

## SUCI(C) holds Supreme Court verdict detrimental to peasants' interest

*Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI (Communist), issued the following statement on 12 January 2021:*

Verdict given by the Supreme Court is totally disappointing and detrimental to the interests of the struggling peasants who are determined to continue their struggle till the three Farm Acts and Electricity (amendment) Bill 2020 are repealed.

We fully support their decision to continue their struggle and urge upon the toiling millions of our country to stand by this heroic struggle aimed at foiling the design of the Central BJP Government to serve their corporate masters.

## Peasants are Determined to Carry on Struggle till the Black Farm Laws are Repealed

The Supreme Court has ordered a freeze on the application of the three black farm laws. The historic peasants' movement continuing in the borders of Delhi for nearly two months braving all odds have been demanding annulment of all the three laws, lock, stock and barrel as they hold that these laws are purported to open up agricultural sector to corporate giants for reckless loot and plunder while the interest of the farmer community would be thoroughly impaired. The BJP led central government has been disgustingly unsympathetic to the peasants' righteous demand and goes on iterating that the laws have ushered in much needed agricultural reforms which would benefit the peasants. Rightly one columnist in a language daily has referred to a story as an

analogy to the situation. One boy scout was asked one day by his leader what good thing he had done on that day. The boy replied in the affirmative but added that it was indeed a tough job. The leader asked what the job was. The boy said he had helped a blind man to cross the street. The leader wondered how could that be a tough job. The boy replied nonchalantly that the blind person did not want to cross the road. The same holds in the case of the farm laws as well. The peasants are saying that they do not want these laws. But the government is bent upon making them believe that free entry of the corporates in crop procurement and contract farming, unbridled power of hoarding food crops by the

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### Capitol Riot

## RICKETY FACADE OF BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY EXPOSED MORE VIRULENTLY

Apoplectic commentators are struggling for words to describe the storming of the Capitol in Washington by thousands of mask-less white-supremacist fanatics and fascist supporters of outgoing President Donald Trump on 6 January last, which saw five deaths. Chanting slogan of "We want Trump", helmet-wearing rowdies, armed with rods, guns and chemical irritants, stormed the US parliament with a view to halting or overturning a constitutional process to affirm the Electoral College vote that was slated to officially ratify Joe Biden's victory over Donald Trump in the recently concluded Presidential election. Not any external enemy or terrorist group, but the President himself - having mobilized supporters for a 'wild' protest that day - egged on loutish and armed white supremacist and

neo-fascist supporters with vitriolic speeches to "take their quixotic fight to the grounds of the US Capitol" to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States" meaning invalidation of the election result. Since the President himself engineered the desecration of the parliament building, there was hardly any adequate mobilization of security personnel to protect it. The frenzied mob easily overpowered the policemen on guard, scaled the walls, made it to the inner precincts of the Capitol, disrupted the proceedings and sent representatives and Senators into evacuating the chamber. With the mob running riot in the Capitol, President Trump stood by for hours, opting to neither press the waiting National Guard into service nor call the armed forces by invoking the provisions of the

Insurrection Act. Rather than appealing to his incensed supporters to restrain as matters escalated, Trump cheered them. This hooliganism evidently was pre-planned and allowed by the Trump administration. Had there been such a demonstration by the exploited workers or common people on a just demand, police would have crushed that brutally. But the joker-like behaviour of the hooligans and their easy intrusion into the national parliament building was proof of everything having been stage-managed. This storming of Capitol by the pro-Trump hoodlums has indeed raised serious questions as to what extent bourgeois democracy in that country has degenerated and how a despotic bourgeois politician hankering for power can arrogate to

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*Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar, veteran Polit Bureau member and South 24 Parganas District Secretary, SUCI(C), felicitating the family members of the martyrs. On his right is Comrade Saumen Basu, Polit Bureau member and on left Comrade Chandidas Bhattacharjee, West Bengal State Secretary.*



*Huge gathering at the meeting*



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## Peasants' movement

## Victory of ongoing peasants' movement would herald a new dawn in the struggle for Emancipation

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private operators, abolition of Minimum Support Price (MSP) etc. which are the key aspects of the laws would make the poor and middle peasants prosperous. Then when the defiant peasants marched to Delhi to register protest in the form of a united movement, the government tried all possible coercive means to stop them. Being unsuccessful, the government switched to negotiation mode. But seven rounds of meeting between the peasants' representatives and the government proved abortive as the peasants stuck to their demand for repealing the laws while the government was only indicating to bring some cosmetic changes in the provisions of the laws but

refused to abrogate them. Hence the dilatory tactics of the government did not materialize. Then in the eighth bipartite meet, the government side brought the cat out of the bag and called upon the agitating peasants to accept the verdict of the Supreme Court. Thus the government thought that by playing the Supreme Court card, it would be able to diffuse the spirit of the movement. But the peasants rejected such a proposal stating that they were not fighting for any legal question. They are fighting for their life and livelihood, to secure their existence. Hence, they

have not knocked at the door of the court nor have sought any judicial intervention. They have come to the government and expect that the government would honour their just demands and withdraw the laws.

### Supreme Court verdict and allied questions

But, apparently in a strange coincidence, a division bench of the Supreme Court led by the Chief Justice of India (CJI) restored a PIL (Public interest litigation) challenging the constitutional validity of Centre's newly enacted three farm laws. The same PIL the Apex Court had dismissed earlier in November on a ground that Parliament lacked power to make legislations on the subject as 'agriculture' is a state subject in the Constitution. But now pronouncing verdict on the same PIL, the bench suspended the implementation of the three farm laws until further orders and set up a committee comprising only those experts who have been openly favouring the contentious legislations "to help resolve the ongoing farmers' protest". "We want to solve the problem and that's why we are making the committee. One of the powers we have is to suspend the legislation. We have the power to appoint a committee, which will submit to us. All who are genuinely interested in solving the problem can go before the

committee". Notably, the previous day, the Supreme Court had lambasted the Centre for its poor handling of the farmers' protests and its apparent non-consultative approach. But the agitating farmers felt that the Supreme Court's intervention to find an "amicable" solution to the impasse between the Centre and farmers was ambivalent at best, as they felt it may end up diluting their fundamental demand. A day later, such speculations proved right when the Supreme Court unilaterally set up a committee and announced its members without any consultation with the peasants' representatives. The ruling also said that "The representatives of all the farmers' bodies, whether they are holding a protest or not

and whether they support or oppose the laws shall participate in the deliberations of the Committee and put forth their viewpoints". The Apex Court also issued notice to farmers' unions on a Delhi Police plea to stop a tractor rally during the January 26 Republic Day parade. The judges rebuffed the lawyer for protesting farmers as well as he said farmers would not participate in the committee as Prime Minister Narendra Modi had refused to talk to them.

