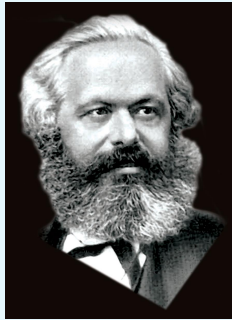


## LONG LIVE GREAT LEADERS OF THE PROLETARIAT

“The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country...

The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralised means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralisation... For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeoisie and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put on its trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society. In these crises a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity – the epidemic of over-production.” (*Communist Manifesto*)



**Karl Marx**

5 May 1818 – 14 March 1883

“...self-criticism is as necessary to us as air or water. I think that without it, without self-criticism, our Party could not make any headway, could not disclose our ulcers, could not eliminate our shortcomings. And shortcomings we have in plenty. That must be admitted frankly and honestly... It would be strange to fear that our enemies, our internal and external enemies, might exploit the criticism of our shortcomings. Oho! All is not well with those Bolsheviks! It would be strange if we Bolsheviks were to fear that. The strength of Bolshevism lies precisely in the fact that it is not afraid to admit its mistakes.” (*The Work of the April Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission-CW' Vol. 11*)



**J V Stalin**

21 December 1879 – 5 March 1953

## Degenerate system and its political managers perpetrate reckless tyranny

**RSS-BJP**

Of late, a new interpretation of the words 'sedition', 'anti-national', 'conspirators' and 'terrorists' is found on the political scenario of India. These words have been made synonymous with any criticism of, dissent against or observation not in conformity with the measures or policies of the BJP government, the Sangh Parivar or any leader of the ruling RSS-BJP. With the police-administration, central investigating agencies as well as punitive machinery having been fast stripped of relative neutrality expected of them and made to virtually act as per dictates of the ruling dispensation and a host of black laws available to pick up anyone anywhere on presumed offences and put behind the bar, a caricature of democracy is being witnessed every day.

### How the dissenting voice is stifled

What is being seen now is that if the critics, protesters or question-raisers happen to be active on social media, i.e. on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, they come under attack by a vast army of trolls, and viciously vilified by the BJP digital propaganda machinery. A storm of distorted and misleading digital propaganda attacks is unleashed, often accompanied by morphed videos. Truth, objectivity are the first and foremost victims. Social media then is swamped day and night with a deluge of fake news and used as a tool for character assassination, to tear the critic's reputation to shreds, and to arouse hatred, as well as a fanatic reaction among the RSS-BJP-Sangh

Parivar followers, and doubts and revulsion among the public. But that is not all. Side by side, sedition cases are slapped against those singled out as public enemies, or they are booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) -- or other provisions as the case may be -- including well-placed personalities, reputed journalists, students, social activists and lawyers, artists and comedians. The strategy used by the RSS-BJP is simple. First, they make their own party workers file a complaint against those persons who are then arrested on fabricated, trumped up charges, or planted documents etc.. Deliberately no charge sheets are filed in the courts so that people can be kept in the jails for an indefinitely long period. Despite there being no genuine grounds for the arrest, the provisions of these draconian laws are such, that bail is very difficult, if not practically impossible to obtain. As a matter of fact, "Bail is routinely denied in most cases under UAP. It became a watertight embargo since the Supreme Court in 2019 gave a ruling that made it nearly impossible for anyone arrested under UAPA to be released on bail, unless the accused could demonstrate that the charges against them were prima facie untrue." (*The Hindu*, 25.2.2021)

Clearly, those exercising their fundamental right to freely express their views against the government or resenting any of its moves are at the receiving end of its wrath while the foot-soldiers, bootlickers or activists owing allegiance to the ruling camp could get

*Contd. on page 2*

## SUCI(C) indignant over hiking passenger train fare on queer logic of deterring Covid 19

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General secretary, SUCI(C), issued the following statement on 26 February 2021:

Alongside continuous raising of petrol-diesel-LPG-kerosene prices which is wreaking havoc in people's life, the Railways have now announced hike in the fares of local passenger trains on the queer logic of preventing crowding in trains and stop Covid from spreading. Though the Railways authorities say that this fare increase is not applicable to suburban trains, one cannot preclude the possibility of same being done any day, anytime as the BJP government has a track-record of unabated pursuit of barefaced anti-people measures caring a fig for the rising woes and wretchedness of the toiling millions.

It is high time that people at large rise up united against the killing policies of the BJP government and force it to reverse such repeated blows on their life and livelihood.

RSS-BJP

## Fascist autocracy in power seeking to create an atmosphere of terror and fear

*Contd. from page 1*

away with any kind of misdeeds, crimes and spreading violence. Recently, a good section of the judiciary has also been found to be exasperated at such spate of incidents and through its rulings, restraining the government from playing foul with law. More disturbing is the fact that tampering of documents and planting of false uploads in social media through cyber-manipulation are being resorted to in order to frame the anti-government crusaders and critics. Even such critiques, protesters, dissenters or even investigating journalists are being charged of being 'public enemy' practising criminality. There are counter-allegations from the discerning people that the propaganda machinery of the ruling BJP and its IT cell, infamous for producing and circulating fake news and morphed videos, have been behind such criminal acts which, in all fairness, should be held as anti-national ploys and practices. In fact, fascist autocracy in power is seeking to create an atmosphere of terror and fear so that nobody dares to open their mouth against the ruling establishment. A brief reference to some such incidents would be revealing.

### Some recent incidents

Just a few years back, the Pune police under the then BJP rule claimed to have recovered important documents from the pen drives, laptops, etc., of Rona Wilson, a human right activist, and other prominent individuals who had been arrested for instigating violence in Bhima Koregaon in Maharashtra and their alleged collusion with the banned self-proclaimed Maoist groups. They were slapped charges of hatching a conspiracy to destabilize India, to dislodge the elected government and even to assassinate Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Though the matter was sub-judice, the police furnished to the reporters what they called, extensive leaks from these recovered letters. But now, explosive revelations by the US based Arsenal Consulting Digital Forensics firm have blown this very conspiracy theory in the face of the ruling quarters. Digital analysis has brought to light that these files had been planted for a long period via secret infiltration of malware by some agency into the accused's computer, and had remained hidden and unopened.

But before the issue could gather steam to turn into a national sensation, it was pushed into the background by the way the Delhi policed rushed to Bangalore and arrested 22 year old climate activist, Disha Ravi, giving the good-bye to norms and rules of proper procedure, while charging her with sedition for sharing and editing a toolkit on Twitter in support of farmers' protest. Naturally, this outrageous event caught the limelight and created widespread protest, both within the country and abroad. Though in the end she was granted bail by the sessions Court, the Delhi police, however, under the central home ministry keep insisting on to the need for further investigation about the conspiracy of defaming India on Republic Day and Disha's links with pro-Khalistani terrorist group.

In Hathras, UP, in September last, a 19-year poor dalit girl was brutally gang-raped, tortured

and murdered allegedly by four men belonging to the powerful community, also high-ups in social rung in the caste-stratified society who are stated to provide support base to the ruling party. The victim was secretly and mysteriously "cremated" at night by the police at dead night keeping her family members locked in their house, despite their begging to take a last look at her. This surreptitious act obviously caused outrage among the villagers.

Siddique Kappan along with three other journalists based in Delhi were on the way to Hathras to report on the gangrape and murder. But he was arrested on 5 October last year while on his way to the destination. It was alleged that he was associated with some terrorist groups and was booked under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and other penal provisions. The Press Association and the Indian Women Press Corps described the arrest of a Hathras bound journalist as an attempt by the BJP government of Uttar Pradesh to "silence" the media and demanded his immediate release. In its affidavit submitted to the Supreme Court, the Uttar Pradesh government has made a number of claims about Siddique Kappan in order to justify his arrest, but has failed to provide any evidence of any wrongdoing or illegal act by him, let alone any offence that would attract the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act that he has been charged with. (The Wire-21-11-20) But he is still in jail. Now, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a prosecution complaint under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act against Kappan.

