

Proletarian Era

RSS-BJP's Electoral Hindutva Turned Maha-Kumbh into a Maha-disaster

They were sleeping—the pilgrims of Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj (erstwhile Allahabad). In the wee hours of 29 January last, there was suddenly an announcement on the public address system in a high-pitch tone: "The auspicious hour which is back after 144 years is imminent! If you want to bathe in the *Amrita* (elixir), wake up and move towards the holy confluence." The police and guards on duty also virtually chased the pilgrims to rush to the 'holy' spot. Devotees, many elderly and frail, had travelled from across India and

beyond, seeking 'divine blessings' in the sacred waters of the Sangam at Prayagraj. So, they hurriedly rushed towards the bank of river Ganga. From the other side, there was a stream of the people who were returning after taking their bath. The path was narrow and fenced by barricades. The dual flow of devotees into opposite directions soon culminated in a rushing, then jostling crowd and finally stampede. Countless people were squeezed into dangerously tight spaces, and when panic set in, the weakest among them had no escape.

Eyewitness accounts paint a grim picture: a surge triggered by barricades erected for VIPs created a human funnel, trapping devotees. When the crowd broke through, the force of the stampede was unstoppable. In a matter of minutes, hundreds were crushed beneath a stampede of panicked people, with survivors recounting the horror of feeling the breath crushed out of them. As a result, *Mauni Amavasya Snan* (bathing on an auspicious moment during new moon) proclaimed by the religious leaders, the Sangh Parivar leaders,

as one of the most auspicious bathing rituals in Hinduism, endowed with spiritual transcendence, instead turned for common people into sheer horror leading to the loss of hundreds of innocent lives, with grievous injuries to thousands. Many more are reported missing. Even the rescue attempts by the survivors of their relatives miserably failed. No policemen were there, nor any administrative persons. People were parted from their kins. Minors lost their parents and the aged who came to get the touch of divinity, met with hell. The bells of the temples were suppressed by the yells of the wounded and bereaved. The siren of the ambulance made the chant of prayers of the 'auspicious' occasion

Contd. on page 2

SUCI(C) severely condemns US President Trump's atrocious statement of taking over Gaza

Comrade Provash Ghosh, General Secretary, SUCI(Communist), issued the following statement on 06-02-25:

The whole world is stunned at the most atrocious statement of US President Donald Trump, trusted representative of ruling American imperialism that US will "take over" and "own" the besieged enclave of Gaza after resettling Palestinians residing there elsewhere. This high-handed announcement upending decades of US policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was made by him while addressing a press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Trump expressed hope that the Palestinians would leave their motherland and would "go to other countries".

Such an utterance is tantamount to talking of ethnic cleansing. This once again lays bare the overlordism and brigandish face of US imperialism

Contd. on page 2

A customary exercise of bundled deceptions camouflaged by demagogic oration

The government's policy is frozen in a mould that is just not

delivering the needed changes for the people—and every year more of the same is peddled in different forms. Could one find any pronouncement of effectively controlling skyrocketing price line by dismantling the criminal nexus operative in price manipulation? Has there been any concrete step to contain mounting unemployment? Does the budget have any proposal to ensure proper healthcare and education at either nil or affordable cost? Is there any declaration of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for procuring crops from the peasants at the C2+50% level as recommended by the MS Swaminathan Commission back in 2006 and as promised by the ruling BJP in the run-up to 2014 General Election and as demanded by the peasants during one year long historic peasant movement of Delhi? No, not at all. Even the usual clap-trap over robust GDP growth was absent. Then what was presented in the name

Budget 2025

- c) Access to high-quality, affordable, and comprehensive healthcare
- d) Hundred per cent skilled labour with meaningful employment
- e) Seventy per cent women in economic activities; and
- f) Farmers making our country the 'food basket of the world'

Outwardly, it sounds so mellifluous and enticing. But alas! That is just the variegated cover of the book. When you flip over the pages, the content turns out to be so treacherous. Just have a glance at the bare facts.

Lowered government spending, rising government debt, surging corporate profit and mounting inflation

A new technique has been invented by the BJP government—not to give any details of the numbers in the budget speech. All are given in the annexures which are not available to the common countrymen. The fudged data, the calculation tricks, the camouflaged reality are all contained in the annexures. Fair enough! Let us proceed towards broad number crunching. Is there any increase in total expenditure? No. Total expenditure had been cut by Rs 1,04,025 crore, with capital expenditure seeing a reduction of Rs 92,682 crore. Allocation towards infrastructural development has been Rs11.21 lakh crore. But the FM herself admitted that the figure might not be reached and could remain at Rs 10.18 lakh crore. Every year, government borrows huge amount to deficit finance (another way of

Contd. on page 6



Protest rally organized on 7 February last by AIKKMS against land grabbing in Patana block in Keonjhar, Odisha, by the BJP-led Odisha state government

of budget that was repeatedly greeted by the members of the ruling dispensation including PM Modi by relentlessly thumping the bench? Oh! A unique menu of *Viksit Bharat* (Developed India) from the stable of the government:

- a) Zero-poverty
- b) Hundred per cent good quality school education

Maha Kumbh

Poor infrastructure and utter mismanagement caused the disaster

Contd. from page 1

inaudible. Thus, was registered one of the deadliest tragedies in the history of the world's largest religious gathering. It is pertinent to mention that there have been repeated incidents of fire. Before the stamped tragedy, a fire broke out on 20 January near the Kinnar Akhara camp, and 15 camps were burnt. Then just a day after the devastating stampede, another fire broke out in the tent city near Nageshwar Ghat. And even on 7 February last, there was one more fire in Sector 18 of the Maha Kumbh Nagar area. The state government allegedly did not issue death certificates of the deceased to obfuscate casualty figures.

Was it divinely ordained or man-made?

Whether there was any divine intervention in orchestrating such a tragedy can be answered by the votaries of Hindutva who claim to be talking with god, having established communion with the Almighty through meditation, holy dips, offering salutation by lying prostrate in temples and chanting mantras, all in media glare. But to the earthly human beings, this tragedy was no freak an accident, but an avoidable tragedy exacerbated by systemic failures. At the heart of the chaos lay a deeply entrenched culture of political privilege that prioritizes the elite over the masses. The UP Government has designed a roadmap for 'Maha Kumbha Mela-2025' long back in 2022. The event's staggering budget of Rs 5010 crore, was / has been supported by a Rs 2010 crore grant from the central government. These are the officially declared figures. Unofficial spending is anybody's guess. Yogi Adityanath, the saffron-clad Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister had remarked, *"This year's Kumbh is not just a religious event but a global spectacle. The increased budget reflects our commitment to creating world-class infrastructure for devotees from across the globe."*