Naturally, the peasants have expressed their displeasure at such a

verdict stating that they had never asked for a mediation of the Supreme Court in this struggle against the government. So, they declined to appear before the Committee and declared to carry out the movement until the laws are revoked. Already programmes to escalate the

movement including tractor ally in Delhi on 26 January have been announced. It is also reported that Justice R M Lodha, a former CJI who was appointed to head the Committee has declined to accept the offer. Another member, Bhupinder Singh Mann has also opted out of the committee. Obviously, questions have been raised whether the Court is taking a needless risk by stepping out of its judicial comfort zone to quell agitations and untangle policies, without the executive's resources or mandate.

Everyone is aware that of late not just the democratic-minded honest people but even jurists are miffed with the juridical process and even some of the key verdicts. Honourable judges have been expressing wrath and disgust at the way the juridical process is tampered with to give a stamp of legal approval to the whims and dictates of the Executive in the fascist autocratic rule euphemized as democracy. Judicial fraternity has been peeved at some of the recent judgments so much so as to hold that the Court is doing a 'balancing act' rather than enforcing the rule of law. Toiling people as well as the peasantry have now realized that the judiciary is also not independent in a capitalist set up but helpsto run and protect the capitalist state, obviously and ultimately in the interest of the ruling capitalist class, the other ones being legislature and executive or bureaucracy. There is a dangerous portent inherent in fast spread of extra-judicial reach of the judiciary. That this realization has dawned upon the struggling peasants is one of the important achievements of the ongoing movement against black farm laws.

By dismissing the apprehension as to what would happen if the Supreme Court finally gives a ruling against the movement, it can be said for sure that the movement would gain further momentum and frustrate the ploy of the government to break the movement under the pretext of judicial intervention and pronouncements. It is incumbent on the part of the toiling masses of all sections to firmly stand by the struggling peasants and ensure that message of the movement spreads rapidly to every nook and corner of the country. The victory of this movement would herald a new dawn in the struggle for emancipation of the oppressed millions from the stranglehold of capitalist exploitation.

### AIKKMS CALLS UPON ALL TO STAND BY FIGHTING PEASANTS

*Comrades Satyawan and Sankar Ghosh, President and General Secretary respectively of AIKKMS, said in a statement on 12 January 2021 that the verdict given by the Supreme Court today is not acceptable to us, the peasants because we are fighting not to stay but to repeal the act completely. We shall continue the movement till our goal is achieved. We urge upon the toiling millions and the right-thinking democratic-minded people of our country to stand by us to defeat the heinous design of the BJP-led central government and their corporate masters.*

### Proof of devastating consequence of black Farm Laws



Peasants from Uttarakhand exhibited one packaged cabbage being sold by a government-approved private agency at a price of Rs 200 and one cauliflower at a price of Rs. 300 in a shopping mall. Peasants said that this cabbage or cauliflower is sold by them at Rs 3 only. Citing this as a proof of the devastating consequence of the black Farm Laws, the peasants quipped that Union Defence minister urged them to give the Laws a trial for one year and a half. But within one day and a half, result of such a trial is in hand.

## Capitol Riot

## Hooliganism was pre-planned and allowed by Trump administration

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himself with such ease the absolute right to trample underfoot the last vestige of democratic codes and procedures still in vogue. The whole world has been aghast and so shocking has been the incident that leaders of the imperialist-capitalist world including those believed to be close to Trump also could not but condemn it.

### Trump earned displeasure of democratic-minded Americans

It is pertinent to recall that Trump has been widely criticized by all saner, democratic-minded people, both inside and outside US, for his mendacity, sickening self-eulogy, lust for power, indecent remarks often crudely misogynist, insolent conduct, open incitement to racial hatred, xenophobic talks, unprecedented arrogance, autocratic approach and actions, apart from utter failure to arrest nose-dive of US economy. His arrogance was so much that despite US being the most Covid 19-affected country with casualty figures climbing to over 4 lakhs, he refused to pay any heed to the advice of the scientist-physician fraternity for adopting necessary preventive measures and not only declined to comply with but even openly derided rudimentary health protocols, not to speak of his outright mismanagement. His passive indulgence to repeated incidents of racial violence and police atrocities on the minority African-Americans which gave rise to the countrywide movement of "Black Lives Matter", the growing poverty, surging unemployment, mounting crime rate and untrammelled spike in corona cases made Trump one of the most disliked Presidents of US. But Trump, power-mad and self-conceited like many of his counterparts in other countries, was giving an impression even before the electoral process was rolled out that he would not reconcile with any verdict that might dislodge him from power. What is more, having refused to wear mask and discouraged others from doing so in this prevailing pandemic, he even tried in various ways to deny people the right to vote through postal ballots while sowing doubts about their outcome long before the election. More the day of election was drawing near, more desperateness he showed in anyhow clinging to power and hurled invectives against all and sundry who opposed him. He even sacked right and left his co-functionaries, administrative high-ups, even

defence officials who dared to voice their differences with him. All codified norms and behavioural guidelines had been bidden goodbye. His self-trumpeting reached nadir. He had the gall to say: 'The beauty of me is that I'm very rich'; 'I'm also honoured to have the greatest temperament that anybody has'; 'Nobody has better respect for intelligence than Donald Trump'; 'I'm the most successful person ever to run for the presidency, by far. ...' Thus he virtually epitomized in himself a signature portrayal of a fascist autocratic leader. He also



*Capitol hill circus*

found like-minded friends and admirers in other countries who wanted to follow his fascist autocratic footsteps to stay glued to the seat of power. No doubt, a vast section of common US citizens particularly those still harbouring illusion about bourgeois democracy were aghast at the turn of events. They had tired of the infantile name-calling, the ugly language and the ceaseless confrontation. They wanted a return to some kind of normalcy. As a large section of the common Americans were reported to be dissatisfied, if not enraged, with his performance, indication of his defeat was very much on the card.