Under cover of corona pandemic the Delhi police has been systematically arresting the persons whom they call conspirators behind the North Delhi riots that erupted during US president Trump's visit. And who are these conspirators? Victims of the riot and students, of course not just any students, but those in the crosshairs of ABVP and BJP, those accused of supporting anti-CAA-NRC protests, including students of Jamia Milia, where at an earlier time the Delhi police resorted to violent thrashing of peacefully studying students and smashed up equipments and furniture. A recent extensive report by Newslandry exposed how Kapil Mishra, a Delhi BJP leader, marshalled a notorious communally fanatic gang of around 20,000 people to incite communal frenzy and organize attacks on minority community to break the historic Shaheenbagh movement against atrocious NRC-NPA-CAA. In fact, Mishra's provocative speech in the presence of complicit police officials stoked the first incidents of communal violence in the Maujpur-Jaffrabad area of Delhi. Soon after the riots, former Delhi Police commissioner told that Mishra should have been arrested for what he had said and the senior police officer who stood next to him should have been suspended. Of course, nothing of the sort happens under the current dispensation and one year later, even very recently, Mishra is found to continue making similar communally provocative statements. Remarkable is the fact that when Justice Muralidhar of Delhi High Court demanded of the Delhi police to examine the video where Kapil

Mishra is seen spewing communal hatred and providing incitement to actual violence just before the Delhi riots, he was served the transfer order at midnight, with instruction to move immediately! While an 'innocuous' toolkit shared by Disha Ravi on Twitter sent the Delhi police into a tizzy, the fact that Kapil Mishra has cultured an entire "Hindu Ecosystem" wherein toolkits are being used for creating and spreading communal hatred is benevolently overlooked.

These four examples constitute not merely four incidents but are part of a practice, a tendency to stifle the voice of dissent, which became manifest in February 2016 with the infamous arrest of JNU Students' Union President Kanhaiya Kumar and nine others for sedition by the Delhi police for their alleged involvement in a procession where they had allegedly supported seditious slogans raised on the varsity's campus - charges the accused denied. A video circulated on ZEE news also showed that some masked persons were raising those slogans. It is from then on that the terms, 'anti-national', 'tukre tukre gang', 'urban Naxals' etc. became a standard feature in the BJP's lexicon.

### Recent juridical views

As we mentioned above, some jurists are visibly outraged at this subversion of law. "For the past few years, there has been a growing trend of identifying people whose ideology or identity does not suit those in power," says advocate Mehmood Pracha, one among several lawyers representing victims and accused in the Delhi riots cases. "The might of the State is then unleashed on them by misusing draconian laws such as the UAPA or Section 124A (sedition) of the Indian Penal Code, which lay out non-bailable offences. Investigating agencies resort to dilatory tactics by way of supplementary chargesheets, which do not prove the offence in court, but present the possibility of unearthing incriminating evidence. The courts buy this line of argument pushed by the prosecution and condone further victimization of the so-called accused by keeping them in jail." (Outlook, 15.2.2021)

While granting bail to Disha Ravi, Judge Dharmender Rana of Sessions Court said that considering 'the scanty and sketchy evidence available on record, I do not find any palpable reasons to breach the general rule of "bail" against a 22-year-old lady, with absolutely blemish-free criminal antecedents and having firm roots in the society and send her to jail'. The offence of sedition cannot be invoked to minister to the wounded vanity of governments,' Judge Rana said. 'Creation of a WhatsApp group or being editor of an innocuous toolkit is not an offence. Further, since the link with the said toolkit ... has not been found to be objectionable, mere deletion of the WhatsApp chat destroys the evidence linking her with the toolkit ... also becomes meaningless.' "In my considered opinion," he continued, 'citizens are the conscience keepers of the government in any democratic nation. They cannot be put behind the bars simply because they choose to disagree with state policies. ... Difference of opinion, disagreement, or for that matter, even disapprobation, are recognised legitimate tools to infuse objectivity in state policies. An aware and active citizenry, in contradistinction with an indifferent or docile citizenry, is indisputably a sign of a healthy and vibrant democracy. ... Even our founding fathers

*Contd. on page 3*

## Continuous interest rate cut and liquidity infusion cannot resolve but worsen 'stagflation' in capitalist economy

Bourgeois economists are in dire straits. They have been circulating various theories to provide a plausible explanation of why the capitalist economy round the world is sunk in an insurmountable crisis triggered by sustained shrinkage of market. Earlier, in the parlance of bourgeois economics, certain terms were coined to denote specific features of the economy. Also were provided various theories to link those terms to indicate the state of the economy at various points of time. For example, the term stagnation is defined as a condition of slow or flat growth in an economy when real economic growth (an inflation-adjusted measure that reflects the value of all goods and services, i.e. GDP produced by an economy in a given year expressed in base-year prices) is less than 2% annually coupled with high unemployment and involuntary part-time employment or underemployment. It is also called recession as people lose buying power to acquire goods which are then either stockpiled or not produced at all. On the other hand, inflation is described as the decline of purchasing power of a given currency over time, (meaning if Rs 20 was spent earlier to buy 1 kg of rice, one has to pay now Rs 40 to buy same quantity of rice) or broadly rise in the general level of prices. Most commonly used inflation indices are the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Wholesale Price Index (WPI).

### Normal conditions described in textbooks of bourgeois economics

In a fast-growing economy, employment ought to be high and incomes go up quickly. So, more and more people have the money to buy the existing bunch of goods. As more and more money chases the existing set of goods, prices of such goods rise. In other words, inflation spikes. When growth contracts or growth rate decelerates, then typically, people's incomes also get hit because they lose jobs and unemployment soars. As a result, less and less money chases the same quantity of goods. This results in either the inflation rate decelerating (that is, prices grow at 1% instead of 5%; also called "disinflation") or it actually contracts (also called "deflation"; that is, prices reduce by 1% instead of growing at 5%). Inflation, as stated in any textbook of bourgeois economics, can be either demand-pull (meaning more demand but less supply) or cost-push (when cost of production is high and hence the additional cost is loaded on the price). There is another general notion. If the price of a commodity falls, the quantity demanded of it will rise. On the other hand, if price of a commodity rises, its demand will dip.

That means inflation should rise when the economy is growing fast. It is because people are earning more and more money and are capable of paying higher prices for the same quantity of goods. But, when the economy stalls, inflation tends to decline as well because there is less money now chasing the same quantity of goods, as mentioned.

### Phenomenon of stagflation in dying capitalism

But these theories failed to describe how it is that inflation is found to be rising when economy is in stagnation—a phenomenon which marks present day capitalism thrashing in its death throes following inexorable course of history. So, the economists belonging to the bourgeois camp began to wrack their heads and then created a new terminology—stagflation, a combination or portmanteau of stagnant growth and rising inflation. Iain Macleod, a Conservative Party MP in United Kingdom, while speaking on the UK economy in the House of Commons in November 1965 stated: "We now have the worst of both worlds—not just inflation on the one side or stagnation on the other, but both of them together. We have a sort of "stagflation" situation. And history, in modern terms, is indeed being made." Later, Paul Samuelson, an American economist, won the Nobel Prize for explaining the simultaneously and concomitant rise of inflation and unemployment rates in the US during 1970s and 80s, meaning stagflation. But the point is: what is the genesis of stagflation? Is it a natural phenomenon or a situation created by the very laws of capitalist economy based on the objective of maximizing profit by constantly squeezing the common toiling masses and thereby plummeting market demand? This question, of course, has been conveniently parried by all the votaries of bourgeois economics. They, instead, remained content to find a bunch of jargons and spurious mathematics that could create a kind of justification in favour of stagflation. Right now, if one looks at the capitalist-imperialist world, one would find stagflation to be a common feature—growing recession, mounting unemployment and spurt in inflation.

