute mills were closed down.

The workers have to understand and bear in mind that what this movement of jute workers with such tremendous potential needed was a correct leadership and that it was imperative to form the "Workers' Struggle Committees" as the workers' own instruments of struggle. The attacks of owner-police-administration and the CITU-backed force of goons cannot be resisted for long by relying upon only spontaneity. For that, numerous "Workers' Struggle Committees" have to be formed and also a large "Volunteer force". The workers will have to take their decisions themselves at the sittings of such committees and also to examine and test the leadership. The present jute strike has shown that the government, the owner-employers and their subservient union leadership are united — they will not easily accept any demand of the workers. So, the workers have no other way out but to be more united, organized and develop protracted struggle.

Massive rally in Bangalore against on-line lottery

The Karnataka State Committee of AIDYO and AIMSS organized a massive rally against on-line lottery on 13.8.2003. The menace of online lottery named, Playwin, Lotto, Keno, etc., has taken a heavy toll. More than 500 cases of mental illness have been reported at the prestigious National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS). More than 100 people committed suicide unable to bear the brunt of loans as a result of addiction to such gambling.

On 13th August thousands of people representing all the districts of the state participated in this organized movement. Many litterateurs, academicians, social activists, freedom fighters throughout the state lent their support to this movement.

Addressing the huge gathering veteran freedom fighter Shri H. S. Doreswamy said, "Our freedom fighters during the independent struggle gave a call to eradicate social evils like alcoholism, gambling, etc. Today we are realizing the importance of the call. When our governments are bringing in anti-people policies like online lottery and pushing the society to the brink of total devastation our very future is in peril. Despite our protest if the online lottery is not banned we should be ready to fill up the jails throughout the state."

In the protest march that started at Chicklabbagh, thousands of youth, students, farmers, workers and women from 25 districts of the state participated with great enthusiasm.

At Basaveshwara Circle a huge protest meeting was organized. Addressing the gathering Comrade B.R. Manjunath, State President, AIDYO exposed the

government's conspiracy of showing the people a mirage of achieving instant richness and filling the pockets of rich business men as well as its own coffers.

Comrade K. Radhakrishna, Karnataka State Secretary, SUCI said, "Today the system in our country is rotting, because it is a dying capitalist system. The political parties

lottery. "This irresponsibility must be condemned", she said.

Presiding over the meeting Comrade H.G. Jayalakshmi, State Secretary, AIMSS said, "Linking midday meal scheme with online lottery is unpardonable. It is the bounden duty of the government to provide education, health and other

The dais on 13 August in Bangalore

standing guard to this system aspired the destruction of all the values of the people. Also, the crisis-ridden imperialist powers headed by the USA are hand in glove with our rulers. As a part of globalization online lottery has entered our society."

Renowned author and advocate Smt. Banu Mushtaq criticized the statement of the Chief Minister that women should keep men away from online

basics to its citizens. Failing utterly on that front the government wants to get the sanction of the people for its evil policy on the basis of this falsehood."

The meeting passed three important resolutions, on drought and farmers' suicide, against licence to 1000 new liquor shops and toxicity in colas.

Delegations of AIDYO and AIMSS met the Governor and submitted a memorandum.

Banning Cow Slaughter

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Then why they resort to such soft peddling of Hindu communal sentiment? Obviously to secure their Hindu vote bank in election politics. Thus their politics is nothing but the other side of the BJP's communal coin. And wonder of wonders, this Congress is the secular ally of the CPI (M) — the self-styled communist and leftist!

These bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties are playing with fire and they know it that such game will

lead the country to fratricidal bloodbath. Still they do it only for governmental pelf and power through bourgeois parliamentary electoral gains. People, particularly of the Hindu community, must see through these evil designs being free from all prejudice, bigotry and ill feelings to other communities and come forward to build up socio-political movements to save the country from communal holocaust. This is the need of the hour.

Mulayam Replaces Mayawati

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the BJP in the poll and justifies it as a coalescence of secularist forces. And all these are categorized under one broad head — political compulsion — an euphemism for a cesspool of corruption and moral turpitude, annihilation of principles and a blatant kowtowing to vested interest. So when such parliamentary parties fight with each other, find fault with one another, it becomes akin to the pot calling the kettle black.

In this backdrop, there ought not to be any doubt whatsoever that the basis of both the present Mulayam-Congress combination as well as dislodged coalition of BJP-BSP has been the same — crass opportunism and petty self interest. There is not even an iota of concern for the well-being of the people. Mad with power — both money and muscle — and emboldened by the backing of the ruling monopoly class, these unscrupulous political elements are so arrogant that they hardly care for the people or the public opinion. As if they are licensed to do all these nonsense unabated. Truly this is democracy diseased. Not only in our country, even in the classical democracies of the West, one could witness this total fall of standard and trampling of all norms and ethics. The way the members of Parliament in US and UK put a seal of approval to the heinous crime of Bush and Blair in annexing sovereign Iraq by telling lies and fabricating documents, is a glaring example of how corrupts and criminals don the cloak of legislative. But why is the political scene, to be exact, the arena of parliamentary politics, so polluted and under the captivity of opportunistic and criminal politicians? Is it accidental or inevitable as per socio-historic law? It was a time in history when the