Aware of that, Trump, like all bourgeois leaders of the time, exacerbated ethnic and racial divisiveness by peddling in all kinds of falsehoods to hoodwink people. Having long ago coined deceptive slogans like "American first" and "make America Great Again", he has been continuously spinning conspiracy theories to rake up ultra-nationalist jingoism with a view to inflaming frenzied racist mindset and sectarianism among the unemployed white middle class people, particularly the youth and pit them against their other fellow citizens belonging to different ethnicities as if the latter were coming in the way of their getting jobs and earning a decent livelihood. He also proclaimed a virtual reversal of the much-clamoured and US enforced

doctrine of capitalist globalization, took some steps to stop entry of people from other countries as well as forcible ouster of immigrants. By all these moves, by all possible means, including social media in which he proved himself a master manipulator, he sought to create a supporter base among the white middle class people and thought that he would be able to secure a second term of presidency riding on these supporters who constitute a majority in the states that have maximum electoral college votes.

### Electoral College System

Before proceeding further, a word needs to be said about the 'electoral college' of US to enable those not familiar with the term to get an insight into it. In US, it is not

although his rival Al Gore won the popular vote by more than half a million. This time, Trump bagged 232 electoral colleges as against 306 by his opponent and president-elect Joe Biden. Biden received nearly 81.3 million votes, or 51.3% of all votes cast - a record, and more than 7 million more votes than Trump.

### Trump refused to accept any electoral defeat

Two months before the election, Trump declared audaciously that he would not lose the election unless there is tampering of the electoral process. Even when counting was on, he organized a press conference in the wee hours at night to announce that he was leading. But, as soon as the electoral results started going against him, he was furious and crossed all limits of insolence and brute display of arrogance.

He blasted the election as a rigged one contending that he was fraudulently defeated in the swing states. It may be mentioned, that since a majority of states traditionally and consistently vote along Republican and Democrats lines, respectively, the outcome of US elections really centres around a handful of so-called 'swing states', which change from one to the other side. So, Trump fought furiously to flip the outcome in those states, like Michigan, Pennsylvania, etc., which include even Georgia, a traditional Republican stronghold. Trump's legal team and his supporters have filed more than 50 court petitions in the key or swing states won by Joe Biden demanding that election results be declared null and void due to electoral fraud, all of which were unanimously dismissed by the courts. The accusation of election fraud, while propagated did not even feature prominently or at all in court cases, contrary to propaganda as they had really no evidence, and what was presented were mere speculations and outrageous demands.

Yet, Trump was unrelenting. Still he kept hammering the lie that he had won the election and victory of his opponent, Joe Biden, is manipulative and based on stolen votes. For weeks, the blind supporters of Trump railed on social media that the election had been stolen. They openly discussed the idea of violent protest on the day Congress met to certify the result. Then he began to infringe on the process of transition meaning handing over the baton to the elected candidate. Things have come to such a pass that he is on the brink of being impeached for the second time for inciting insurrection. "high crime or misdemeanour"

When all efforts on his part to

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## Capitol Riot

# Trump shredded his constitutional oath of parliamentary democracy to anyhow stall his defeat

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nullify the election results proved abortive, he made a last-ditch attempt to countermand the formal affirmation of the electoral verdict by hatching a plan for violent assault and immobilizing police force to maximum extent. He organized a "Save America Rally" of his supporters near the White House on 6 January, having long made them believe that the election had been stolen from him and incited them to act: "If you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore," Trump had told the crowd, urging them to head to the Capitol. Their passion stoked by his defiant speech, the crowd marched toward the Capitol, stormed it, held it under siege and went on a rampage. By such an action, President Trump shredded his constitutional oath of parliamentary democracy, which made him the President, which bound him to follow the law of the land and demonstrated how, not his "great America and American people" but his greed for power mattered for him. When the entire world was shaken by the incident and his own countrymen condemned it as an 'attack on democracy', Trump did a somersault, conceded defeat, and said hypocritically that he was outraged by the violence, lawlessness and mayhem, only to later backtrack again.

### Myth-buster of American democracy

There has so far been a myth about American democracy amongst many. The US rulers often boast of vibrant democracy in operation in their country. They are always seen to express "concern" about "murder of democracy" in other countries that refuse to bend before their dictates. So, they have arrogated to themselves the right to 'export democracy' to those rogue countries in gunboats and by imposing draconian economic sanctions. All recent crimes of war, sabotage, assassination, planted violence and rebellion in other lands like Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, Venezuela, - the list goes on and on - have been engineered by the US rulers under the garb of 'establishing democracy'. But what is now being seen in their own country? Ridiculing the efficacy of that democracy, the US President himself has raised questions about its operation. For two months, Donald Trump refusing to acknowledge defeat in the presidential election held in November has been spinning outlandish conspiracy theories,

recklessly tweeting allegations of unproven electoral fraud, spreading fake news on social media and riling up crowds of his supporters to fuel their collective aggrievement. It went to such a height that the social network agencies and even the TVs had to block him for long time. Even today, his social media accounts are blocked so that he is debarred from inciting his supporters and spread fake news. He also pressurized government officials to carry out vendettas against his 'enemies', meaning those who oppose or criticise him including cabinet members he had himself chosen. And finally there has been an incited attack on the Capitol by marauding supporters/ mob to unsettle electoral mandate.