So, all government resources were harnessed to the full, pliant media was pressed into ceaseless campaign to create a hype and all other works were relegated to the back. RSS-BJP camp claimed that 40-50 crore people (meaning 1/3rd of the country's population) would congregate at the Maha Kumbh venue—an absurdity par excellence! In fact, such a weird assertion was propelled by the agenda of glorifying Hindutva by

resorting to a surfeit of counterfeit claims as well as a slew of neatly woven concoctions. But for the vote-merchants, show-offs are indispensable. Thus, was Maha Kumbh highlighted as a mega event. PM Modi and his colleagues often boast of spectacular technological advancement of the country and its emerging as a global 'super-power'. By technological advancement, they mean India's military power armed with nuclear weapons and inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBM), space technology like launch of artificial satellites up above the blue firmament, successful lunar expeditions, or future 'Solar Mission' etc. Earlier also, the Prime Ministers of either the Congress or the BJP parroted the same story of success. But the same leaders have been preaching for 'holy' dips on a specific cosmic alignment eluding the question of scientific basis of the 'holiness'. Hence, the question arises—was it any religious festival or a politically engineered religious spectacle designed to buttress the arch communal Hindutva agenda of the Saffron brigade and serve the ruling BJP's electoral ambitions?

A UP minister talked of 'world class arrangements'. Was it in place or just customarily bragged of? Is it not poor crowd control, inadequate emergency measures, and the notorious VIP culture that resulted in a catastrophic stampede? Security personnel, instead of managing the common devotees, were deployed to clear paths for ministers, bureaucrats, and select Hindu seers—the VVIPs. On the other hand, lakhs of pilgrims were left to navigate an over-congested and ill-planned space without sufficient exits. The government painted the stampede as the result of an overwhelming turnout rather than a failure of crowd control and logistics. Yet, multiple reports indicate that inadequate infrastructure, poor coordination, and VVIP mismanagement were the real culprits. Bouts of fire incidents also raise serious question about safety measures. The tragedy that unfolded was not merely an administrative lapse; it was a damning indictment of a state apparatus more concerned with optics than lives.

Science behind unique planetary constellation

Fact is that the occasion marks a unique planetary alignment which occurs every 12 years in keeping with the experimentally proven scientific laws of cosmology and

astrophysics. This is primarily due to the complex orbital periods of planets, especially Jupiter, which takes roughly 12 years to complete one orbit around the Sun. When this 12-year cycle aligns with the cycles of other planets like the Sun and Moon, this is a rare alignment that happens approximately every 144th year. But the scientific cause behind this unique natural phenomenon was not known in yester years. Amazed at such an occurrence, the then protagonists of Hindu religion gave a spiritual colour to this occasion calling it an 'auspicious time' for purifying the self through bathing at the Kumbh site and attain salvation. It was then presumed, albeit based on subjective supposition, that confluence of the rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati known as *Sangam* in Prayagraj become charged with divine nectar (Amrit). But now when science has unravelled the truth, its disavowal means projecting theocratic postulates and blind religious faiths as gospel truths, and thereby foment obscurantism and superstitions.

Pollution of the Ganga and the Yamuna

Besides loss of so many human lives, so many injured, so many missing, another issue seriously concerned with people's health and even life needs to be brought to attention. It was only recently that the Yamuna was frothing with toxic foam because of overdose of industrial and city waste. More than 800 million litres of largely untreated sewage are pumped into the Yamuna every day. Another 44 million litres of industrial effluents are also discharged daily into the river. Sewage that is treated before being released into the river accounts for only 35% of the total estimated sewage discharge. Once blue Yamuna is now turning blackish. Likewise, the Ganga is severely polluted with regular disposal of human sewage and animal waste as well as industrial waste. Moreover, traditional Hindu religious belief is that being

cremated on the banks of Ganga and flowing down the river washes away a person's sins and takes them directly to heaven. Every year, an estimated forty thousand remains are burned and deposited in Varanasi alone. One would recall that during Covid pandemic, hundreds of dead bodies were seen floating down the streams of the Ganga. Besides, lakhs of people bathe in the Ganges during festival seasons. Some goods, such as food wastes, rubbish, plastic bags, flowers or leaves, are regularly dumped in the Ganga to add to the menacing pollution. The situation is so dire that the sight of dead fish floating in the Ganga and the Yamuna is common now. So, bathing in the Ganga is also linked with dysentery, cholera, hepatitis, acute diarrhoea and such other water-borne diseases.

Despite various National Green Tribunal orders against the discharge of untreated sewage water in the river, there is no change in the situation. Rather, the human-initiated pollution has increased manifold. One wonders what happened to the Rs 40,000 crore spent on the Namami Ganga programme in the past decade with Narendra Modi as Prime Minister. The public relations exercise has failed to clean the river. Far from cleaning the Ganga, the BJP government appears hell bent on further damaging it by allowing hydel projects on the tributaries, thus destroying the ecosystem.

Water pollution will multiply several times after Maha Kumbh

But what will be the consequence of this 'Maha Kumbh'? As lakhs of Indians and also huge number of foreigners flock to the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj, stay in make-shift arrangements and offer 'puja' with a basket of disposable items, one needs to take into cognizance pollution level of both Ganga and Yamuna rivers.

The health of the rivers is beyond fragile due to contamination and pollution in Prayagraj. The city

Contd. on page 4

SUCI(C) condemns US President's atrocious statement

Contd. from page 1

which, it appears, has gone a step ahead from extending its sphere of influence to virtually colonize various lands including sovereign countries. Just the other day, Trump spoke of gaining control of Greenland, the autonomous Danish territory.

We once again reiterate that US imperialism, the worst enemy of mankind, is unbridled in absence of the mighty socialist bloc and the only way to thwart such international gangsterism of the Pentagon regime is to spearhead in right earnest an

organized well-coordinated anti-imperialist movement round the globe by anti-war peace-loving people. We are sure that along with us, the right-thinking people of the world would severely condemn this imperialist tyranny to bully others to submission.

We also demand that the right of the Palestinian people to free their motherland from illegal occupation and military assault of Zionist Isreal, aided and abetted by US imperialism, ought to be honoured and voice must be raised throughout the world in support of that.

America's Great Unmaking: Trade Wars, Isolation, and the Doctrine of Chaos encompassed in Trump's policy declarations

The American monopolists and multinationals at the helm of US imperialist regime are also engulfed in acute insolvable growing crisis global imperialism-capitalism is sunk in following inexorable law of social development. Being the kingpin of global imperialism-capitalism, it is now desperate to stave off the crisis by adopting a very aggressive posture, both in economic and political spheres, which is enconced in the slogan "America first". And to implement that class design, the majority of the giant American monopoly houses and multinationals led by world's richest industrialist Elon Musk, wholeheartedly backed Donald Trump, also a business tycoon himself, as President of the country. With a view to scoring over its imperialist rivals like Russia, China, both formidable imperialist powers after counter revolution, and some other European countries in so far as establishment of global hegemony is concerned, the US rulers are on to pursue a set of policies, both domestic and international, which smacks of rank insolence, military muscle-flexing and economic gangsterism. Trump, as political representative of the US ruling class, is articulating those objectives in his own style of brag and bluster.

