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On the Pahalgam Incident and Operation Sindoor

On April 22 this year, some unknown forces killed 26 Indian tourists at Baisaran valley in Pahalgam, Kashmir. They did this after first ascertaining the tourists were Hindu. As yet the identity of the killers is not known, nor their backers. A little-known “Resistance Front” at first claimed responsibility on its website, but on the following day denied it, claiming its site had been hacked. To date there is no convincing evidence, in the public domain, about who committed this heinous crime.

In fact any one of several dark forces could have engineered such an event, through their proxies. The responsibility for such an attack extends beyond its direct perpetrators. Decades of intense oppression and torture of the entire Kashmiri people by the Indian state have created many devastated and desperate individuals who might undertake, or might be manipulated into undertaking, such actions – without realising whose interests are finally served. There are enough records of how an entire generation of Kashmiri youth have grown up knowing nothing but rule by the criminalised Indian military forces.

Since 2019, the Modi regime has further developed its open Hindutva communalisation of the Indian state machinery. It also discarded the last pretences to Kashmir’s historic special status. Most alarming for the Kashmiri people are the signs of a policy of settlement of outsiders in Kashmir. The Indian authorities have issued over 80,000 domicile certificates for non-Kashmiris in the last two years. Kashmiris are keenly aware that Israeli intelligence and security officials are advising the Indian government with regard

to the control of Kashmir. The policy of introducing outsiders recalls the systematic demographic changes which Israel has brought about through settlements in Palestine's West Bank in order to oust the native people altogether from their homeland. The Modi government's trumpeted claim of having permanently wiped out 'militancy' (resistance) and brought 'normalcy' to Kashmir is further humiliating, provoking and inflaming the psyche of the Kashmiri people. Thus the Indian state itself bears the main responsibility for any deranged individuals who might be the immediate perpetrators of such an attack as in Pahalgam.

The events that followed the Pahalgam killings highlighted: (1) the humanity, resilience, and courage of the oppressed Kashmiri people; (2) the anti-people character and communal, national chauvinistic, war-mongering policy of the Indian state – a policy of war on the people not only of Kashmir but of India; (3) the political bankruptcy of the Indian parliamentary opposition parties; and (4) how the Indian rulers' petty ambitions invariably serve the interests of imperialism, particularly the US imperialist superpower.

Response of the Kashmiri people and its significance

Kashmiris at the site of the incident attempted to protect the Indian tourists, with one young man, a tour guide, going so far as to physically intervene, as a result of which he was martyred. Other Kashmiris gave shelter to the Indian tourists in their homes, escorted them away from the site, provided them food and transport free of cost, and even helped panic-stricken tourists to flee the valley. These immediate responses were a testament to the Kashmiri people's humanity and empathy towards suffering people, which even decades of torment have not been able to eliminate – rather they may have furthered their political consciousness.

In this way, even more significant was the response of the Kashmiri people on the following day, April 23, when the entire valley observed a spontaneous bandh and conducted mass protests

against the attack. This expressed in the public domain their human empathy and their revulsion at an attack on innocent civilians. It was also their way of declaring to the Indian people, and to the world at large, that such anti-people criminal acts had nothing to do with their struggle for self-determination. Indeed that such acts were in fact harmful to their national aspirations. So powerful an expression by the Kashmiri masses has not been seen in a long time. (Notably, their response was not mainly determined by the fear that the tourism industry would suffer. The reality is that tourism accounts for less than 10 per cent of Kashmiri's national income. It is always overlooked in the dominant mass media that the overwhelming bulk of Kashmir's income is accounted for by horticulture, agriculture, artisanry, small trade, transport, and other activities. So the demonstrations mainly showed the Kashmiri people's abhorrence of the attack and their rejection of its aims.)

True to their nature, the Indian rulers feared this response of the Kashmiri people. The ruling class news media either blacked out news of this response or presented it as the Kashmiris' support of the Indian state. Any democratic state power which is genuinely opposed to communal terrorism would have banked on this people's democratic response as the most important basis for uprooting criminal anti-people forces. However, the Indian state, true to its general practice, instead started rounding up large numbers of Kashmiri youth and throwing them in jail. Elsewhere in India, the ruling party's footsoldiers and other communalised lumpens began attacking innocent Kashmiri persons in their regions, or even non-Kashmiri Muslims. The stark contrast between the human response of the Kashmiri people to the Pahalgam incident, and the lumpen attacks on Kashmiris and even other Muslims elsewhere in India, shows how tight the grip of Hindutva communal forces is on this country.

To date, the actual culprits of the Pahalgam massacre have not been publicly identified, let alone apprehended. The Indian state

merely staged a drama of killing some persons and labeling them the culprits.