### Degeneration of bourgeois democracy

So far, we have dwelt on the informative aspects of the incident and its specific backdrop. But the moot point is what did it unravel eloquently? Is it that the fight between Trump and Biden was a tussle between anti-democratic and pro-democratic forces in an otherwise perfect democratic order? Would it be enough to hold that Trump was a power-mad brute and hence his defeat has signalled end of brutality? Perhaps thinking in such a way would keep the truth elusive from us. What has been exposed and exposed nakedly is the growing corrosion of bourgeois democracy in the present decadent moribund capitalism. But why is it so?

The answer needs to be sought in the inexorable course of history. Following the course of development, capitalism passed over the stage of *laissez faire* and entered the stage of monopoly. Arrival of monopoly rang the death knell of free competition. So, in the political superstructure, the principle of equity and unfettered freedom of expression received a jolt. As we all know, those who control the economy, i.e. the production system, also control politics and for that matter, all other spheres of society including the realm of spiritual production, or mental spheres including ideas and culture. And the more the monopolists strengthened their grip and control over economy, the more they moved towards curtailing the sovereignty of parliament and turning it into their appendage. However, they continued to maintain the facade of parliamentary democracy to cover their motives and deeds from people.

Perforated with crisis and morbidity, capitalism has nothing



*Namaste Trump*

more to offer to the common toiling people but oppression, deception and deprivation. Even its political system, the parliamentary democracy, stinks of rot and decadence, of corruption and total lack of morality and ethics. More the capitalist system is becoming crisis-ridden because of its endemic law of operation, more the ruling monopolists are frantically trying to prolong their exploitative class rule by destroying all the established norms, codes, practices, values and ethics hitherto governing bourgeois democracy and tilting towards fascist autocracy.

### Illusion about two-party democracy or a presidential form of government

There is a thought in our country that proliferation of so many parties is the cause of the peril. In fact, the ruling circle is behind precipitating such a notion and tacitly fuelling a demand for appropriate electoral reforms to weed out smaller parties and preferable existence of only two parties to choose between. It is contended that such would help prevent intrusion of untoward elements in parliament as keeping watch on two parties is relatively easy compared to many parties. Besides this helps in centralization of power they want to arrive at. A section of people, out of confusion, is getting entrapped by that. As we had said earlier, the ruling monopolists are now weaving ploys to virtually make parliament defunct and turn it into an appendage of theirs by stripping it of its essence as was once conceived by the founding fathers of bourgeois democracy. Two party democracy perfectly suits that design. Long back, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, Founder General Secretary, SUCI(C) and an outstanding Marxist thinker, had observed: "...As to its form also fascism presents no stereotyped pattern. It has assumed different forms in different countries to suit

the local conditions. Somewhere it has adopted the form of individual dictatorship, somewhere the autocratic rule of a military junta and yet in some other countries it has assumed the democratic garb, keeping the parliament still alive but limiting its power by way of economic and political centralization. The appearance of fascism in a 'democratic' form through the two-party parliamentary system of government is certainly a post-war social phenomenon, having no historical precedent. Because of its seemingly democratic appearance it is, at the same time, the most deceptive. And in fact, it has been able to deceive many so-called intellectuals, who try to recognize fascism by its form and not by its content or its distinguishing features..." (Call of the Hour, SW, Vol. II) Exactly, that is seen in US, UK and some other countries. In a two-party system, the ruling class selects two parties of its choice and servitude to rule the roost, and people, from an impression of exercising voting right and electing a government of their choice, would only alternate between the two. As a matter of fact, the ruling quarters with the help of monopoly-controlled media have almost succeeded in operationalizing such a system as could be seen during the elections when the bourgeois propaganda machinery underlines only two contending parties or combinations to choose from and virtually negates, if not resorting to blackout of other contesting parties. In India also, as could be seen in various elections, the electoral battle is virtually made limited between either two parties or two combinations of the ruling bourgeoisie. So, it is also fast assuming a *de facto* 2-party democracy. There is also an espousal in favour of presidential form of government in India. Just the other day, Indian Prime Minister talked of "one nation, one election"

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# Lack of honesty, integrity and sobriety marks the bourgeois political class afloat in the corridors of power

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which, if viewed in the context, could well be an attempt to create ground for eliciting public support in favour of a presidential system so that absolute power is concentrated in the hands of an executive. But the recent episode of US where both presidential system and two-party democracy are in existence, ought to be an eye-opener as to how "democratic" is either of the two forms or a combination of both.

Moreover, is it that in the countries with either two party-system or presidential system, people's predicament has waned? Or has it multiplied? Have corruption, aberration and misconduct abated there or mounted? Is it not that everywhere parliamentary democracy has been stripped of all its declared objectives and vows and turned into a rickety façade? The present instance of the US bears clear testimony of that. With grave agony, right-thinking democratic minded people have been observing that not only power-monger self-seekers but even criminals and anti-socials are now making it to the leadership of the bourgeois parties, getting elected to the legislature, the highest law-making institution, becoming law makers, ministers and thus are virtually operating as controllers of slaughtered parliamentary democracy. Money-mafia-media are calling the shots. It is nothing but criminalization of politics. What is gained by the ruling class in the process is, inter alia, stalling the entry of the real representatives of the people and thereby preventing people's voice from reverberating inside parliament. Only the ruling monopolists remain vigilant about one thing: that no ruling party or leader becomes so discredited by dint of their avid pursuit of anti-people policies, self-aggrandizement and overdoing of things that accumulated wrath of the people is feared to transgress the confines of anti-incumbency mindset and snowball into anti-establishment outlook. In such an event, the ruling class cunningly replaces the ruling party or leader by another trusted party or leader of its choice. So, people alternate between this or that representative of the ruling bourgeoisie within the worn-out parliamentary democracy, and the oppressive capitalist system remains unscathed. We saw this in our country. We saw this in US also. It is obvious that Trump failed to receive full-fledged backing of the US monopolists because of his excesses in abusing power, betraying whimsical attitude, indulging in impulsive conduct and thereby making people hostile. So, Joe Biden could triumph over Trump.