Occupying Gaza through ethnic cleansing

Trump says US will "take over" and "own" Gaza after resettling Palestinians elsewhere under an extraordinary redevelopment plan that, he claimed, could turn the enclave into "the Riviera of the Middle East". This announcement which has been made when following the ceasefire negotiated between Hamas and Israel earlier this month, evicted Palestinians (90% of its 23 lakh residents have been displaced) have been trying to return to their settlements which have been reduced to rubble due to Israeli attacks. Already over 45,000 Palestinians have been killed because of Israeli military assault. This reveals a chilling pattern: the systematic dehumanization of vulnerable populations for political gain. His casual suggestion to "clean out" Gaza and relocate the displaced Palestinians from their motherland to Jordan and Egypt is akin to ethnic cleansing and echoes the voice of Roman emperors and Alexander who thought they would reshape and dictate the history and destiny of the world by running their cavalry

through country to country thereby expanding their fiefdom and bully others to submission at the point of sword. These moves are about reinforcing an exclusionary, fear-driven strategy that weaponizes suffering to rally US base. He even mentioned the "lovely beachfront property" —while hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were walking north along the beach toward their demolished homes in Gaza City. This also flagrantly violates Article 11 of UN Resolution 194 from 1948 which stipulates that all refugees have the right to return home. However, that has not prevented Zionist Israeli regime, front office of US imperialism in the Middle East, from advocating for resettling Palestinians elsewhere in the past so that it could take control of that territory. Trump's extraordinary proposal also cast a pall of uncertainty over the next round of negotiations to extend the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. Moreover, Trump has also an individual agenda to buttress—to see the world in the framework of real estate that he and his family members can buy at low prices and then use the funds to finance hotels, casinos and golf courses. In fact, Trump enterprise is reported to have set up high-rises, hotels and golf courses in Oman, Saudi Arabia and Dubai (UAE). From Oman alone, it has minted a profit of \$75 lakh.

Forcible takeover of Greenland

Secondly, Donald Trump's obsession with Greenland, the world's largest island and an autonomous territory of Denmark is back. In December last, Trump, then President-elect, revived calls made in his first presidency for US ownership of Greenland, calling it "an absolute necessity." At a news conference, he did not totally rule out "military or economic coercion" to gain Greenland—or Panama, which also Trump has expressed desire to own. It is obvious that US imperialists have been eyeing Greenland for its trove of natural resources—including rare earth metals which may become more accessible as climate change melts the territory's ice. These include oil and gas, as well as the rare earth metals in high demand for the electric cars and wind turbines of the green transition, as well as for manufacturing military equipment. Currently China dominates global rare earth production and has already threatened to restrict the export of critical minerals and

associated technologies, ahead of Trump's second term. Trump's renewed interest in 2024 reveals something far more consequential—America's Arctic ambitions in an era of great-power rivalry within imperialist camp. With China and Russia, expanding their Arctic footprints, US imperialists find their global dominance slipping. So, Trump's rhetoric has shifted from transactional bluster to a more ominous suggestion of "military or economic coercion" to forcibly occupy Greenland'.

Not just that. Even before he formally re-entered the White House last month to begin his second term as president of the United States, Trump had repeatedly taken aim at Canada arguing that it had failed to stem irregular migration and drug trafficking at its border with the US, and he threatened to impose steep tariffs on Canadian imports. Later, in a Fox news interview, he went to the extent of saying: "I think Canada would be much better off being a 51st state of US".

Had the mighty socialist bloc been in existence, he would not have dared to say so as he is aware how Britain and France who along with Israel had invaded Egypt to recover control of the Suez Canal, had to tuck up the tail and flee within 48 hours when Soviet Union gave a threat of bombing London and Paris in case of non-withdrawal of illegal aggression.

Imposition of high import tariff

In a bid to secure internal market of US for American monopolists and increase bargaining power with other countries for easier access of US to their markets, Trump, in compliance with the wishes of his masters, have announced imposition of high import tariff on goods exported by others to US. Trump's revised import tariff are 25% on Chinese steel, 60% on Mexican autos, and threats against European industries—signal a paradigm shift from multilateral engagement to economic self-exclusivity. Trump has also warned that 27 countries belonging to European Union which, of late, have not maintained good relationship with US, might also face similar tariff barrier. In a social media post, Trump himself had said that there is a decline of bilateral trade between US and European Union. Unless the European countries increase the volume of import of oil and natural gas from US, they should be ready to face tariff wall while exporting

their produce to US. Even threat has been given to India to reduce import tariff on goods procured from US. Otherwise, US would take counter action. In fact, Trump's salvo of a 25% blanket tariff on all imports of steel and aluminum into the US are the latest in a series of announcements and executive orders, just days before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington. So far, the government has demurred from commenting on these moves or stuck to muted responses. However, being nervous before wielded tariff threat, India hurriedly slashed import duties on motorcycles, cutting tariffs on heavyweight bikes with engines above 1,600cc from 50% to 30% and smaller ones from 50% to 40% as a pre-emptive move to ward off any threat of tariffs and facilitating entry of more Harley Davidson bikes in India. Trump earlier warned that 50% tariff on US bikes by India was 'unacceptable'. Beyond bikes, India has zeroed out import taxes on satellite ground installations, benefiting US exporters who supplied \$92m worth of those in 2023. Tariffs on synthetic flavouring essences dropped from 100% to 20% (\$21m in US exports last year), while duties on fish hydrolysate for aquatic feed fell from 15% to 5% (\$35m in US exports in 2024). India also scrapped tariffs on select waste and scrap items, a category where US exports amounted to \$2.5bn last year. India also announced that the tariff rate on luxury cars, including station wagons and race-cars, priced above \$40,000 has been slashed to 70% from 125% levied earlier obviously to curry favour with Elon Musk, Trump's principal backer and owner of Tesla motorcars. Trump tariffs are increasingly becoming global trade disruptors, leaving the market uneasy and uncertain with common people slated to bear the brunt.

Threat to stop aid

On the other hand, accusing South Africa of human rights violations against white farmers, Trump signed an executive order freezing financial aid to the country. The order further said significantly that the US "cannot support the government of South Africa's commission of rights violations in its country", and as long as it "continues these unjust and immoral practices" then the US will not provide aid or assistance. "In addition, South Africa has taken aggressive

Contd. on page 4

Maha Kumbh

No simple testament to India's spiritual resilience, but politically engineered spectacle to serve ruling BJP's electoral ambitions

Contd. from page 2

is ill-equipped to tackle its own sewage waste. Therefore, one wonders what would happen once lakhs of people congregate at Kumbh Mela. Moreover, the Bullua ghat to Rasoolabad ghat of Kumbh Spot has been having many sewage creeks entering the river, which bore untreated waste. Most of these sewage lines are right next to the designated bathing areas. If one looks at the Aarel ghat on the other bank of the river, it tells the same tale. Countless sewage drains also enter the river right before the Triveni Sangam of the Ganga and the Yamuna. Can the river ecosystem take the shock of so many millions of people living in and bathing in it? The answer is pretty straight forward. The confluence and mostly the Ganga beyond the city of Prayagraj will suffer another major blow to its ecosystem. This will end up endangering plants, riverine communities and fishes. The city of Prayagraj would have to suffer more from the pollution and a diseased river system.