Let us go into it a bit more. What economists—columnists subservient to ruling capitalism shrewdly seek to hide is that in capitalist economic law, the entire production system is run from the standpoint of the interest of the capital or capitalists. Maximization of profit and not meeting the needs of the society is the motive of production. And this maximum profit accrues in the hands of the few owners of the means of production (industry or land) i.e. the capitalists or the bourgeoisie only by ruthlessly exploiting the working people, denying them their legitimate due and squeezing out even the last drop of their blood. Profit is accrued by way of appropriation of surplus labour power of the workers or, in other words, appropriating the value of unpaid labour (which is at the root of capitalist market crisis as it robs the toiling people of purchasing power.) Wealth accumulates only from this profit. Globalization, free market economy or trickle-down economics, whatever renaming takes place—capitalism remains capitalism. So remain operative its basic operative laws. And the more obsolete, reactionary capitalism seeks to prolong

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RSS-BJP

## Some jurists are visibly outraged at the continuous subversion of law

*Contd. from page 2*

accorded due respect to the divergence of opinion by recognising the freedom of speech and expression as an inviolable fundamental right. The right to dissent is firmly enshrined under Article 19 of The Constitution of India. In my considered opinion, the freedom of speech and expression includes the right to seek a global audience. There are no geographical barriers on communication. A Citizen has the fundamental rights to use the best means of imparting and receiving communication, as long as the same is permissible under the four corners of law and as such have access to audience abroad." (First Post 24-02-21) Dealing with the interpretation of the word 'sedition', a charge slapped by the Delhi Police on the activist, the judge said, "Law proscribes only such activities as would be intended, or have a tendency, to create disorder or disturbance of public peace by resort to violence...There is not even an iota of evidence brought to my notice connecting the perpetrators of the violence on January 26, 2021, with the said PJF (Poetic Justice Foundation) or the applicant/accused [Ravi]" the court said. (The Hindu 24-02-2021)

### Truth that needs to be imbibed

There is a prevailing impression that perhaps the root cause of such misdeeds and flouting of rudimentary democratic principles lies in the ruling BJP. No doubt, the BJP as the most trusted political manager of the ruling Indian monopolists are now unbridled in firming up a fascist autocratic rule and hence ought to be directed the main blow at. But, more important is the fact that bourgeois democracy or parliamentary democracy which emerged as political superstructure of capitalist economic base during the advent of capitalism by overthrowing feudal autocracy is now at its decadent moribund stage following inexorable course of history. It can even perceive death knell ringing for itself. Hence, it is breeding all kinds of evils, aberrations, distortions and criminalities to anyhow extend its exploitative rule. So its defenders and servitors have also become reactionary, out and out corrupt and despotic undertaking all kinds of heinous acts. Particularly, when saddled in governmental power through a farce of election, they become more reckless and tyrannical in their repression and suppression of the people. As they are afraid of truth being unfolded, they are making every possible effort to gag voice of dissent, smother opposition and crush protest movements. The RSS-BJP are now doing that only. obediently serving the ruling degenerate capitalist order.

But democratic conscience cannot allow the oppressors to run amuck. So, let the voice of questioning, of criticism, of protest, far from being cowed down, unite into an irresistible chorus holding aloft the demand for restoration, protection and extension of democratic norms, rights and values.

### Stagflation

## Growing recession, mounting unemployment and spurt in inflation-common feature in all capitalist-imperialist countries

*Contd. from page 3*

its moribund existence, the more it breeds crisis. Stagflation is a manifestation of that insoluble crisis endemic of the capitalist system.

### India - a typical case study

If we turn to India, we shall find the economy has long been gasping in a stagflationary condition. But the governments subservient to the ruling monopolists never accept it. In December 2019, the BJP Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman refused to comment on queries on stagflation. According to reports, she said: "I have heard of the narrative going on and I have no comments to make". But the monetary policies adopted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) confirm that despite all liberal measures to reach out maximum concessions and benefits to the ruling monopolists, the economy has been plunging more and more into stagflation.

We need to dwell a bit on the monetary policies and the tools and techniques used in bourgeois economics to get an insight into stagflation. The RBI announces its monetary policy bimonthly now. The monetary policy is related to the monetary matters of the country. The policy involves measures taken to regulate the supply of money, availability and cost of credit (i.e. borrowing and lending rates of interest from banks and financial institutions) in the economy. Of the various tools and techniques available for such controls are Cash Reserve Ratios (CRR which is the cash set aside by the commercial banks with the RBI) and Statutory Liquidity ratio (SLR which is the portion of the liquid assets (i.e. assets that can be easily converted into encashed like Government securities etc.) set aside by the commercial banks with the RBI). If CRR is reduced, banks have surplus cash in hand for lending. Similarly, by reducing SLR, the RBI can increase liquidity (meaning how quickly one can get one's hands on one's cash reserve or convert one's assets into cash) with the commercial banks. The additional money available because of increased liquidity might then be offered as loans to creditors (like the industrial houses, small scale industries, individuals seeking housing or consumer loans etc). Similarly there are two other rates known as Repo rate and Reverse

Repo rate. Repo rate is the rate at which banks borrow from RBI on a short-term basis against a repurchase agreement while reverse of repo rate is the rate RBI pays to banks in order to keep additional funds with it. If Repo rate is lowered, banks can borrow additional fund at a cheaper rate for lending. Similarly, lowering of Reverse repo rate means discouraging the banks to park funds with the RBI and instead find avenues for lending at a higher rate.

### Indian economy in tatters despite RBI lowering interest rates

Now, of late, it was being found that the RBI stopped lowering all these rates arguing that this step would boost liquidity. The liquidity measures so announced by the RBI since February 2020 aggregated to about Rs 9.57 lakh crore - equivalent to about 4.7% of the 2019-20 nominal GDP (Nominal GDP differs from real GDP in that it includes changes in prices due to inflation). The RBI claimed the liquidity measures so far have helped in significant lowering of interest costs for corporate borrowers and others resulting in improvement in their financial conditions to boost the economy by investing more and more in production. But suddenly, the RBI had decided to keep the rates related to monetary policy unchanged for the fourth time in a row in the monetary policy announced on 4 February 2021. Why? Because the RBI was of the view that inflation was likely to remain elevated and the substantial wedge between wholesale prices and retail prices would force the consumers to turn away even from purchasing essential items. Here one more point needs to be discussed. A lowered bank rate entails a slash in the interest rate on bank deposits. Bourgeois economists argue that in such a situation, people would be disincentivized to save and instead come to the market to buy more. This would increase demand and so supplies would also increase in tandem. But this is a bunkum. Who does not know that majority of the countrymen do not earn even what is needed for bare subsistence, let alone saving. Even the middle class who are relatively better-off are haunted by the fear of uncertainty of life and hence try to save as much

as possible even if the return comes down. So, the presumption of the bourgeois economists is a misnomer.

Coming back to the holding on to the bank rates by the RBI, it is evident that the apex bank had opted not to disclose that despite all these so called liquidity support, neither has the productive investment gone up nor has the plummeting of buying power of the common people abated. While there is a cunning effort to hold Covid 19-induced lockdown responsible for all the mess, truth is otherwise. Long before the strike of the pandemic, the Indian economy was in shambles. According to National Statistical Office (NSO), the Consumer Food Price Index increased from 5.11% in September 2019 to 7.89% in October 2019. The retail price inflation rate reached an annual high at 4.62%. By the end of the 2019-2020, inflation was 6.7%. The NSO estimates of GDP (calculated as per revised method that inflated growth of 2012-14 from 4.7 to 6.9) for the second quarter of 2019-20 was 4.5%, the lowest in a decade. GDP growth fell continuously for eight quarters. For the April-June 2019 period, the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) had slipped 7% lower compared to corresponding period in the previous fiscal year. All major industries were in a slump. Officially, 6.8 lakh industries were reported to have closed by this time. India's unemployment rate long before the coronavirus pandemic struck was highest in 45 years. Closure of industries and fall of production in core sectors has left lakhs of workers jobless. Earlier, demonetization had gobbled up thousands of jobs in cash-based industries especially in the unorganized and small-trade sectors as well as agriculture. According to a Consumer Pyramids Household Survey by the Centre for the Monitoring of the Indian Economy (CMIE), nearly 20 lakh jobs were lost between January and August 2017 because of demonetization. The actual figure would be much more than what had been reported. The cascading impact of job loss at such magnitude also dealt a blow to other means of livelihood. Besides, many small and medium-scale companies had been forced to lay off lakhs of employees to reduce production costs and volume. Contraction in manufacturing, capital goods and mining hit factory output