### **Bonhomie between Trump and Modi**

But one thing is noteworthy. It is the crisis-ridden obsolete, utterly corrupt and reactionary capitalist system which is the root of all evils in people's life-economic distress, rising inequality, deprivation, stinking politics, socio-cultural pollution, erosion of values-everything. To shield this truth and in a bid to thwart his apprehended electoral reverse by deluding people, Trump chose to bank on fanned up white supremacist pride, as stated above. And that he could succeed in doing so is evident from the fact that even after so many of disgraceful acts, he managed to secure more than 70 million votes, the second highest total in American history. Nationally, he

has more than a 47% share of his vote. It shows that he succeeded in having an extraordinary hold over large swathes of this country, a visceral connection that among thousands of supporters has brought a near cult-like devotion. His stoking of racial tensions, his use of racist language in tweets, maligning people of colour, his reluctance to condemn white supremacists, his strange boasts about being "a very stable genius" and the like had created a visceral connection that had brought among thousands of his supporters a near cult-like devotion.

If one compares the US and Indian scenarios, one would find many similarities. Economies in both these imperialist countries are on a tailspin. Penury and misery of common people, unemployment, jobless, social crimes are skyrocketing. Ruling dispensations in both the countries whether peddling in ultra-nationalist slogans or soothing talk of unity etc. are all wedded to the task to bamboozle people and keep their eyes away from the real cause of economic collapse, social unrest, uncertainty and insecurity of life as well as immense distress the common masses are plunged in. Both the societies are ridden with racial-communal-sectarian divides precipitated by the ruling quarters to keep people disunited. In both the countries, persecution and killing of the minorities and underprivileged with impunity is rampant. Also there has been a persistent attempt to create a 'larger than life' image of the top leaders in both the countries. So, Trump found in Modi a dependable ally and fellow-traveler and so had Modi in Trump. Hence both praised each other. Admiration for authoritarian strongmen bound the two. The bond had been so strong that while Trump organized a "Howdy Modi" event in Houston, US, in September 2019 with the apparent objective of wooing the voters of Indian origin there, Modi jovially exhorted all to elect Trump for another term by raising the slogan, "aapki bar, Trump sarkar" (Next time, it would be a Trump government). And within months, Modi reciprocated by serenading Trump at Motera Stadium in Ahmedabad in a "Namaste Trump" show by spending over Rs 100 crores and hiding the spectacle of 'shining India' by erecting walls overnight to shield the filthy slum areas. It was obvious that by association with Trump, PM Modi sought to create an impression before the world that he also equals the US President in status. By that, he also bracketed himself with the brand of dirty politics-the politics decidedly anchored in undemocratic habits, practices, power-madness, self-projection and if not in servile obedience to the ruling monopolists in the case of Trump who had been pursuing his very own corporate or business interests which by focussing attention on his individual misdeeds, rather helped shielding the rotten capitalist system from people's wrath. So what was this bonhomie between Modi and Trump rooted in other than sailing in the same boat of fascist autocracy? Only one aspect needs attention in this connection. Despite all degeneration, the justice department, a section of the media and the elected legislators of US can raise their voice even against the President if they find he is overdoing things. Even they can dare to go for impeachment as well. But in India, this

much democratic intent is also missing. Rather, with every passing day, starting from bureaucracy to judiciary to media houses, there is a sickening tendency to defend the executives including cabinet ministers even if the latter commit grave mistakes, indulge in falsehood, tamper democratic process, conduct themselves in an autocratic manner and glaringly betray power-mongering. Let alone impeachment, even criminal cases against them are either dropped or suppressed or manipulatively closed down in India. Anyone criticizing the government or the ruling party is immediately branded as anti-national, unpatriotic and traitor and often taken into custody, detained without trial and slapped with false cases. Some of such people are also assassinated mysteriously. Also, if there is a legitimate movement by the people, the government arrays its entire arsenal to suppress that whereas criminals basking under the shelter of the ruling dispensation get away with any kind of offence including lynching. Even a section of the juridical fraternity and eminent personalities have been expressing discontent at the way the judiciary is often found to please the executive with favourable judgments passing rulings on certain extraneous and hence irrelevant issues that have wider ramifications.

### **Correct remedial course need to be identified and avidly pursued**

The democratic-minded persons, intellectuals, social activists are indeed disturbed and agonized at the ongoing farce in the name of democracy, marked deviation from even the constitutional provisions, unsavoury catfight for power, hooliganism and slugfest, semantic quibbling of the self-serving political leaders, squalid mess in the arena of politics and above all, lack of honesty, integrity and sobriety among the political class afloat in the corridors of power. What they need to understand is that this marked degeneration of bourgeois democracy is not exclusive to US or India but has become a common feature of the entire imperialist-capitalist world with some variance in degree. Bourgeois democracy is wrought with all rot, perjury, filths as well as brazen subversion of laws, values and codes. More the bourgeois statesmen and their lackeys cry aloud of democracy, more virulently is exposed the putrid underbelly of the obsolete reactionary system.

Our fervent appeal to the thinking class is to understand that parliamentary democracy is not the last word in social journey. It is only a phase and once the relevance of that phase is historically nullified, it is pointless to lament for that. Prudence lies in that. Erudition and intellect demand that the correct course to social progress is duly identified and traversed along to emancipate humanity from the shackles of oppression of man by man, growing poverty and destitution by organizing revolutionary overthrow of capitalism fulfilling all necessary conditions and in the process get rid of all the filth and smuts polluting the polity.