Sparkle of humanness

The Hindutva doctrine of the RSS-BJP-Sangh Parivar is based on Hindu religious fanaticism and anti-minority, particularly, anti-Muslim hatred. This has been systematically exacerbated to such an extent that not only the religious minorities get persecuted and lynched and their religious shrines facing attacks, they are debarred from earning their livelihood from small shops or food outlets if those are situated on the roads through which Hindu religious processions would pass. Just the other day, the BJP-led UP government had directed that food shops along the route of Kanwar Yatra to Haridwar must have 'name plates' displaying the names of the owner(s) and employees. This was done with a view to prohibiting the pilgrims to take food in or buy anything from outlets owned by the Muslims. While most of the Muslim-owned dhabas were thus closed down, dhabas run by the Hindu owners were asked to terminate the service of

their Muslim workers. The decision was stated to have been taken to maintain the purity of the faith of Kanwar pilgrims since, according to Hindutva zealots, the religion of Kanwariyas would have got corrupted by eating food in the dhabas owned by Muslims. The Muslim community in Prayagraj has historically played an active role in Kumbh Mela, which has benefited both Hindus and Muslims socially and economically. The event had long provided business opportunities for Muslim shopkeepers, transporters and labourers. This year calls for their boycott from certain religious figures and abetted by the UP government led to their exclusion from trade and services at the event. Even Muslim shopkeepers who attempted to operate discreetly were targeted and harassed.

But then, human feelings transcends beyond the barrier of communalism-fundamentalism. Despite the boycott, the local Muslims have disregarded their exclusion and have provided food, shelter, and medical aid to stranded pilgrims after the stampede, displaying an unshaken commitment to humanitarian values. Moreover, Muslim volunteers have set up food stalls and medical aid stations to assist the injured and hungry. A community-run 'bhandara' (free meal service) has been organized, serving hundreds of devotees irrespective of religion. Videos and pictures circulating on social media depict local Muslims distributing essential supplies and aiding the pilgrims, defying efforts to sow division. This, in fact, has given a snubbing to the hate campaign of the Hindutva brigade.

Why then this Maha Kumbh?

This tragedy raises fundamental questions about India's priorities. Can religious faith continue to justify human sacrifice on the altar of incompetence? Will the government finally take real steps to modernize event management, or will another stampede a few years from now be met with the same excuses? Why is this Kumbh Mela organized with so much fanfare and spending of

huge money from the public exchequer? The BJP is in power for the last 11 years. Previously the Congress also ruled this country for more than 54 years in different slots. The BJP also ruled earlier for 6 years from 1999-2004. Poverty, hunger, unemployment, price-rise—all are insurmountable. Lack of healthcare and proper education continue to plague the common people, while, on the contrary, the corporates are reaping super-profits. The economic inequality is growing. Hence, anger is brewing among all sections of the population. The peasants are in revolt against anti-farmer policies. The workers are demonstrating against anti-labour codes. The students and teachers are protesting against the disastrous education policy. The youths are demanding jobs. So, in the bourgeois class interest the government besides precipitating communal hatred and mutual animosity to keep the toiling millions disunited, is also fanning up and misdirecting religious sentiment of the people to divert their attention from the actual problems and thwart a possible mass upsurge. So, they are creating hype centring religious festivals.

When the issue of building Ram-mandir in Ayodhya did not yield desired mileage, the BJP leadership has fallen back on 'Maha Kumbh' to serve their narrow sectarian electoral, political and economic interest. Does one find any true religious sense in their conduct, any religious values? Their pursuit is only of the outer shell of religion. It once again shows how capitalism and its servitors are leading civilization to the precipice of utter ruination. Also, there is a business angle. UP CM has claimed that such religious tourism is expected to generate business of around Rs 1.5 lakh crore to Rs 2 lakh crore.

Many experts have also predicted a significant economic boost for the region due to the large influx of pilgrims and associated spending on services like transportation, accommodation, food, and retail. So, it is a double benefit for both the RSS-BJP and their masters, the ruling bourgeois class.

The Maha Kumbh is not a simple testament to India's spiritual resilience, it is a politically engineered religious spectacle designed to serve the ruling BJP's electoral ambitions and the ruling bourgeoisie's mandate for accentuating divide among people along religious line to thwart possible united upsurge against capitalist misrule.

Trump's policy

Trump is operationalizing class design of ruling US bourgeoisie

Contd. from page 3

positions towards the United States and its allies, including accusing Israel, not Hamas, of genocide in the ICJ, and reinvigorating its relations with Iran to develop commercial, military, and nuclear arrangements." Obviously, the violation of human right is a pretext, and the measure is in fact a punitive action against South Africa for raising finger at Israel.

Withdrawal from Paris climate agreement

Global warming and climate change are posing serious threat to the planet endangering very existence of mankind. Even US are

facing the consequences as were seen in the repeated bouts of Tornadoes in Florida in all seasons. The hills above Los Angeles exploded in flames early last month because of wildfire fuelled by climate change in the form of a summer of record-breaking temperatures, extreme heat, lack of rainfall, combined with strong and dry Santa Ana winds. Yet, Trump, as per dictate of the ruling American bourgeoisie, signed an Executive Order on 20 January 2025 that starts the process of withdrawing the United States from the Paris climate Agreement. He also shrugged off global warming worries, saying 'that

is not our problem'. The Paris Agreement is an international climate change agreement adopted in December 2015 by nations that are Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ("UNFCCC"). The Executive Order signed by Trump and titled "Putting America First in International Environmental Agreements," in fact, signals the process of withdrawing the US from any agreement, pact, accord, or similar commitment made under the UNFCCC. Trump cited potential economic damage and unfair burdens as reasons behind the order. In another Executive Order titled Unleashing American Energy disbanded the Interagency Working Group on the Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases and talked of reevaluating the US government's

use of social cost of carbon calculations in permitting, and reevaluating the US Environmental Protection Agency's 2009 determination that current and projected concentrations of atmospheric greenhouse gases threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations, among other measures. Earlier, Trump, during his electoral campaign had dismissed the global threat of climate change and claimed that concerns about rising sea levels are exaggerated and argued that the ocean would only "go down 100th of an inch within the next 400 years". Thus, overriding international scientific opinion about potential threat of climate change, Trump virtually avowed the class interest of the US monopolists as

Contd. on page 5

Trump's policy

Open declaration of occupying sovereign countries and domestic policies are equally damaging

Contd. from page 4

well as the bourgeoisie of other countries including India of profit maximization by reducing production cost through continued use of fossil fuel and turning away from giving emphasis on switching to green energy.