and Index of industrial Production (IIP) hit record low in 2019. As per National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) report, per capita consumption in real terms, or at constant prices, had fallen drastically between 2011-12 and 2017-18. That means people were consuming much less and hence spending figures declined. Credit growth rate of Indian banks, for the first time this fiscal, slowed to single digit at 8.8 per cent to Rs 97.71 lakh crore during the fortnight to 27 September 2019 meaning there was hardly any inclination on the part of the industries to take loan because of continuous contraction of market. The RBI claimed that as much as Rs 5.2 lakh crore had been released by it to the banks by way of bringing down the borrowing rates. But there have hardly been any borrower from the banks. Who would risk borrowing when the economy is in deep recession and demand is dipping with every passing day as people are losing purchasing power in absence of means of earning? So the commercial banks were left with no option but to park all of that money back in the RBI even at lower reverse repo rate. As a result quantum of money in the RBI's reverse repo rate parked by the commercial banks with the RBI swelled from Rs 3 lakh crore on 27 March to Rs 8.4 lakh crore by the end of April. On the contrary, NPAs i.e. defaulted loans majorly by the large corporates, are multiplying. As of 31 March 2019, India's scheduled commercial banks had gross NPAs worth Rs 9.49 lakh crore. "The economic impact of the pandemic... may result in higher NPAs and capital erosion of banks", admitted the RBI governor. It is apprehended that NPAs could rise to as high as 14.7% of total loans in the worst-case scenario by March 2021.

Surely, the pandemic has further worsened the situation because sudden unplanned imposition of lockdown and the government refusing to give any relief to the suffering people, nor taking any remedial measure to salvage the economy sunk in deep crisis in pre-pandemic situation. So, infusion of as high as over Rs 12 lakh crore of liquidity by the RBI through substantial interest rate cuts of over 250 basis points over the last 24 months has been of no avail.

### The monopoly giants reaped all benefits

Though continuous interest rate cut and the liquidity infusion could neither contain or reduce inflation nor boost the economy but it has benefitted the giant monopoly

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## Work From Home

# A new device for corporates to boost profit and unarm employees

Covid 19 pandemic of 2020 introduced or pushed up quite a few so-called 'innovations'. These include coinage of terms like 'new normal', 'disruptive technology', 'work from home' (WFH) etc. Associated with high-tech, digitization, artificial intelligence (AI) and their lot, these new terms are interrelated and bear significance in people's life. Hence these demand attention and discussion.

To confront the pandemic, at least as it was proclaimed, the Union government clamped a country-wide lockdown in a 4-hour notice without any prior preparation whatsoever. The lockdown disrupted, rather paralyzed, the normal life, as people were shoved into home-confinement. With industries closing down, lakhs of workers were thrown out of their jobs. Having lost job and shelter, over 12 crores of migrant workers engaged in casual jobs hundreds of kilometres away from home had to walk back home to fend for themselves. The rulers, the monopolists and their corporate houses, as well as their faithful spokesmen, the government and ruling party leaders did not waste time to make use of the situation to reap commercial benefits trading on the hunger and destitution of the toiling masses. Their well-knit propaganda machinery and the pliant section of media were also geared up to make their well-woven ploy successful. They fiddled on a new tune : Start of a new normal. They assured that in the lockdown situation, people need not worry. Everything-starting from business, education, medical advice, financial transactions to fulfilling other basic needs including procurement of essential items would be available online. It hardly mattered, they affirmed, what percentage of population was equipped with means, materials and knowhow of online mode. Or what was the ground reality with internet connectivity, even required power supply. So the 'new normal' was characterized by a great divide: a digital divide, discriminating the country into halves with all requisites of online operation and have-nots scrambling to find way out. While the former scanty section welcomed new normal situation, the rest majority, the poor and economically backward, were in a severe disadvantage, resenting increasingly and tending to get frustrated.

### Economy shattered before pandemic was further shaken during it

It may be recalled here that even prior to the pandemic, the economy of the country was sliding into dire straits, with growth limping beyond expectation, industries stagnating, acute recession staring at economy and unemployment reaching record heights. The only consolation was that it was not India alone which had been suffering. Countries of the entire capitalist world faced the same fate to a great or less extent. Adding fuel to the fire, the pandemic-induced lockdown stalled economic activities, disturbed daily job-routines, brought about unimaginable job

loss particularly at the lower rung of economy, thus squeezed market because of drastic fall in purchasing power of vast majority thereby causing a massive shock to the economy. However, monopolists and their corporate houses, driven by their relentless profit hunt, were frantic for finding out ways and means to be creative and innovative. They found a new avenue to multiply profit in the 'new normal'. With shutters being brought down in one industry after another, the IT- electronics industry made a giant leap forward. One CEO of an IT giant poured in Rs 70,000 crore in 'Digital India' campaign in only the education sector. The big medical facilities-providers started minting money through faceless treatment of helpless Covid19 patients lining up in tens , if not hundreds of thousands. The victims certainly included those falling back because of the great financial gulf arising out of the digital divide. So, the 'new normal' began baring its fangs as new aide to corporate plunder.

But to be frank, the 'new normal' is nothing new. Years back, the Union government had prepared a national education policy. It brought the policy to public domain as the Draft NEP (DNEP) in 2019. The DNEP affirmed "India is a global leader in ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and in other cutting-edge domains such as space": p.339) but elsewhere in the same document contradicted the affirmation writing that "our present education system's inability to cope with rapid and disruptive changes places us (individually and nationally) at a perilous disadvantage in an increasingly competitive world" (p.354). So it needed an all-out drastic change. And to get at what drastic change was envisaged, we need to go further back through about two decades. In 1997, when the capitalist world had been hopelessly scrambling for a way out from the then economic recession and market crisis, one Mr. Christensen from USA coined a term 'Disruptive technology' in his book Innovator's Dilemma. 'Disruptive technology' is an innovation that significantly 'alters the way that consumers, industries, or businesses operate., sweeping away the systems or habits it replaces because it has attributes that are recognizably superior'. For instance, Artificial Intelligence, e-commerce, GPS systems represent disruptive technologies of today. Though the protagonists of 'disruptive technology' tried to put discovery of automobile, electricity service, and television also in the same category, fact is that they represented developed and not disruptive technology. Clearly, by definition, origin and purpose, 'disruptive technology' has been a corporate innovation to somehow keep the sinking boat of capitalism afloat. And the DNEP advocated for this brand of technology for the education system of the country to get over the 'disadvantage' it faced. And the 'new normal' was based on that. It is true, the term 'disruptive technology' has not been used in the final NEP 2020, but it remained as the

latent force to determine the outlook and approach not only in the field of reforms in education, but also in other fields like service industries, retail trade etc.. Digitization of social activities and use of artificial intelligence have become the slogans of the capitalist world today. So, the 'new normal' was a normal for IT-electronics giants to make a breakthrough in a pandemic stricken country. And the change from the old to the 'new normal' was designed to be made on 'disruptive technology' with a pretence to help consumers, industries, or businesses operate smoothly. But the actual intent was, and still it is, to mint profit on the pretext of running economy in an unsettling situation. Development of technology is supposed to come to the aide of common people, free them from giving otherwise unwanted labour, improve the standard of their life and thus foster their prosperity. But a development of technology in a class-divided capitalist society hardly comes to the benefit of the masses at large , rather is misused by the ruling capitalist class to reduce their cost of production by replacing manpower with machine by resorting to reckless retrenchment, lay-off etc. to maximize profit.

### WFH: the new slogan following pandemic-lockdown

With such a background, there arose a third slogan of 'Work from Home' (WFH). Pandemic and lockdown prevented people from coming out from their home. No problem! You work from home! Only keep the wheel on!

But there has been a great digital divide even in this case. Establishments and enterprises that could make use of digital technology could ask their stakeholders and employees to work from home. It could be in education, health, business and such others, but the precondition was always there. Obviously, it required the infrastructure and resources to sustain the system of WFH. It was not meant for a farmer who feed the country, for a delivery boy who had to take pains to keep the lifeline of supply alive in the market; for a worker in the assembly line of a workshop which was yet to be automated; for an overwhelmingly large number of schools and their students-teachers and others who could not build up the infrastructure of online education or for a patient, say a Covid patient, who needed a one-to-one attention for his or her survival. So 'WFH' came really handy to a privileged few of the society.