bourgeoisie, in the days of emergence as a progressive class, was the standard-bearer of democracy, albeit in the bourgeois sense. Parliamentary democracy, as a political superstructure of the pre-monopoly competitive capitalist economy had a different character. Today, in the era of moribund capitalism, when the bourgeoisie has turned out and out reactionary, the parliamentary democratic structure too has decayed. This is not even the parliamentary democracy of 19th and 20th century Europe. Bourgeois parliamentarians did reflect a standard at that time also. One can not forget the fever of the middle-class revolutionaries during our freedom struggle. Even the standard reflected by the bourgeois leaders of our freedom movement was of a very high order. But today, bourgeois democratic values and ideals cannot provide that base of character. Serving the bourgeoisie now is synonymous with treading the line of reaction.

None of the bourgeois parties, be it the ruling or the parliamentary oppositional, big or small, national or regional, who are committed to serve the cause of the capitalist class, can be expected to behave otherwise. These parties having no difference in basic class angularity with the fascist forces would make every endeavour to come to political power by resorting to any kind of manipulation, manoeuvre, use of money and muscle power, combination and recombination, defection, horse-trading and what not. Faced with a situation where intense and indissoluble crisis of capitalism is giving birth to severe group conflicts and fierce competition within the class, resulting in split and further splits in the bourgeois parties, the bourgeois class

as a part of a grand design to divide people over caste, religion, communalism, f u n d a - m e n t a l i s m , provincialism and other fissiparous as well as separatist thinkings, is encouraging the casteist, fundamentalist and ethnic parties so that the people in general and the working class, in particular become vulnerable to reactionary ideas of different hues and blindly stand behind such political outfits who thrive on the ignorance, political unconsciousness as well as pent up feelings of the masses. The people's unity, particularly the unity of the working class becomes the worst casualty.

It is true that this naked lust for power and lucre is causing a great aversion towards politics among people. People tend to believe that politics means corruption, plunder and loss of scruples. A section of people feel that nothing could be expected of politics, nobody would do anything for them. But would this apathy towards politics help in stemming the rot? Or would it allow the power-hungry bourgeois politicians, rogues and ruffians to rule unchallenged, subject people to more misery, increased dose of economic, political and social oppressions? This is what needs to be pondered over. The so-called vote politics with all its ugly facets need to be combatted with the high nobler politics, the revolutionary politics of the proletariat based on the edifice of higher ethical and cultural standard. This is the true alternative and already this revolutionary politics based on Marxism-Leninism-Comrade Shibdas Ghosh thoughts has started stirring the people with a new consciousness, providing them the grit and courage to stand erect against the fascist onslaughts of the ruling class and take up cudgels

On different dates four central trade unions UTUC-LS, CITU, AITUC, HMS and BHEL (UTUC-LS), UTU (Independent Trade Union) and Bharatiya Anusuchit Jati Janajati Trade Union organized several protest demonstrations in Bhopal against TamilNadu Government and Supreme Court's anti-employee verdict of ban on strike. A view of such a rally held on 21.8.03 before the Jubilee Gate of BHEL.

Protest in Bangalore against Pepsi and Coca Cola

Bangalore district committee of All India Democratic Students Organization (AIDSO) and All India Mahila Samskruthika Sanghatane (AIMSS), and All India Democratic Youth

participated in the demonstration that was organized at Mysore Bank Circle on 20.8.03.

Comrades Mahadev Prasad, District President, AIDSO, Govindarajan, District Committee member,

Organization (AIDYO) organized a protest demonstration against the poisonous soft drinks Pepsi and Coca Cola, since these soft drinks have high toxic chemical ingredients that are hazardous to public health. Hundreds of students, youth and women

AIDYO, Shobha, District Secretary, AIMSS in their speech exposed the unholy nexus between the state and central governments and the multinationals in this regard.

A large replica of Pepsi and Coca Cola was burnt amidst thunderous slogans.

against the fleeing and deception of politicians defending the moribund bourgeois rule. In West Bengal, it has already carved out a space in the people's mind as the force upholding their cause while in the other states, such a conviction is slowly gaining ground.

While the political parties subservient to the ruling class would continue this nasty game of power

politics bereft of rudimentary democratic values and principles, people must unite on the platform of conscious democratic movement under genuine leadership to press for their genuine demands and in the process restrain, if not inflict defeat on the forces of reaction including the power-thirsty politicians. People's politics must triumph over anti-people politics.

Red Salute Comrade Asha Banerjee

Comrade Asha Banerjee, a dedicated party worker of Joynagar-Majilpore Municipality in South 24-Parganas district, breathed her last at Dakshinanchal Swastha Sadan, Joynagar on 21st August last. She was bedridden for a long time suffering from various old age ailments. She was 75. After her demise, district leaders, workers and supporters went to Swastha Sadan and paid revolutionary homage to her memory by offering floral tributes.

The memorial meeting of Comrade Asha Banerjee was held on 31st August on behalf of Municipality Party Committee at P.C. Pal Institution.