Withdrawal from World Health Organization and UN agencies

Trump also announced withdrawing the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO), a move that public health experts say will undermine the nation's standing as a global health leader and make it harder to fight the next pandemic. It bears recall that way back in May 2020, the pandemic period, Trump, then in the last leg of his first Presidential term, had announced the US would sever its relationship with WHO and redirect funds to US global health priorities. On 6 July 2020, the US administration officially notified UN Secretary-General António Guterres of its intention to withdraw from WHO membership. This notification coincided with record daily increases in COVID-19 cases worldwide and rising infections in more than three-quarters of the US states. In response, 750 leaders from the academia, science, and law have urged the US Congress to block the president's action. Ultimately it was blocked. The US had entered WHO membership through a 1948 joint resolution passed by both houses of Congress. The current US administration's unilateral action notifying the UN that the US is withdrawing violates US law because it does not have express approval of Congress to leave WHO. Withdrawal from WHO would have dire consequences for US security, diplomacy, and influence because WHO has unmatched global reach and legitimacy. The US administration would be hard pressed to disentangle the country from WHO governance and programmes which are in total detriment to the interest of US people.

Trump has also withdrawn US from a number of United Nations bodies, including its Human Rights Council (UNHRC), UN relief agency for Palestinians (UNRWA), and said he would review involvement in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Retrenchment of government employees

Besides some threatening international steps, Trump's domestic policies are also equally pernicious. In an attempt to reduce federal spending, Trump has announced buyout offers to more than 2 million (20 lakhs) government employees. According to a memo from the Office of Personnel Management, the employees who leave their posts voluntarily will receive about eight months of salary until September, provided they choose to do so by 6 February. The buy out offer applies to all federal workers except certain military, postal, or national security personnel. Such a largest single job cut is unprecedented in US

history. The administration has warned the workers that they could lose their jobs if they did not accept the buyout. Federal employees have been told to expect significant cuts. So far, more than 1% of that workforce has chosen to take part—making up between 20,000 to 40,000 federal workers, according to US media.

Trump has also not mandated or even suggested that the federal minimum wage—stuck at \$7.25 per hour for the last 15 years—would be raised closer to \$21 per hour. This might bring millions out of poverty. Instead, he has unleashed attacks on organized labor, including federal civil service workers, and removed National Labor Relations Board protections for unions.

Price rise and budget cut for nutrition programmes

During the 2024 election, Trump blamed former President Biden's administration for high food prices and the inflation that has driven up the cost of living. Trump said he would lower the costs of everyday food items "on Day 1." Since February 2020—the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S.—average grocery prices have increased by 27%—with eggs up 81%, margarine up 55%, beef and veal up 37% and juices up 32%. Rather, monopolization of control over the food industry has allowed major food producing and marketing companies to experience record profit margins as they have raised prices to take advantage of predictions of inflation. But none of the volume of Executive Orders Trump has signed offer any hope to cut weekly grocery bills for working families. These bills remain unaffordable for many people. Trump signed no order calling for a freeze on food prices or better yet, mandatory price reductions. Thus, Trump has reneged on his pre-electoral promise as is the case with most bourgeois leaders adept in deceiving people with counterfeit promises for securing votes. Also, because of cutting or adding restrictions to the 'Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programme' (SNAP), more than 42.6 million Americans (1 in 8 families) who rely on these essential benefits to feed their families now may face even greater threats of rising food costs.

Trump has not ordered the rural bourgeoisie to lower exorbitant rents that have pushed housing costs beyond the reach of millions of people in the US, nor demanded that the banks reduce excessive mortgage interest rates to put buying a home within reach for people wanting a home. It is pertinent to recall that huge default of housing loans in US triggered global sub-prime crisis in 2007. Fact is how can he fix inflation because the monopolist sharks and multinational hounds surrounding him would never allow any cut into their mega profits.

Anti-immigrant stand and deportation spree

During electioneering, Trump said that if given a second term, he would decimate American communities by targeting

Contd. on page 8

Comrade Kartik Saha passes away

Comrade Kartik Saha, a senior member of West Bengal State Committee and well-known leader of education movement breathed his last on 31 January last after a sudden brain stroke at Calcutta Heart Clinic and Hospital. He was 76. When his mortal remains were brought to the central Party Office in Kolkata on 31 January, Comrades Provash Ghosh, beloved General



Secretary, Asit Bhattacharyya, veteran Polit Bureau member and other central and state leaders paid revolutionary tribute to him.

Comrade Kartik Saha, who hailed from a very poor family, was inspired by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, great leader of the proletariat and brought into the Party by another departed leader Comrade Badal Pal in mid-1960s. He was a leading activist of AIDSIO and was elected General Secretary of AIDSIO-led union of Ashutosh College in south Kolkata in 1967-68. He then joined as an assistant teacher in the government-recognized Sarat Sikhshayatan Prathamik Vidyalaya and later became the principal of that primary school. He then took initiative to build Bengal Primary Teachers' Association (BPTA) of which departed Comrade Sukomol Dasgupta, former Central Committee member, SUCI(C), was the President and he was the Secretary. Later, he took active part in the historic education movement that surged forth in West Bengal under the leadership of front-ranking educationists, litterateurs, scientists, journalists and intellectuals of various fields when the then CPI(M) government abolished English from primary level and the pass-fail system. Afterwards, when at the instance of the Party leadership, Primary Education Development Board, a parallel academic organization, was set up under the stewardship of Dr Sushil Kumar Mukhopadhyay, internationally acclaimed scientist and former Vice-chancellor of Calcutta University, Comrade Kartik Saha was elected Secretary of that organization as well. This Board has been conducting since 1992 a primary end scholarship examination totally depending on voluntary service of a good number of teachers and academicians. Around two lakh students sit in this examination every year and the rank holders are given prizes in an annual function. Comrade Kartik Saha was also involved in the activities of All India Save Education Committee as well as served as the secretary of its West Bengal Chapter for a long time. Later he built up an association of the retired primary teachers in the state and was its secretary till his last breath. In a memorial meeting held on 11 February last presided over by Comrade Chandidas Bhattacharjee, Polit Bureau member and West Bengal State Secretary, Comrade Saumen Basu, senior Polit Bureau member, dwelt at length on the various aspects of life and struggle of Comrade Kartik Saha. Also present in that meeting was Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, veteran Polit Bureau member. In the demise of Comrade Kartik Saha, Party has lost a very valuable comrade.