Even then, the 'WFH' became popular. What else could be done in this difficult situation of lockdown; work cannot remain suspended for indefinite time-- such were the common arguments presented by both the sides on the WFH route: the employer and the employee, the teacher and the student, the specialist doctor and the helpless patient or such others. The establishments and enterprises were happy; the larger they were , the happier they became. It cut down drastically the establishment costs including power tariff, water tax, security arrangements etc.; it could do away with travelling allowances for the employees and there were other avenues too. It meant huge drop in expenses for nearly the same output of service and production. In plain words, it meant a huge rise in profit. So those at the authority end, that is

*Contd. on page 7*

# ALL Bengal Conference of ABECA

The 18th Conference of All Bengal Electricity Consumers' Association (ABECA), a people's committee, formed in West Bengal three decades back to fight for the cause of the electricity consuming people. The name familiar enough to the electricity consumers of West Bengal, was held on 18 February 2021 at the historical Subodh Mallick Square, Kolkata on a dais erected in the name of Sanjit Biswas, the departed leader and founder President of the organisation. The delegates fully endorsed the Organizational Report placed by Prodyut Chowdhury, the outgoing General Secretary and pledged to expand ABECA organization and build up intense movements in demand for withdrawal of the "Electricity Act 2003"- as well as the amendment

Bill of 2020 and now of 2021. This movement should be extended to other states as well. The delegates also voiced protest against growing spurt in electricity tariff and demanded that electricity be supplied free of cost to the agricultural consumers. Another resolution extending wholehearted support to the ongoing peasants' movement was unanimously adopted. A new State Committee to guide the movements



in the days to come unanimously elected with Anukul Bhadra as the President and Subroto Biswas as the General Secretary.

## Stagflation

# RBI and government seeking to pass on the entire burden of capitalist crisis on common people

*Contd. from page 4*

houses in all respects. Lowered lending rate or cost of borrowing has enabled the big borrowers to get bank loans at nominal interest. In absence of scope for productive investment in key and essential sectors, monopoly houses found this as an easy window to use cheap bank finance for investing in speculative capital market, gold, real estate and in the opened up public welfare sectors like health, education etc. So whatever little credit offtake has taken place has been for such purposes only so that the corporate sharks can multiply their wealth. Oxfam had earlier reported that just 1% of the super-rich owns 73% of country's wealth. Now Oxfam in a latest report has given a detailed account of how the wealth of the top monopolists swelled during the pandemic while common Indians were struggling to eke out a bare living. Not only that. These monopolists have been under no obligation whatsoever to refund bank loans as the government has been too generous to liberally waive their defaulted loans, by either directing the banks to write off the loans straightaway or under the garb of restructuring. It is reported that loans worth Rs 8 lakh crore have been written off by Indian banks in the last decade. And then the government is rescuing the banks through recapitalization, meaning providing them financial support from public exchequer. Also the government lost revenue of as high as Rs 1.43 lakh crore in just one year in 2019 by drastic cut in corporate tax.

### Common people bearing the brunt

And who is bearing the brunt? Surely the common pauperized people. Lowered bank rates are translating into lower interest on bank deposits by common savers. So, their return from hard-earned savings is depleting, thus affecting their spending power. Recently, the government announced with much fanfare a Rs 20 trillion rescue package to revive the economy in the post-lockdown period. But the bulk of this economic stimulus, which is nothing but more liberal grants, has also been grabbed by the monopolists-corporate. All the measures that the government and RBI had taken have brought

gains for the capitalists at the cost of distress, pain, sufferings of the working class. While benevolence has been showered on the corporates, the government mopped up as high as Rs 1.96 crore in the last one year and a half by imposing additional excise duty on petrol-diesel-LPG. This hefty hike in fuel prices are also contributing to spiralling of price line or, in other words, fuelling inflation. It is obvious that the government has also been printing currency notes to finance budget deficits which is causing spurt in money supply and thereby increasing inflation. Huge black money pumped into the system regularly is also another factor of rising inflation. Moreover, giving licence to the hoarders, blackmarketers and punters to manipulate price is also adding to inflation. The very theory of the RBI or the government that discouraging savings by lowering bank interest and returns from national saving schemes is prompting people to spend more and thereby causing demand-pull inflation is thus proved to be far from the truth. In this way, the RBI and the government have been seeking to pass on the entire burden of the capitalist crisis on the common people including the working class and peasantry in the form of various stifling economic and fiscal policies while the profit interest of the monopoly houses and corporate sector are being catered to in every possible way. And as the purchasing power is dwindling, market is getting shrunk resulting in recession which in its wake is causing further job loss and stagnating the economy more and more. This is the genesis of stagflation. The recent claim that since India's GDP has grown at 0.4% on a year-on-year basis in the quarter ending December 2020, the country is out of recession is a bunkum as this is hardly any evidence of economic stagnation being over.

And as we have pointed out earlier, stagflation is a feature of dying capitalism stricken in insoluble market crisis. 175 year back, great Marx and Engels mentioned in the "Communist Manifesto" that "It is enough to mention the commercial crises ...put on its trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society... And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one

hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises..." They had conclusively proved that the capitalist economic system is inherently crisis-prone because it is driven by forces which cause it to be unstable, anarchic and self-destructive. Elucidating further, great Lenin had shown that economic ruin, crisis, ...is what the capitalists have brought all the nations to ...(and) there is no way out-except through the transfer of power to the revolutionary class, to the revolutionary proletariat, which alone... (would be) leading humanity to lasting peace and liberation from the yoke of capitalism." ("Honest defencism reveals itself", CW Vol 24, page 205 - 206). In fact, Soviet socialism had proved it. When the entire imperialist-capitalist world was gasping in acute crisis and plunged into great depression the early 1930s, Soviet Union within a less than two decades from accomplishing revolution and establishing socialism, not only faced any crisis but surpassed all imperialist countries in every aspect of economic development and elevated standard of life of the common people. There was no unemployment, no recession, no price rise, no closure, no lay-off-nothing. It is thus clear that so long capitalism would persist, stagflation and such other aberrations would continue to surface and plague people's life. Till the time capitalism is overthrown by revolution, toiling millions need to build up united struggle to force government and the RBI reverse their anti-people, pro-capitalist monetary and fiscal policies.

### [Information sources:

The Wire-16-05-19, 23-09-19, 23-12-19, Outlook 24-11-19, 12-10-19, Economic Times 16-11-19, Live mint-19-11-19, 29-10-2020, The Hindu 19-01-20, Business World- 14-12-19, Indian Express 19-12-19, 07-08-20,10-08-20, 07-12-20, lendingratesambadenglish 08-01-20, Hindustan Times 14-01-20, 27-02-21, Business Insider 22-05-20, Bloomberg/quant 25-09-20, Business Today, 18-10-20, The Print 07-01-21, empowerias.com, corporatefinanceinstitute.com., money control31-12-20]

WFH

## Vile motive is shielded behind much-trumpeted 'Digital India' campaign

*Contd. from page 5*

at the helm of the affairs, were elated beyond measure. And those at the other, that is down on the ground of work-activities were also pleased. It changed the daily routine, saved the rush hour hazards to and from the work-place or hazards of living in a distant workplace, kilometres away from home etc. Instead, it was the homely atmosphere of the home, in which they could work now. The corporate world, the monopolist-pliant media took up the cue and were all praise for 'WFH' to step up the campaign for it, to induce in the minds of the employees the convenience this mode of working has been providing to them.

But what is being suppressed in course of that is another important aspect. WFH meant a kind of self-isolation thrust in lieu of money. It did not necessarily fit with the work-routine hitherto followed. Hence it clashed with the daily routine at home. For homemakers such as working housewives, the two responsibilities tackled in a pattern earlier, suddenly took a wild turn. The two gradually became irreconcilable. Also for those without much to do with family responsibilities, the isolation ultimately was telling upon mind and body. Prolonged exposure to computer or smartphone also took their turn. Health hazards and even psychic problems started to grow.