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# Wistron-dream of landing good job turned into nightmare for thousands of workers

When Wistron InfoComm, a subsidiary of Taiwan-headquartered Wistron Corporation, started recruitment last summer at Narasapura near Bangalore, for its newly set-up plant to manufacture and assemble Apple iPhones, the opportunity of landing a good job during the pandemic proved to be a dream come true for thousands of young people in the area. And with Wistron providing its own transport to and from the facility, what more could they want. In the first few months, things went well. But already by November last, their dream had not only turned sour but into an outright nightmare. And in December, Wistron made headlines for all the wrong reasons. On 12 December, hundreds of workers went on a rampage, smashing windows, CCTV cameras, laptops and other electronic gadgets, and several employees allegedly took with them some laptops and any other gadget they could lay their hands on. The police has arrested over 160 workers, and the search for others present at the time is still underway. Meanwhile local BJP legislators have threatened that anyone involved in having stoked the violence would face dire consequences. Astonishingly, Wistron in its first complaint pegged its loss at Rs. 437 crores. But later, it drastically reduced its claim of loss to be about around Rs 20 - 40 crores.

Different media reports (e.g. The Hindu, Indian Express, Economic Times, The Wire, The Mint, etc.) have revealed some shocking facts which the flurry of investigations carried out by different government agencies, the Department of Labour and among others by Trade Unions, after the incident, have brought to light. Without enumerating all the important labour laws, rules and regulations Wistron had reportedly violated that, in short, the plant can be said to have been run under sweatshop conditions.

A few months after opening the new facility Wistron began to rapidly increase its sanctioned workforce of 5,000 to 10,000 indicative of the frenetic pace of production. But what apparently looked rosy was having darkness underneath. First of all, most of those employed were hired as contract workers. As against 1,343 permanent employees Wistron employed 8,490 contractual workers through 6 different contractors or staffing firms. Naturally, almost 80% of the staff had no security of job, and remained completely at the mercy of contractors. Secondly, the management suddenly increased the 8-hour working schedule to 12 hours, by squeezing three 8-hour shifts into two 12-hour shifts.

Promised wages of 22,000 remained elusive, for large sections or all, who knows, and in some cases these were reportedly slashed to Rs 8,000. According to The Hindu (26.12.2020) at an internal meeting, the Labour Department found that no matter the different educational qualifications, everyone was doing the same work for a monthly salary of Rs. 15,000. Again women had been posted at night shifts without consent letters.

To give a bit more details, according to former employees interviewed by the Hindu (ibid.) all went well in the first few months as long as the three 8-hour work shifts were in place. Despite a defective attendance system, i.e. punching

machines that often failed to capture the exact work hours logged by the workers, redress of complaints used to be forthcoming. But everything changed in October when manpower had increased enormously and 12-hour work shifts was introduced (at a mere 10 day notice.) Abhishek, an engineering graduate (name changed) who had joined the engineering department, told The Hindu: when we joined we were not told about the 12-hour shift. There was a huge difference between the salary offered and what the workers actually received. Overtime did not bring much relief, he said. Employees stressed that the sudden increase to 12-hours work shifts took a heavy toll on their health. Already affected from Covid-19 related stress, added to the grueling working hours came the 3 hour-long commute to and from the facility (and for those living in Kolar even longer). This meant that employees had no life outside work, and in view of the stress, would end up sleeping on their weekly offs. Confounding their misery was the fact that the glitch in punching machines that did not properly log the working hours was not rectified. Yet as the number of workers had swelled the overwhelming number of complaints remained unaddressed. "I know my friends received only Rs. 300 and Rs 600 as salaries for the full month of November. Overtime in October and November did not reflect in the salaries of many people. These people's families depend on their salaries," says Nithin, employed in the FATP (Final Assembly Test and Pack) department. Many employees said that the assembly line had become a tinderbox from October onwards. The glaring anomalies continued unabated into December. A report prepared by the Karnataka Labour Department in Kolar Circle, after the violence, claimed that Wistron did not maintain attendance and salary records. With no employee grievance redressal system in place at the firm or a union, workers were constantly asking company officials for their dues, the All India Central Council of Trade Unions has said in a report.

On 12 December, when workers at the end of a shift came to the punching machines at the exit, and an argument or 'miscommunication' between the executive of a staffing company and its contract workers' ensued, the aggrieved and stressed out workers, going without proper pay for months, of what is anyway a paltry salary, and no prospect for redress of their woes in sight, (the company having also flouted to employ

requisite number of safety officers, welfare officers, etc. and no union, as mentioned) they exploded in anger and went on a vandalizing spree.

While Wistron and its parent company, Apple have publicly owned up to some mistakes under pressure, what has been the reaction of BJP governments, both at the Centre and in the state, for whom the Wistron i-Phone plant had been a matter of pride as being part of their much hyped "Atmanirbhar (Self-reliant) India" and "Make in India" programmes? Their sole concern is that worker unrest could impair their image as a business friendly country and hence they intended on nipping in the bud any unrest by workers, more so of contract workers, and have come down with a heavy hand. While nobody will support any form of vandalism, has the government shown any concern for the violent attacks on workers' health, labour rights and even the right to lead a normal life, which have surfaced by the Wistron incident? Does workers' life have no value in the governments' eyes?

This particular instance clearly shows that the real import behind the so called slogan of making India 'Atmanirbhar' is not in any way related to the welfare of toiling people and bettering their living standard, but of fostering business interest of industrial tycoons for even more ruthless exploitation. This Wistron episode is a testimony of what things are in the offing once the newly introduced labour codes which the BJP government at the centre has enacted are enforced. The much-touted labour reforms are in fact poised to make life of the workers yet more nightmarish and enslave them more and more in shackles of inhuman capitalist exploitation.

But workers themselves need to realize that even when their grievances reach breaking point resorting to vandalism or violent outbursts, though understandable, is self-defeating, and only increases their woes. It is only by getting organized and seeking out the correct revolutionary leadership that can guide them along the correct path by uniting whether in Trade Unions or whatever form, that they can get respite and will find a way out towards a better tomorrow, which is exactly what the government with its new labour codes want to prevent. Unless due political consciousness dawns upon them, the ruling monopolists and their caretaker government would continue to wreak havoc in their life.