Red Salute Comrade Kartik Saha



Comrade Provash Ghosh paying tribute to Comrade Kartik Saha at central Party office, Kolkata

Budget 2025

Fudged data, calculation tricks, camouflaged reality abound

Contd. from page 1

financing deficit is by printing of new currency note—but that figure is kept secret). This time, as the Finance Minister (FM) stated in her speech, the gross market borrowings are estimated at Rs 14.82 lakh crore. In fact, during the last 10 years of the BJP rule, India has borrowed Rs 4 lakhs every second. As of September 2024, India's national debt was \$2,144.6 billion (Rs 1,86,58,020 crores), which has been an all-time high. Because of such huge debt, interest payments accounted for 25% of the total expenditure, and nearly 40% of revenue receipts.

Then, what about reining inflation? No, government is not bothered about that because that is left in the hands of esoteric monetary policy mandarins who have working overtime to ascertain upto what decimal point retail price index is slated to fall so that interest rates could be brought down and the large corporates who have made it a habit to default bank loan (Indian banks have reportedly written off a total of Rs 14.56 lakh crore in Non-Performing Assets or defaulted loans mostly by corporate giants over the past nine financial years, starting from 2014-15) can avail of fresh loan at lower interest, not for productive investment but to park funds in speculative stock market, arms manufacturing and taking over government infrastructure like roads, bridges and mines, now euphemized as asset monetization.

Economic Survey 2025 placed a day ahead of Budget presentation mentions that wages lagged even as "profits surged", with corporate profitability soaring to a 15-year peak in 2023-24 on the back of robust growth in financials, energy, and automobiles. Among the salaried, real average monthly wage for male workers in 2023-24 was Rs 11,858, down by 6.4 per cent from Rs 12,665 in 2017-18. For female workers, real wages fell more sharply by 12.5 per cent to Rs 8,855 from Rs 10,116 in 2017-18, the Survey added. (Real wage is calculated by dividing nominal wages by retail inflation.) But, despite such an exorbitant profit rise, corporate tax contribution to the tax kitty of government has shrunk to just 17% in the Budget presented today, compared with personal income tax contribution of 22%. What does it mean? It means the corporate world is maximizing profit riding on squeezing blood of the workers and the huge benefits, waivers and concessions offered by

the government.

To control inflation, not only does production of essential food items need to be raised but its trade and distribution needs to be controlled. The expansion of a robust public distribution system could have been a step to ensure that foodgrain, cooking oil, fuels, clothing, stationary, etc., reach the countrymen at affordable prices. This would have lower the surging open market rates to some extent. Extortionate taxes and cess on petrol-diesel despite considerable dip of crude oil price in the international market have been pushing prices up because increased transportation cost is loaded on the end price. A due reduction of those exorbitant taxes and cess which are inflating the government kitty could have given some relief to the people by way of reduction of indirect tax burden on them.

Unemployment

Unemployment is soaring. It is 44.49 in one age group (20-24). On the other hand, it stood at 14.33% for the age group of 25-29. 32.06 crore people have no job. 31 lakh people officially have lost jobs in last three years. As per the ILO-Institute for Human Development (IHD) joint study, the share of educated youngsters among the unemployed, rose from 54% in 2000 to 66% in 2022.

But, there is no concrete proposal other than some customary pious wishes of job creation. As of March 2023, over 9.7 lakh posts in the central government of India were vacant, which is around 24% of the total sanctioned posts. Over 3.5 lakh vacancies are lying in the Railways. But the FM is silent over that as she is tight-lipped about regular government jobs being outsourced or performed by contractual workers at paltry wage. These contractual jobs are no employment but underemployment or pseudo-employment. There is the usual hullabaloo over 'skilling' people so that jobs will become available or giving small loans (like for home stay managers) to supposedly boost jobs. But how would this skilling be done? What is the roadmap? Can skill upliftment be of any use if job opportunities go on shrinking? Perhaps the FM thinks that such 'trivial' questions ought not to feature in such an 'august' document like Union Budget document.

Last year, the FM announced a new "Prime Minister's Internship Scheme" aimed "at providing internship opportunities to youth in top 500 companies of India.

The programme was stated to be offering youth exposure to real-life business environments across sectors, helping them gain valuable skills and work experience". This scheme was to target one crore internships to youth over five years. But in this budget, there is no mention of that, let alone reporting the progress in this regard. In fact, it is now left to the corporate houses to provide jobs. And as government data reveals, in the April-June quarter of this 2023-24 fiscal year, fresh investments announced by corporates was just Rs 44,000 crore—a 20 year low. Private investment fell 15.3% in 2023-24, in last year. According to recent economic reports, it was expected to dip further the 2024-25 fiscal year, with a slower growth rate compared to previous years, primarily due to factors like weak manufacturing, slower corporate investments, and concerns over rising input costs and domestic demand slowdown. Over 2.5 crore small and medium industries have closed down in last 10 years throwing 12 crore people out of work, reported government agencies. So, generation of jobs by private sector in large number is a fiasco.

When job is sought in government sector having very little avenue, they receive bullets and batons. Just a couple of months back, Patna Police lathi charged hundreds of aspiring Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) candidates protesting outside the commission's office against reports of potential normalization in the 70th Combined Preliminary Examination scheduled in Bihar on 14 December 2024. Again, the Bihar state police resorted to baton charge of job aspirants alleging leak of a question paper of combined preliminary exam conducted by Bihar PSC. The day PM Modi was closeted with select economists for pre-budget discussion, 1800 candidates for just 10 posts thronged at a private engineering college in Bharuch, Gujarat, which resulted in collapse of a railing causing injuries to six. And who does not know that engineers, post-graduates and doctorates are scrambling for a job of class IV staff, sweeper and even mortuary assistants? If the government call these highly educated youths 'unskilled', then who are, according to it, skilled? So, the prattle over 'skilling programmes' compatible with industry need is a bunkum. In fact, the industrial houses stricken with acute market crisis endemic of capitalist system are now on a path of drastically reducing manpower and opting for sophisticated technology to keep production cost down. And that

feature is neatly camouflaged by over-emphasis on skill development and occasional citing of rising enrolment in PF account.

Agriculture

Government talks of farmers making India food basket of the world. What a consonant rhythmic language to suppress government's apathy towards improving the condition of the wretched peasant community! As per the revised budget estimate 2024-25, the expenditure made in the Agriculture and allied sector had been Rs. 3,76,720.41 crore and in the 2025-26 Budget, the estimated amount is Rs. 3, 71,687.35 crore, that is less by Rs. 5042.06 crore. The allocation to the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has come down by Rs 3,905.05 crore when compared to the revised estimate of 2024-25. Considering the inflation also this is a drastic cut in allocation for the farming sector that is the 'first engine of the economy' in the words of the Finance Minister. The 'Flagship Programme of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana' for crop insurance has a drastic budgetary cut is from Rs.16,864.00 crore in 2024-25 to Rs. 12,242.27 crore in 2025-26 i.e. Rs. 4612.73 crore. Allocation for crop insurance scheme is down by Rs 3,621.73 crore. Allocation for fertilizer subsidy is Rs 1.67 lakh crore for 2025-26, lower than the revised estimate of Rs 1.71 lakh crore for 2024-25. The government had earmarked Rs 1.88 lakh crore towards fertilizer subsidy in the previous year. Cut in funds for fertilizers is destined to being down subsidy level making input costs yet more dearer for the poor peasants. So, the efforts are on to fully privatize agriculture by completing the course of handing over both input sector (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides) and procurement system to the agr-giants and multi-nationals.