After all workplaces were not merely a place to earn money. Those were and will still remain a part of the modern society. And with the normal working schedule, it covered or covers, a major part of the day. Man being a social entity, in addition to family, workplaces provide platforms to man to interact and be interrelated with others of the society. So from the day a youth, grown up enough to earn, enters a workplace, he or she builds up an association, which helps him or her to develop certain new traits of mind-set, cultural-moral structure. 'WFH' puts a stop to all this. It throws the person into a shell, where he/she loses even his/herself. He /she is simply a cog and screw of the workforce of his workplace, separate, singled-out and left face-to-face with the authority or the assignment. This is a position not normal for any human being, not even a 'new normal'. This is not only abnormal for a human being it is an imposition of the capitalist system upon personal life and hence infringement upon individual liberty and self-respect. It, in fact, contributed to widen 'social distancing', a term misused during pandemic meant only to denote physical distancing necessary to keep

transmission of the virus at bay.

But that does not deter the authorities, which normally include the owners, the corporate houses or their managers from carrying on with the system of 'WFH'. The corporate houses are gleeful and not for nothing. It is not only paying them with huge profit as mentioned. It also unarms the workforce, disaggregated into discrete, separate, single individuals, placed face-to-face with the authorities. Any problem, any imposition, any exploitation from the latter will have to be handled exclusively between the authorities and the individual. So it infringes upon the hard-earned right to launch collective protest, right to association, scope for collective dialogue and bargaining—in short, the democratic and trade union rights of working people.

The monopolists and their corporate houses, particularly those associated with the IT- electronics industry, banks, financial institutions etc. are well aware of these benefits 'WFH' is bringing to them. And they are also aware that the capitalist system is generating various problems in people's life, which may affect their workforce itself. So they have started a new campaign: how to use 'disruptive technology', namely the artificial intelligence etc., to make 'WFH' cool, free of hazards, less painful, even fun. They are out to introduce, for example, what is called noise cancellation technology, which ensures suppression of background noises like sounds of kitchen utensils, drilling in adjoining flats or such others when the WFH is on. They are also running after technologies that do error correction, that do speech enhancement automatically adjusting speech volumes. Besides there are technologies for transcription and translation. These are still not to their satisfaction. While new technologies deal with low frequency noises, those fail with sounds like that of children or dog barking, which AI systems are unable to distinguish from human speech with similar wavefronts. While technologies can help Tamil-speaking listeners understand a speech in French, plenty of mistakes creep in. Those make, for example, 'pure' to record as 'your', 'SAP' as 'sleepy' etc. In brief, though 'WFH' system is yet in its introductory stage, the corporate houses are hell bent upon making the system flawless, enjoying, because this is bringing in huge dividend to them.

Thus, the 'WFH' is proving to be the latest device for the corporate houses to reap huge profit and disorganize, hence unarm their workforce against the extant capitalist order. So working people should beware of it !

## AIKKMS congratulated peasants and toiling people for successful "Rail Roko" Programme

In a statement issued on 18 February 2021, AIKKMS congratulated the struggling peasantry and the toiling people at large for the successful of 'Rail Roko' programme called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) on that day from 12 to 4 pm. Thousands of peasants participated in this programme with much vigour and enthusiasm. It is clear that the movement is gaining momentum and spreading across the country. In 17 states near about seventy places, AIKKMS activists, organized this programme successfully, either singularly or jointly with other fraternal peasants' organizations. In course of the movement, Police arrested AIKKMS volunteers in workers in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. AIKKMS top leadership exuded confidence that the people will come forward and help the struggling peasants to achieve victory.

## CENTRAL TUs CALL TO OBSERVE COUNTRYWIDE 'MAZDOOR KISAN EKTA DIVAS'

Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions and Independent Sectoral Federations and Associations in a statement issued on 23rd February exhorted the workers and employees in the entire country to participate en masse in the 'Mazdoor Kisan Ekta Divas' all to observe countrywide "Mazdoor Kisan Ekta Divas" (Workers-Peasants' Unity Day) on 27 February 2021 called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, by organizing mobilizations/agitations/rallies etc. in workplaces and block/district levels throughout the country.



*Demonstration against vandalization of Kisan Dharna Manch in Muzzafarpur, Bihar, on 19 February by Bajrang Dal Goons*



*Comrade Satyawan, President, AIKKMS, addressing a peasants' meeting in Uttar Pradesh. Seating behind him (3rd from left) is Comrade Shankar Ghosh, General Secretary, AIKKMS*

## MAKE SUCI(C) CANDIDATES VICTORIOUS IN ENSUING ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS AND GENUINE LEFTISM