## UP State SUCI (C) strongly condemns brutal gangrape and murder of a woman by a priest

In a press statement issued on 7th January 2021, Comrade Pushpendra, Uttar Pradesh State Secretary, SUCI(C), condemned in the strongest of words the brutal gang-rape and murder of a woman at a temple located at Aghauti region in Badaun, by the priest and his associates on 3 January last. Comrade Pushpendra also expressed deepest sympathy with the victim and her family. He also denounced the manner in which the police attempted to cover up the crime and suppress the case and said this incident once again bears ample testimony to utter negligence on part of the administration to bring the culprits to book and the how a jungle raj (rule of the jungle) is prevailing in the state of UP where the women are not at all safe and even so called priests are committing such horrendous crimes. Comrade Pushpendra called upon people of all sections to get organised and raise their voice against incidents like the Badaun case, and demanded that the culprits in Badaun case be meted out exemplary punishment

## MARTYRS REMEMBERED AT A HUGE MEETING IN SOUTH 24 PARGANAS WITH DUE SOLEMNITY

South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal has a significant presence in the history of struggle of the toiling millions of the country for emancipation from the stranglehold of ruthless capitalist exploitation. It was here in this district that way back in 1948, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, worthy continuer of great Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin-Mao Zedong and an outstanding Marxist thinker of the era showed a rare revolutionary audacity to found the SUCI(C), the genuine communist party on the soil, at Jaynagar, a district town, alongwith his handful of revolutionary compatriots. Since then, this district has seen surges of left-democratic movement particularly waves of peasants' movement against the oppression and repression of the rural gentry under the leadership of the Party. The glorious and turbulent tebhaga (three equal divisions of crops) movement of the sharecroppers in the early fifties warrants special mention. All front ranking leaders of the Party like Comrades Nihar Mukherjee, Sachin Banerjee and Subodh Banerjee alongwith the leading comrades reared and steered under their supervision and overall guidance of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh took active part in the movement and spread Party organization throughout the district. Hereafter also, the district had been witness to many stormy class struggles to realize the just demands of the poor marginalized peasants, sharecroppers and agricultural labourers. In course of developing these class and mass struggles, as many as 184 Party leaders and comrades embraced martyrdom. The criminals and anti-socials of the Congress, then the CPI (M) and now the Trinamool Congress have assassinated them brutally. One of them was Comrade Amir Ali Halder, a fore-ranking and leading organiser of the SUCI (C), member, West Bengal State Committee and Secretariat of the South 24 Parganas District Committee of the Party and Secretary, West Bengal State Committee of the AIKKMS, and a highly respected mass leader. He was murdered by the CPI (M) goons on 11 January 1997 in broad daylight at about quarter to 12

noon by bomb charge. His body was also mercilessly torn by chopper by the assassins.

In memory of these martyrs and to pay homage to them, the Party organized a huge meeting at Bakultala-Natunhat on 11 January last. Over 20 thousand people from far flung areas thronged at the venue which was overflowing with crowd. On the right side of the dais was a photo of Comrade Amir Ali Halder and on the left a tall martyrs' column bedecked with flower. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar, veteran Polit Bureau member and South 24 Parganas District Secretary. Among those who spoke were Comrades Saumen Basu, Polit Bureau member, Chandidas Bhattacharjee, West Bengal State Secretary, Prabodh Purkait and Joykrishna Halder, former MLAs, Tarun Mandal, former MP and others. An emotional message from Comrade Rabin Mandal, former MLA who is in very bad health due to age, was read out. Families of the martyrs were facilitated by handing over mementos. It was a very touching scene. Comrade Saumen Basu dwelt mainly on the legendary life struggle of Comrade Amir Ali Halder, popularly known as Mastermashai (Teacher Sir). When all parties are involved in nasty power-game, betraying a degraded culture and when all attempts are made to break the moral backbone of the people particularly youths, SUCI(C) is committed to uphold the banner of genuine struggling leftism based on higher proletarian ethics and culture that could produce a gem like Comrade Amir Ali Halder. Comrade Chandidas Bhattacharjee said that this party is a big family of all oppressed people irrespective of caste, creed or religion, If one member of this family becomes martyr, all others take firm resolve in tears to carry forward the revolutionary task. No reactionary force would be able to stall us. The meeting ended with rendering of the Internationale. All those who congregated at this solemn meeting went back with the pledge to become man worth the name and firm up revolutionary organization of the Party on yet stronger footing.

## Works of Bhagat Singh launched at Delhi Movement site

On 2 January, Selected Works of Bhagat Singh was launched at Khera border of Rewari, Haryana, at one of the farmers' agitation centres. Yadabendra Singh, descendant of the great martyr's family, launched the book, All India Democratic Youth Organization drew up this programme. The book contains fifteen important writings of Saheed Bhagat Singh.

Yadabendra Singh said, AIDSO did a commendable thing publishing this book. This book will spread the thoughts of Bhagat Singh among the people, particularly among the

students and youth. He said, when the historic movement was in motion, this book would create new fervour among the farmers, young and old alike.

Rajendra Singha, on behalf of the AIDYO, said, great Bhagat Singh made supreme sacrifice in his battle against the British imperialism. What an irony that today people of our country are compelled to fight against multinational companies. Along with others, Ajoy Singh, District Secretary of AIDYO, and other leaders were present there.

## Is CPI(M) leader a Corporate mouthpiece...

The brave peasants are fighting for a just cause by opposing the three black Farm Laws which would pave way for total control of agriculture in the hands of agri-corporates. The government which is not agreeable to this just demand failed to persuade the peasants to toe its line even after several rounds of talks. "We will fight and win our battle"-such is the stand of the peasants. But, it has been surprising to find Sitaram Yechury, CPI(M) General Secretary, advising the government to make the corporates party to the negotiation. Yechury, in an interview to The Hindu, a leading English daily, said: "We are only saying repeal these laws, then sit with all stakeholders, the kisans and let your corporate friends also come, have a discussion. On the basis of this discussion, you formulate new Bills. This is the most reasonable and democratic way of going about it." (The Hindu, 31st December 2020). This has also appeared in Ganashakti, Bengali organ of the CPI (M) on 1st January 2021.