Education

Budget allocation to educational sector, now in doldrums with increasing privatization, closing down of government schools in large numbers, lack of minimal infrastructure and number of teachers in the government schools, downgraded standard of curricula, grotesque semester and choice-based credit system, hefty fee structure, lack of academic autonomy and so forth, is Rs 1,28,650.05 crore which is just 2.54 % of the total budget. Budgets allocated to UGC and All India council for Technical Education have been reduced by 47% and 50% respectively. Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (a few number of schools meant for children of Indian Defence Services personnel)

Contd. on page 7

Budget 2025

No obligation to report implementing last year's promises

Contd. from page 6

has been allocated Rs 9,503 crore, an increase of Rs 776 crore as compared to the revised estimates of 2024-25. The Centre's cumulative support for all its secondary schools in India is less than half the funding for the central schools such as *Kendriya Vidyalayas* (Rs 9,504 crore) and *Navodaya Vidyalas* (Rs 5,305 crore).

While the FM in her speech said that for the Union government, "*Viksit Bharat encompasses 100% good quality school education*," the increase in budgetary allocation has been minimal. In absolute terms, the allocation to the education sector was about 0.37% of India's gross domestic product (GDP) last year. This year, it is about 0.36%. Public spending on education (by both state and Centre) has been stagnant at 4.2%-4.6% of the gross domestic product (GDP) since 2019. Even the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) has recommended that at least 6% of total budget. Very interestingly, when government schools have no funds to buy chalks, dusters and blackboards or making toilets or repair the dilapidated buildings, the FM takes pride in announcing 'Broadband connectivity' to all government secondary schools and expanding the capacity of highly expensive Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs). According to the Unified District Information System for Education dashboard, the overall dropout rate at the secondary school-level is 10.9%. But budget has not addressed this concern. Given that India has 445 state universities and approximately 9,200 state government colleges, this level of support is inadequate and widens the resource disparity between central and state institutions. On the other hand, impetus is given to the private operators to make decisive entry into the academic arena to mint enormous profit by selling education as a commodity. Also notable is the fact that allocation of Rs 20,000 crore to the Department of Science and Technology (DST) is only to initiate a private sector-driven research and development (R&D) fund.

Child Nutrition

As per the October 2024 data of 'Poshan Tracker', out of 8.82 crore children (0-6 years), 37% of these children) have been found to be stunted and 17% children (0-6 years) have been found to be underweight. Nearly 8.8 lakh under-five children die every year. In 2021, 24 lakh children died of malnutrition.

But PM-POSHAN, as the

'National Mid-Day Meal Programme' is now called, was allocated Rs 12,500 crore, a 0.26% increase from Rs 12,467 crore for 2024. Adjusting for inflation, this is a reduction from last year. The Revised Estimate (RE) 2024-25 for Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 scheme stands at 20,070.90 crore, while the Budget 2024-25 allocation was Rs 21,200 crore. The Budget 2025-26 estimate is Rs 21,960 crore. So, there is a 2.7% decline under this programme over the last year's Budget allocation in real terms, that is, accounting for inflation. For the Ministry of Women and Child Development, there is a decline of about 3% in real terms over the last year's Budget allocation.

According to the 2024 Child Nutrition Report, India has the second highest rate of severe child food poverty (CFP) in South Asia. The report also highlights that unhealthy foods are becoming more common in children's diets. Right now, allocations under midday meal are Rs 6.19 for primary school students and Rs 9.29 for upper primary students. Can this budget provide food to the fill, let alone nutritional food?

Yet, the BJP government did not show any obligation to free crores of children from appalling hunger and malnutrition. But the defence budget has been further increased to as high as Rs 4.91 lakh crore for FY2025-26.

Healthcare

The Union government's health expenditure as a proportion of the total income of the country (or GDP) continues to remain a meagre 0.29%. The priority to health in the total Budget continues to remain low at about 2%.

Last year, the estimated health budget was Rs 90,958.63 crore, while the revised budget was Rs 80,517.62 crore, marking an 11% reduction. This year, allocation is Rs 99,856.56 crore. If we assume a similar 11% reduction this year, the revised budget would be Rs 88,873.62 crore, which is 2.29% less than last year's allocation.

Prices of 800 essential drugs were increased from April 2024. The prices of 11 formulations of 8 drugs were increased by 50% in October 2024. In 2018, India's private hospitals jacked up prices of drugs and consumables up to 18 times, according to a study by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority. Over the years, the GST on medicines has been raised to 12%. This huge burden is borne by



A school of Politics was organized by Andhra Pradesh State SUCI(C), at Anantapur, from 11 to 13 January 2025. Comrade K Radhakrishna, senior Polit Bureau member, (on the mike) conducted the school. Comrades B S Amarnath, AP State Secretary and Central Committee member(extreme right) and K Uma, Karnataka state Secretary and Central Committee member (second from left) were also present

the common people. So, as a palliative, the FM boastfully announced exemption of some drugs from basic customs duty (BCD) to "provide relief to patients" suffering from cancer, rare diseases and other severe chronic diseases. But this is nothing but a drop in the ocean of high costs of medicines. Even after this much touted drop, cancer drugs for a full course treatment would continue to be around Rs 27 to 61 lakhs. How far are these medicines affordable by common people of a country where over 60% people survive on paltry free ration? The BJP government always speaks of insurance coverage to the cost of medical treatment. But the evidence already suggests that schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) with over emphasis on tertiary care and in-patient care, are not appropriate or capable to cater to the health needs of the poor and marginalized.

One more stunt is about opening of day-care clinics for cancer patients, a proposition announced several times earlier but not implemented. Now, it is aimed to have 6 such beds in each district hospital which works out to be 4554 beds in three years. But do we have enough trained oncologists and medical practitioners to man these number of cancer beds? What will be the outcome of the budget proposal then? Management will be through Public-Private Partnership (PPP)— a model of facilitating backdoor entry of private houses- and hub-and-spoke delivery model.

Budget speech talks of adding 10,000 additional seats in medical colleges and hospitals. But who

does not know that with passage of time, the standard of government hospitals is on a steady decline because of paucity of beds, non-availability of qualified doctors and nursing staff, absence of medical equipment and diagnostic facilities and above all, rampant corruption? And, the government is paving the path of making healthcare service an exclusive preserve of highly expensive private hospitals.