### WEST BENGAL

<p><b>COOCHBIHAR</b></p> <p>1. Mekhligang (SC)      Ranjit Kumar Roy 2. Mathabanga      Bikash Barman 3. Coochbihar (Uttar) (SC)      Anil Chandra Roy 4. Coochbihar (Dakshin)      Najma Khandakar 5. Sitalkuchi (SC)      Jagadish Adhikary 6. Sitai      Anil Chandra Barman Roy 7. Dinjata      Pradip Roy 8. Natabari      Abdus Salam 9. Toofangunje      Bhola Saha</p> <p><b>ALIPURDUAR</b></p> <p>10. Kumargram 11. Kalchini (ST)      Sukhan Munda 12. Alipurduar      Pijush Kanti Sharma 13. Falakata (SC)      Tarani Roy 14. Madarihat (ST)      Sudhistha Baraik</p> <p><b>JALPAIGURI</b></p> <p>15. Dhupguri (SC)      Dhiranjan Roy 16. Moynaguri (SC)      Shyamal Roy 17. Jalpaiguri (SC)      Palendranath Roy 18. Rajgunje (SC)      Uday Roy 19. Dabgram-Phulbari      Maniul Islam 20. Mal (ST)      Jyotish Minj</p> <p><b>DARJEELING</b></p> <p>21. Matigara-Naxalbari (SC)      Harish Barman 22. Phansidewa (ST)      Bhola Tirkki 23. Siliguri      Dipti Roy (Bhattacharya)</p> <p><b>UTTAR DINAJPUR</b></p> <p>24. Islampur      Birendranath Singha 25. Goalpokhor      Nabin Chandra Singha 26. Karandighi      Shantilal Singh 27. Hemtabad (SC)      Jyotirmoy Barman 28. Kaliagunje 29. Raigunje      Sanatan Majumdar</p> <p><b>DAKSHIN DINAJPUR</b></p> <p>30. Kumargunje      Ranjit Deb 31. Balurghat 32. Tapan (ST)      Kalicharan Ekka 33. Harirampur      Harish Mahato</p> <p><b>MALDA</b></p> <p>34. Gazole (SC)      Supen Kumar Roy 35. Chanchal      Jhantu Kumar Rabidas 36. Harishchandrapur      Musaraf Hossain 37. Englishbazar      Goutam Sarkar</p> <p><b>MURSHIDABAD</b></p> <p>38. Samsargunje      Tipu Sultan 39. Suti      Anup Sinha 40. Jangipur      Mirza Nasiruddin 41. Raghunathgunje      Rabiul Alam 42. Sagardighi      Mirza Lutful Haque 43. Lalgola      Muntasir Zamil 44. Bhagobangola      Abdul Mabud 45. Raninagar      Nasrin Nahar Lucy 46. Murshidabad      Milia Sajem 47. Nabagram (SC)      Barun Mandal 48. Kandi      Sukhen Halder 49. Rejinagar      Babar Ali 50. Beldanga      Sariful Islam</p>	<p>51. Baharampur      Goutam Ghosh 52. Hariharpara      Golam Ambia 53. Naoda      Sahidul Islam 54. Domkal      Samsujjaman 55. Jalangi      Enamul Haque</p> <p><b>NADIA</b></p> <p>56. Karimpur      Dhanapati Mandal 57. Palashipara      Maniruzzaman Mandal 58. Kaligunje      Mahiuddin Mandal 59. Nakashipara      Krishna Chandra Debnath 60. Chapra      Mojammel Hossain Mandal 61. Krishnanagar (Uttar)      Joydeep Chowdhury 62. Shantipur      Nadiachand Biswas 63. Ranaghar Uttar Paschim      Aparna Guha 64. Ranaghat Dakshin (SC)      Nanigopal Mistry 65. Haringhata (SC)      Biplab Chandra Das</p> <p><b>NORTH 24 PARGANAS</b></p> <p>66. Bongaon Uttar (SC)      ShyamSundar Halder 67. Bongaon Dakshin (SC)      Rabindranath Barui 68. Gaighata (SC)      Nanibala Biswas 69. Swarupnagar (SC)      Debabrata Biswas 70. Baduria      Nitai Krishna Paul 71. Habra      Probodh Kumar Sarkar 72. Ashoknagar      Tarak Rajak Das 73. Amdanga      Goutam Biswas 74. Bijpur      Kalipada Debnath 75. Bhatpara      Partha Bhattacharya 76. Jagatdal      Ratna Dutta 77. Rajarhat-Newtown      Jagonmoy Karmakar 78. Madhyamgram      Kshama Panda 79. Barasat      Biplab Dutta 80. Deganga      Ajay Sadhukhan 81. Bashirhat Dakshin      Ajay Bain</p> <p><b>SOUTH 24 PARGANAS</b></p> <p>83. Gosaba (SC)      Tapan Mistry 84. Basanti (SC)      Nimai Mandal 85. Kultali (SC)      Joykrishna Halder 86. Patharpratima      Narayan Halder 87. Kakdwip      Jhantu Maity 88. Sagar      Swaraj Das 89. Kulpi      Ranajit Singha 90. Raidighi      Gunasindhu Halder 91. Mandirbazar (SC)      Sisir Mandal 92. Joynagar (SC)      Tarunkanti Naskar 93. Baruipur Purba (SC)      Joydeb Naskar 94. Canning Paschim (SC)      Narayan Naskar 95. Canning Purba      Rafiq Akunji 96. Magrahat Purba (SC)      Sanjay Mandal 97. Magrahat Paschim      Ahamed Sardar 98. Diamond Harbour      Manorama Halder 99. Satgachhia      Sk. Rabial 100. Sonarpur Dakshin      Dibakar Halder 101. Kasba      Shampa Sarkar 102. Tollugunje      Debabrata Bera 103. Behala Purba      Ashish Danda 104. Budgebudge      Uttam Pal</p> <p><b>KOLKATA</b></p> <p>105. Kolkata Port      Zahed Hossain 106. Rashbihari      Susmita Panda</p>	<p>107. Belegghata      Tarun Das 108. Jorasanko      Dr. Bijnan Kumar Bera</p> <p><b>HOWRAH</b></p> <p>109. Bally      Putul Chowdhury 110. Howrah Madhya      Srirup Das 111. Shibpur      Kartick Shil 112. Hawrah Dakshin      Tapas Kumar Das 113. Uluberia Dakshin      Jayanta Khatua 114. Shyampur      Pradip Mandal 115. Bagnan      Pampa Sarkar Bera 116. Amta      Sanjib Santra</p> <p><b>HOOGHLY</b></p> <p>117. Srirampur      Samir Sarkar 118. Singur      Shankar Jana 119. Balagarh (SC)      Sukdeb Biswas 120. Pandua      Paban Majumdar 121. Haripal      Biswanath Ghosh</p> <p><b>PURBA MEDINIPUR</b></p> <p>122. Tamluk      Jnanananda Roy 123. Panskura Purba      Chandramohan Manik 124. Panskura Paschim      Sunil Kumar Jana 125. Moyna      Subrata Bag 126. Nandakumar      Soumitra Pattanayak 127. Mahishadal      Tapan Kumar Maity 128. Haldia (SC)      Narayan Pramanik 129. Nandigram      Manoj Das 130. Chandipur      Swapan Bhowmik 131. Patashpur      Surjendu Bikas Patra 132. Kanthi Uttar      Panchanan Das 133. Bhagabanpur      Ashoktaru Pradhan 134. Khejuri (SC)      Somnath Mandal 135. Kanthi Dakshin      Shrabani Pahari 136. Ramnagar      To be notified later 137. Egra      Jagadish Sahoo</p> <p><b>PASCHIM MEDINIPUR</b></p> <p>138. Dantan      Subhas Das 139. Keshiary (ST)      Jhaeswar Rout 140. Kharagpur Sadar      Suranjan Mahapatra 141. Narayangarh      Shyampada Jana 142. Sabang      Dr. Harekrishna Maity 143. Pingla      Sisir Manna 144. Kharagpur Gramin      Manik Poyra 145. Debra      To be notified later 146. Daspur      Jagadish Mandal Adhikary 147. Ghatal (SC)      Anjan Jana 148. Chandrakona (SC)      Akshay Khan 149. Garbeta      Tapas Mishra 150. Shalboni      Paresch Dutta 151. Medinipur      Debasish Aich</p> <p><b>JHARGRAM</b></p> <p>152. Nayagram (ST)      Kalicharan Besra 153. Jhargram      Archana Sain 154. Binpur (ST)      Rajib Mudi</p> <p><b>PURULIA</b></p> <p>155. Bandwan (ST)      Nirmal Tudu 156. Balarampur      Dipak Kumar 157. Baghmundi      Mrityunjoy Singhbabu 158. Joypur      Bhagirath Mahato 159. Purulia      Rani Mahato 160. Manbazar (ST)      Swapan Murmu 161. Kashipur      Dipak Mahato 162. Para (SC)      Jagannath Bauri</p>
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**WEST BENGAL**

163. Raghunathpur <b>BANKURA</b>	Pashupati Roy	174. Sonamukhi (SC) <b>PURBA BARDHAMAN</b>	Avaranil Mandal	183. Durgapur Purba 184. Durgapur Paschim 185. Asansol Dakshin 186. Asansol Uttar 187. Barabani <b>BIRBHUM</b>	Jugal Krishna Pakhira Somnath Banerjee To be notified later Sanjoy Chatterjee Debsar Besra
164. Saltora (SC) 165. Chhatna 166. Ranibandh (ST) 167. Raipur (ST) 168. Taldangra 169. Bankura 170. Borjora 171. Onda 172. Bishnupur 173. Kotulpur (SC)	Dipen Bauri Sadananda Mandal Goutam Kumar Mudi Shyamapada Mudi Suvendu Mahato Lina Ghosh (Sarkar) Sudarshan Adhikary Apurba Mandal Sashi Bhusan Banerjee Mohan Santra	175. Bardhaman Dakshin 176. Kalna 177. Bardhaman Uttar 178. Katwa 179. Ketugram 180. Mangolkot 181. Ausgram (SC) <b>PASCHIM BARDHAMAN</b>	Aniruddha Kundu to be notified later to be notified later Apurba Chakraborty Satyanarayan Mandal Moklesur Rahaman (Dalu) Manasha Mete Dona Goswami	188. Suri 189. Bolpur 190. Sainthia (SC) 191. Rampurhat 192. Hansan 193. Murarai	Nitai Ankur Samarjit Barman Naba Kumar Das Farida Yasmin Juthika Dhibar Ansarul Sk

**ASSAM**

District	Constituency	Candidate
1. Goalpara	Goalpara East	Chitralekha Das
2. Goalpara	Goalpara West	Mahibul Islam
3. Goalpara	Joleswar	Osman Goni Molla
4. Dhubri	Dhubri	Habibur Rahman
5. Dhubri	South Salmara	Abdus Sabur
6. South Salmara	Mankachor	Saidur Alom
7. Barpeta	Sarukhetri	Halima Khatoon
8. Nalbari	Nalbari	Kenidi Pegu (Kushol)
9. Nalbari	Dharmapur	Promode Bhagabati
10. Kamrup (R)	Kamalpur	Sisir Kakati
11. Darrang	Sipajhar	Pahi Barua
12. Darrang	Kalaigaon	Jitendra Chaliha
13. Udalguri (BTAD)	Paneri	Swamalata Chaliha
14. Sonitpur	Tezpur	Nayanjyoti Choudhury
15. Nagaon	Baharampur	Sonaram Bora
17. Lakhimpur	Lakhimpur	Brimchi Pegu
18. Lakhimpur	Naobaisa	Anupam Chutia
19. Lakhimpur	Dhakuakhana	Jotika Doley
20. Majuli	Majuli	Bhaity Richong
21. Dhemaji	Dhemaji	Hemkanta Miri
22. Dibrugarh	Naharkatia	Mahendra Dhadumia
23. Cachar	Silchar	Dulali Ganguli
24. Cachar	Dhalai (SC)	Gour Chandra Das
25. Cachar	Sonai	Anjan Chanda
26. Karimganj	Karimganj North	Sujit Kumar Pal
27. Karimganj	Ratabari (SC)	Sanchita Sukla
28. Karimganj	Patharkandi	Bulu Chanda
29. Hailakandi	Hailakandi	Sushil Paul