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, our beloved General Secretary sent his condolence message,

which was read out in the memorial meeting.

Condolence Message of Comrade Nihar Mukherjee

After a long sickness Comrade Asha Banerjee breathed her last on 21st August at the Dakshinanchal Swastha Sadan at Joynagar, South 24-Parganas, West Bengal.

She started her revolutionary life in the 1950's. After beginning her party work as a regular worker in Howrah district she came in personal touch with Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. She was one of the handful of active female workers of our party in those days. At that time, there was many a obstacle for the women to come out of their homes and engage in active politics. Even Comrade Shibdas Ghosh and his close associates had no regular provision for shelter and food. It was difficult for the present day party workers to comprehend the arduous struggle our women workers had to undertake to sell party literature, engage in fund collection drive and other works in such a situation.

After working in Howrah district, Comrade Asha Banerjee worked for a long period under the Calcutta District Committee staying in the party commune at Tarak Pramanik Road, Calcutta. While living here she was married with Comrade

Sachin Banerjee, member, Central Committee of our party.

After quite some time she was sent to Joynagar as per the decision of the party. While doing party work, even there she had to face various adversities. Besides, financial difficulty was her constant companion. Birth of her child made the financial crisis acute. In such a situation she took up the job of a school teacher in a primary school at Joynagar. After some time her second child Shyamali was born. When this little girl was 3/4 years old, Comrade Asha Banerjee used to lay her down on a jute sack, tie her up to a bench and go away to the school. She used to keep food and water for her nearby. There was nothing to prevent cats and dogs from taking these. In this way, Shyamali was infected with diptheria. I was then in-charge of the party finance. I could not collect the money required for her treatment. The child died without any treatment. After this incident the relatives and neighbours of Comrade Asha Banerjee not only rudely reproached her, they even bitterly ridiculed her saying, "Why did you marry if you could not provide treatment for your child?" Comrade

Banerjee bore all this silently and stoically.

At the root of this extraordinary power of endurance that she acquired was the deep influence of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh's teachings, character, and affection. At that time, just as Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, through his personal association, deep affection and revolutionary teachings was moulding the party workers one by one, and at the same time he had created a joyous, free, open and truly dialectical relationship between the leaders and workers of the party and a lively environment conducive to the revolutionary political struggle throughout the party. It is by surrendering herself to the party from the very beginning and involving herself in this inner struggle of the party that Comrade Asha Banerjee acquired such power of endurance. This struggle was the source of her strength.

For the very long period that she was active, she all along remained a shining example of a dedicated and silent worker. Those who did not see her in those days, would perhaps not be able to fully grasp this.

Red Salute Comrade Asha Banerjee !

SUCI on Supreme Court remark on Gujarat

Comrade Dwarika Nath Rath, Secretary Gujarat State Organizing Committee, SUCI, in a statement welcomed the remark of the Supreme Court that if Narendra Modi, the Gujarat Chief Minister, cannot protect the citizens, he has no right to remain in power. This once again proves that there was a mockery of the judicial process when the trial court in Gujarat following the witnesses turning hostile after being threatened and intimidated acquitted the 21 accused of the Best Bakery Case where 14 people were burnt alive by the Hindu zealots during the worst pogrom ever seen. It was so glaring a case of the BJP-led government deliberately suppressing the facts and terrorizing the witnesses from coming out with the

truth that even the Supreme Court could not but vent its ire and directly point at the Hindu fundamentalist Modi government of dereliction of duty. We demand that the case be conducted in a free and fair manner in due compliance with the legal procedure and the culprits be meted out exemplary punishment. We also demand that the State Government does honour the directive of the Supreme Court and take all possible steps to protect the life and property of the minority and provide adequate compensation to the riot victims. SUCI appeals to the people of Gujarat to come forward and launch a mighty democratic movement to force the BJP-led state government haul up the culprits and deliver justice to the hapless riot victims.

SUCI on High Court Award on Electricity

Comrade Provash Ghosh, West Bengal State Secretary of the SUCI in a press statement dated September 12 stated :

"In two consecutive judgements on 8th and 9th September, 2003, the Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta held 52 paise increased power tariff and 9 paise increase in fuel surcharge for West Bengal State Electricity Board totally illegal.

The judgement unmistakably proves that both the State Government and the Electricity Regulatory Commission are not only at work against the consumers but also at work undemocratically and illegally.

This historic verdict reflects the legitimate demands of the mass movement and we welcome it."

CPI(M) leader-cum-goon

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the left forces in search of an alternative healthy people politics as opposed to the Congress misrule, are now horror-stricken at the sight of these cadres of the CPI(M).

The honest section of the CPI(M)'s rank-and-file, who still have emotions for Marxism-Leninism, are also extremely disturbed at this criminal based politics for

self and power practised by their leadership and are desperately seeking reprieve. To them, and to all the toiling people, we once again reiterate that it is only by way of building up of mighty democratic mass movement, in the finest continuity of the rich tradition of the soil, under a genuine revolutionary leadership can they resist this criminalization of politics.

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