Gimmick of lowering Personal Income Tax

Now we come to the gimmick of lowering personal income tax which the FM shrewdly announced at the end of her budget speech like a tasty dessert at the end of a frugal dinner. She knew that once the lollipop of no tax on an annual income upto Rs 12 of an individual and reduced tax rates on slab basis on subsequent higher range of incomes, there would be euphoric reactions from talk show experts, industrialists, pro-government economists and the 'godia media' on the announcement of a cut in income tax. Many would be celebrating this as evidence that the BJP government has done this to 'pump prime' or 'kick-start' the flagging Indian economy.

Is this sufficient to kick-start the economy by pump-priming demand? Answer is a big No. Just two days before the Budget, another arm of the government released the full report of the Household Consumer Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2023-24. It revealed that at constant prices, the average monthly spending of a four-member family is

Contd. on page 8



Netaji Subhas Birth anniversary observed in a befitting manner at Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh

Trump's policy

Masses should understand politics to understand intrigues of the ruling bourgeoisie and its agents

Contd. from page 5

immigrants who have already been contributing members of society, and blocking new immigrants from coming lawfully to the United States. Trump had made clear that he will double down on what he did during his first presidency—without regard for the law, decency, or common sense. A central promise of Trump's 2024 campaign is to "carry out the largest domestic deportation operation in American history" once in office. He now has targeted the core rights of children and families: attacking birthright citizenship, barring undocumented children from schools, and again forcibly separating children from their parents at the border. Mass deportations require far more agents than Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has or could rapidly hire.

So, Trump and his associates have been planning to build a new deportation force out of the military, federal agents, and state and local police. Trump has described plans to federalize state National Guard personnel and deploy them for immigration enforcement—arresting people in their homes and workplaces in communities across the nation and deploying National Guard troops, in some cases against the will of local officials and communities. He has also signed orders to unleash a new US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) reign of terror. This attacks not just undocumented workers but anyone whom racist ICE agents consider a possible immigrant. It does nothing to address the deep poverty that permeates the US. If the restaurants and hotels, health care providers, construction firms, agribusiness and food processing plants that depend on undocumented workers are suddenly left with an inadequate workforce, they will either cut production or raise prices to maintain

profit margins. But then Trump and his masters are not bothered about that. Paradoxically Trump who is driving immigrants from his own country, is asking Egypt and Jordan to accommodate evicted Palestinians.

Trump has further ordered freeze on federal funding is his sledgehammer against his own people. Affected sectors would be school meals for low-income students, cancer treatment trials, and housing assistance for veterans. There were reports that the online portal for Medicaid, the low-income health insurance plan funded by both the federal government and states, was offline on 28 January last. However, court order refuted freeze of billions in government funds and ordered reversal.

A Reckoning with History

These decisions are not just Trump's political agenda; they are the roadmap the fascist rulers are going to follow in the days to come. They will not only define America's role in the world for decades to come, they are modelling features of coming world if imperialism-capitalism is not overthrown by revolution. Toiling millions of US as well as the entire world need to take cognizance of this fact. Parliamentary vote politics or switching between this or that camp of ruling imperialism-capitalism once in four years will, not be get slightest of redressal but only aggravate their distress. Time has come for the masses to understand politics, the intrigues of the ruling bourgeoisie and its agents, the reckoning of the laws of social development and imperativeness to imbibe the essence of the same which would make it clear why imperialism-capitalism are worst enemies of mankind and need to be opposed tooth and nail. Let not Trump and the ilk be allowed to wield the stick anymore and instead be thrown into the dustbin history by conscious organized people's upsurge.

All India Jan Adhikar Suraksha Committee (AIJASC), Odisha organized a State level convention at Jashipur in Mayurbhanj district, Odisha on 07-02-25.

The convention was presided over by

Sadashiv Das and attended by Shambhu Nath Naik, AIJASC All India President, Biswambar Mura, General Secretary, and Swapan Ghosh, Chief Advisor of the organization. The convention was attended by more than 500 delegates from different parts of the State.



Budget 2025

Gimmick of lowering personal income tax a tasty dessert at end of a frugal dinner

Contd. from page 7

Rs.8,316 in rural areas and Rs.14,528 in urban areas. That means average annual income is just Rs. 99,792 and Rs. 1,74,336, respectively, in rural and urban areas. Moreover, in rural India, the household monthly per capita expenditure is Rs 4,122, which is roughly Rs 140 a day. In urban India, it is Rs 230 a day, or Rs 7,000 per month. This is the reality for most people. These people do not fall in the category of tax payers. In fact, 3.2 crore people meaning around 2.5% of the 144 crore odd Indians pay individual income tax. Then, what, relief is offered to the remaining 141 crore people?

What could boost demand in the market?

In order to increase the purchasing power of the countrymen, what was needed was more money in the hands of people in the form of increasing wages of agricultural and non-farm workers, industrial workers and employees, increasing the earnings of the peasants by legalizing Minimum Support Prices at C2+50% formula

coupled with more government expenditure to create proper remunerative permanent employment. Years of ignoring this path and sticking to the globalization formula of cutting or restricting government expenditure, including for welfare schemes, has steadily worsened the situation.

Array of waffle and hoax

So, it is clear that except some lingual gymnastics to shield the truth, there is no change in the content of this budget when compared with the previous ones—brazenly anti-people, nakedly pro-capitalist. Obviously the industrial houses, corporate barons and their lackeys are effusive in praise for the budget which has given them more than what they expected to fleece people more fiercely.

The suffering millions must realize that no political party subservient to the class interest of ruling capitalists can offer any relief to them in the budget which is nothing but a blueprint of escalated squeezing of the poor and increased bonanza for the ruling capitalist class. So, there will be pretended empathy for the poor, tall talks of inclusive growth and hollow promises of bumper opportunities but at the end all would end in a fiasco for common people. People need, therefore to rise in protest and develop united organized movement and wrest some of their pressing legitimate demands under pressure of movement.

There is no other way they can dissuade the bourgeois government from annually repeating such deceptive budgetary exercise to pauperize them on a higher scale.

TO RESIST THE ANTI PEASANT PRO-MONOPOLY AGRICULTURAL POLICIES OF CENTRAL BJP GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENTS OF DIFFERENT STATES

KISAN MARCH

25 FEB. 2025 AT STATE CAPITALS

- ASSAM
- TRIPURA
- WEST BENGAL
- JHARKHAND
- BIHAR
- ODISHA
- MADHYA PRADESH
- UTTAR PRADESH
- PUNJAB
- RAJASTHAN
- TAMILNADU
- CHATTISGARH
- KERALA
- HARYANA

AIKKMS

ALL INDIA KISAN KETH MAZDOOR SANGHATAN

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : PROVASH GHOSH

Edited & Published by Asit Bhattacharyya from 48 Lenin Sarani, Kolkata 700 013 and printed by him at Ganadabi Printers and Publishers Private Limited, 52B, Indian Mirror Street, Kolkata 700013. Phone : 2249-1828, 2265-3234 E-mail : cc.sucicommunist@gmail.com, proletarianera@gmail.com, Website : https://sucic.org