**PUDUCHERRY**

Constituency	Candidate
1. Kamaraj Nager	S. Lenin Durai
2. Muthiyalpet	K. Saravanan
3. Orleanpet	M. Shankar

**TAMILNADU**

Constituency No	Constituency	Candidate
11	R K Nagar	S Sivakumar
12	Perambur	J Sebastin
91	Veerapandi (Salem)	P Mohan
191	Madurai North	M J Voltaire
199	Periyakulam (Theni)	A Murugesan

**KERALA**

District : Thiruvananthapuram		
Constituency	Candidate	
1. Thiruvananthapuram	A Saboor	
2. Vattiyoorkaavu	A Shyju	
District : Kollam		
3. Iravipuram	S. Sudhilar	
4. Karunagappally	S. Bhargavan	
5. Kottarakkara	E. Kunjumon	
6. Kundara	R. Rahul	
7. Punalur	K. Mahesh	
District : Pathanamthitta		
8. Adoor	Saranya Raj	
District : Alleppey		
9. Mavelikkara	K Sasikumar	
10. Kayamkulam	Myna Gopinath	
11. Ambalappuzha	K.P Subaida	
12. Harippad	T Madhu	
13. Chengannur	TK Gopinathan	
14. Kuttanad	Biju Xavier	
15. Alappuzha	KA Vinod	
16. Aroor	K Prathapan	
District : Kottayam		
17. Kanjirappally	Mayamol K.P	
18. Puthappally	M.V Cheryan	
19. Changanassery	Rajitha Jayaram	
20. Kottayam	M.K Shahasad	
21. Ettumanoor	A G Ajayakumar	
22. Kaduthuruthy	M.J Sunny	
23. Vaikom	to be finalised	
District : Ernakulam		
24. Angamaly	K.C Jyothylekshmi	
25. Aluva	A.G Ajayan	
26. Thrissur	C.B Ashokan	
27. Piravom	C.N Mukundan	
28. Muvattupuzha	C.K Thampi	
District : Idukki		
29. Thodupuzha	T.R Sreedharan	
District : Thrissur		
30. Guruvayoor	M Kumar	
31. Kodungalloor	O. M Sreeja	
32. Chalakkudy	P. K Dharmajan	
District : Malappuram		
33. Malappuram	T K Bose	
District : Palakkad		
34. Malampuzha	K Prasad	
District : Kozhikkode		
35. Kozhikkode- 1	K Rahim	
36. Koilandy	C Praveen	
District : Kannur		
37. Azhikkode	Reshmi Ravi	

## Significant Verdict of Delhi Court in Priya Ramani Defamation Case

On 17 February 2021 Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Ravindra Kumar Pandey of a Delhi Court gave a significant verdict highlighting the women's constitutional right to life and dignity unquestionably denying the plea of stellar reputation of the accused in the Priya Ramani defamation case. The criminal defamation suit against Priya Ramani, a journalist, was filed against her by MJ Akbar, presently a BJP MP, former BJP Minister of External Affairs and a veteran journalist, under section 500 read with section 499 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), stating that accusation by Priya was false, fabricated and deeply distressing. He also levelled counter-charge against Priya of damaging not only his personal reputation and goodwill, but also his political career and social status. He also raised objection on the issue of Priya's public disclosure of the incident and long time lapse of recording accusation. Priya made an allegation of sexual harassment against him in 2018. She found strength to lodge the complaint when the #MeToo movement that was started by Tarana Burke, an American activist, in 2006 to raise awareness of sexually abused women and got global recognition in 2017. Emboldened by that, Priya, brought to the fore her sad experience of being hapless victim of sexual misconduct by Akbar in October 1993 during a job interview. Akbar utilized his plum post of a sitting Union Minister to do such a criminal offence. Inspired and encouraged by Ramani's move, other women who worked under M J Akbar between 1993 to 2011 also came forward and narrated their experience of being sexually exploited by him. Ghazala Wahab, another journalist and a witness in Ramani's favour in the case, came out with her own story of harassment at Akbar's hands. Akbar is among the most powerful people accused of workplace sexual harassment in India.

While pronouncing the verdict, the honourable Magistrate wrote "The right of reputation cannot be protected at the cost of the right of life and dignity of woman as guaranteed in Indian Constitution under Article 21, and right of equality before law and equal protection of law as guaranteed under Article 14 of the Constitution". This significant judgment has laid down a precedent for women to speak up against sexual harassment particularly by the so called socially reputed influential persons who try to take advantage of their position to abuse women and outrage their modesty. The court over ruled Akbar's claims saying that the time elapsed since the alleged incident or the platform on which the woman chooses to speak up remains irrelevant saying "a woman has the right to put grievances before any platform of her choice even after decades" clearly contradicting The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013 that imposes a three-month time limit on the filing of a complaint and honorably acquitted Priya Ramani from all the charges framed against her. In the present rotten capitalist society, the objectification of women and viewing them as items of consumption has become rampant since sex-perversion and animal instinct are on a spiral. Moreover, women are often hesitant to come out with their sad, if not horrific experience, out of shame and fear of being socially stigmatized. The Court in its Priya Ramani verdict has sensitively observed that the sexual harassment is enabled by huge inequalities of social status and the victim is likely to be younger, junior, working in a more menial or marginal capacity or belonging to a marginalized or minority group and systematic abuse at the workplace due to lack of the mechanism to redress the grievance of sexual harassment at the time of the incident and lodge the complaint against it. Further the abuse comes as a shock when the harasser is a person in a position of trust or authority. In fact, the more famous the perpetrator, the more the harassment exercising the power, with the confidence of impunity. This verdict is expected to empower women to speak up against such sexual harassment in workplace or other locations and certainly strengthen the movement encouraging the victims to fight against this heinous crime.

## SUCI (C) candidates valiantly fought in the following wards in Gujarat Municipal Election upholding genuine leftist line and received encouraging number of votes

City	Ward	Candidate
1. Vadodara B	Ward No.12 Akota	Comrade Bharti Parmar
2. Ahmedabad	Ward No. 18 Navrangpura	Comrade Bhavik Raja
3. Surat	Ward No. 27 Dindoli South	Comrade Sureshchandra Maurya
	Do	Comrade Bhavna Maurya
	Do	Comrade Pankaj Maurya

## AIDSO and AIDYO protest brutal assault on a girl child in Pilani

At the call of AIDYO and AIDSO, a demonstration was organized on 23 February, in Pilani, Rajasthan, against the brutal assault on a 6 year old girl child. Apart from district AIDYO and AIDSO leaders, Comrade Shankar Dahiya, Pilani district secretary, SUCI(C) also spoke on the occasion. Expressing deep concern over such atrocities on women and girl children, Comrade Dahiya pointed out that to stop such inhuman crimes, people's movement need to be organized to compel the governments take effective steps need to be taken on the part of the against reckless spread of drinking, drug-addiction and obscenity.



*Rail Roko by AIKKMS at Gwalior, MP, on 18 February, in Support of Peasants' Movement. Similar demonstrations were organized by AIKKMS in other staes also*

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Name and address of individuals who own the Newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one per cent of the total capital: CENTRAL COMMITTEE, SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA (COMMUNIST). I, Asit Bhattacharyya, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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Sd/- Asit Bhattacharyya  
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