Protesting farmers are indeed awfully surprised at this proposal of the CPI-M General Secretary. They ask: "When talks are going on between the farmers and the government, how do corporates come in? Since when the corporates have become a stakeholder?" Is it that the CPI (M) General Secretary has become a representative of the corporates? Has he then become the mouthpiece of the corporates? As everyone knows, the farmers have the farmers, irrespective of religion, region caste or creed are united in this historic movement that

has been continuing for over 50 days, have been saying from day one that the government's urge to serve the interest of the corporates and not that of the farmers is behind the framing of the farm laws. So, slogans have been raised against the corporate houses, even by naming some of them close to the ruling party. The farmers' organizations have given a direct call to boycott all products from the companies owned by the Ambani and Advani groups who are slated to be being among the main beneficiaries of the black Farm laws. The farmers have already boycotted Jio phones. Electricity connections have been torn off at the Jio towers throughout Punjab and Haryana. So, when the farmers are carrying on an uncompromising battle against the financial oligarchs, no wonder they are stupefied at the CPI-M leader's proposal to come to terms with the corporates.

At this juncture, such a proposal on part of the CPI-M General Secretary would naturally harm the movement and create a lot of confusion. By making such a weird proposal, has not Shri Yechury, exposed the compromising social-democratic character of his party notwithstanding their Marxist-leftist verbiages?

Those workers and supporters of the CPI (M) who wish this farmers' movement to be successful should judge for themselves where leadership is taking the party to and how, for staying afloat in the corridors of bourgeois power politics, is seeking to curry favour with the monopoly houses.



AIMSS Organized a rally in Agartala , Tripura on 2 January in support of the peasants' movement in Delhi and other basic demands of the people

## Farmers scored important victory through determined movement

Corporate sharks, who are at the root of reckless pollution of air, water, soil, etc., by not abiding by the stipulated anti-pollution rules while running the industries, are spared of their crime. Instead, the Delhi government took measures to punish the farmers for pollution in Delhi. The central government made the cruel announcement of five year imprisonment and Rs one crore fine for the farmers for burning stubble and straw.

The stubble that remain after harvesting or heaps of straw that lie idle after threshing of paddy are a severe problem for the farmers. Use of machine in agriculture is rising while dependence on using cows is diminishing. So straw as fodder is not much in use. How to dispose them? Helpless farmers are compelled to burn them right on the field. This is not only causing air pollution, but also damaging the soil. Countless microscopic insects are destroyed with the soil being damaged. Certainly, an eco-friendly solution to this problem is an urgent necessity. This stubble-straw can be turned into organic fertilizer by decomposition. To make it a reality, it is incumbent on the agricultural ministry to play a positive role to scientifically build up necessary

infrastructure for garbage clearance, dumping wastes in the rivers etc. and preventing toxic emission. But the government is silent about it. It did not try any alternative path. Instead it holds the farmers guilty and announced stiff punishment for the farmers. The farmers have been seething with anger.

The farmers are food givers. Problems centring agriculture is the problem of the entire society. It is the responsibility of the government to solve the problem. Stubble-straw burning is only a seasonal phenomenon solution to which can easily be arrived at if there is a will on the part of the government. Still the farmers are threatened with punishment of five year jail and Rs one crore fine while the owners of the industries causing air pollution are left scot free. This shows once again that the ruling BJP is wedded to the task of serving the capitalist class and is utterly anti-peasant.

Finally, the farmers achieved victory as the government agreed to change the law in a bipartite meeting. This has been possible under pressure of the peasants' movement that is receiving support from all sections of the toiling masses round the country.

AIMSS and AIDYO organized a convention on 4 January 2021 at Tezpur, Assam, against growing crime against women and widespread obscenity



## Victory of anti-liquor movement in Chhattisgarh



At the initiative of AIMSS, AIDSO and AIDYO, an anti-liquor movement was continuing in the Titurdi area of Durg district, Chhattisgarh, for 13 long years. Ultimately, under pressure of movement, the administration has been compelled to issue order for closing down the liquor shops there. A victory rally was taken out after the order.

## CAT IS OUT OF THE BAG

Facing major heat from the agitating farmers as being responsible for bringing the black Farm Laws, Reliance Industries Limited issued a statement on 4 January 2021 stating that they have nothing to do whatsoever with the three laws. They further stated that Reliance Retail Limited or its parent company Reliance Industries Limited have not done any "corporate or contract farming in the past, and have absolutely no plans to enter this business. Reliance retail has never entered into long term procurement contracts. (opindia.com 04-01-2021)

In the first big transaction between a large corporate and farmers since the promulgation of the amended APMC Act in Karnataka, Reliance Retail Ltd has closed a deal for the purchase of 1,000 quintals of Sona Masoori paddy from the farmers of Sindhanur taluk of Raichur district.

Around a fortnight ago, agents registered with Reliance signed an agreement with Swasthya Farmers Producing Company (SFPC). Though SFPC primarily trades in oil, the firm now has ventured into procurement and sale of paddy; close to 1,100 paddy farmers have registered with it. Reliance Retail stipulated that there should be less than 16% moisture in the crop. Moreover, the company is offering Rs 1,950 per quintal of Sona Masoori, which is Rs 82 more than the minimum support price (MSP) for the crop set by the government (Rs 1,868).

The understanding between SFPC and the farmers entitles the former to a 1.5% commission for every Rs 100 transaction. The farmers have to bear the expenses of the sacks used to pack the crop and transporting it to the warehouse in Sindhanur. SFPC managing director Mallikarjun Valkaldinni said that the quality of the paddy currently stored at the warehouse will be tested by a third party. "Once the quality is found to be satisfactory, Reliance's agents will procure the crop. Once they have procured the crop, Reliance will transfer the money to SFPC online and we will credit the money directly to the farmers' accounts," he said. (Times of India 10-01-21)

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