Drumming up national chauvinist frenzy and war

To divert from any implication that the Pahalgam incident exposed its weakness and failure, the Modi regime decided to go one step further, and use the incident further to whip up communal and national chauvinistic frenzy. As part of this, it staged a grand spectacle ('Operation Sindoor') of a retaliatory attack on Pakistan, claiming Pakistan was the source of the terror attack. Using its control over the Indian media and its domination of the social media, it built up a drumbeat of demanding revenge for the victims, and drowned out any questioning of the irrationality, absurdity and recklessness of such a retaliation. The Indian authorities simply ascribed responsibility for the Pahalgam killings to Pakistan, by terrorist forces operating with the Pakistani authorities' help. But the Indian authorities did not provide any evidence, let alone proof of this. The Pakistani authorities' request for evidence, and their assurance that they would act against the culprits if given such evidence, were disregarded. Hence there was no international credibility to India's claim, and no country endorsed it.

Moreover, the Indian authorities have for some years now been claiming the extra-territorial right to strike at militants across the border, whether in the east (in Myanmar) or in the west (in Pakistan). These attacks have been made into a showpiece of Modi's muscularity, using the gangster phrase "*ghar mein ghus ke maareng*" (we will enter their homes and kill them). Such cross-border attacks were carried out even by previous Indian regimes, as the Congress leaders now competitively boast. The difference is that the present rulers, styling themselves as a great power, openly advertised that they would do so. It is clear that they believe the genocide being carried out in Gaza by the Zionist fascists and US imperialists provides them, the right to carry out international crimes here as well.

Contradiction between claims of Indian rulers and reality

However, the Indian comprador rulers are aware that they are not a great power. Unlike the US imperialists and the Zionist fascists, who can wantonly carry out terroristic attacks on militarily weaker countries, the Indian regime lacks the technological dominance to be able to carry out such attacks without the tacit cooperation of the very country being attacked. Thus when the Modi regime carried out a cross-border attack in the east, Myanmar's rulers did not in fact actively oppose the Indian violation of their sovereignty, since India's attack was on some militant forces operating near the border with India without the Myanmar rulers' support. On the other hand, the Pakistani rulers not only oppose any Indian violation of their sovereignty, they also possess the military capability to rebuff any such violation, particularly after having strengthened their military ties with China recently.

Even before this recent strengthening, Pakistan's capability had already been proved in 2019, when, in retaliation for the killing of Army jawans at Pulwama by Kashmiri militants, the Modi regime carried out bombings of alleged terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan. Apart from bombing some empty structures and killing a few innocents, the Balakote bombing of 2019 achieved nothing. Instead it turned into a fiasco when an Indian plane was shot down and its pilot, Abhinandan, was captured by the Pakistanis. It was only with the intervention of the US imperialists that the Pakistani authorities returned the pilot (who claimed to have been well treated) and the Indian rulers could repackage their debacle as a grand victory before their lapdog domestic media.

Overall, this contradiction between the Indian rulers' boasts and the reality came once again to the fore during the Operation Sindoor. In an attempt to avoid any response by Pakistan, the Indian rulers gave the Pakistani forces advance notice of their attack, with the absurd clarification that they were not striking Pakistani military sites, but allegedly only terrorist infrastructure. The Indi-

an military's ability to strike with impunity depended crucially on the Pakistani authorities' cooperation in allowing this display. But Pakistani militarily did not cooperate. It shot down several, perhaps five, Indian jets on the very first day, an event reported widely around the world.

Equally disastrous was the Indian military's attempt to avoid a situation similar to the capture of Abhinandan in 2019. In order to avoid getting shot down over Pakistani territory, the Indian planes remained well inside the Indian side of the border/Line of Control and fired their missiles from this apparently safe position. However, Pakistan, using the equipment and cyber capabilities supplied by China, merely shot down the missile-firing Indian planes over Indian territory itself. To this day the Indian military, while admitting losses of aircraft, has avoided saying the extent of its losses, thereby exposing itself to ridicule internationally.

The Indian rulers have long chafed against being bracketed with Pakistan in world affairs. They style themselves as competitors with China for leadership in Asia. However, what the recent military clash underlined is that in fact they are militarily in the same league as Pakistan.

Increased scope for imperialist intervention and arm-twisting

Moreover, the India-Pakistan conflict once again provided an occasion for the US imperialists to extract maximum advantage, even more brazenly than in the past. On the one hand, the Indian rulers did not wish to extend the conflict beyond a brief exhibition, and were seeking to end it somehow, quite contrary to the propaganda they were spreading to their following. The Indian rulers therefore welcomed US intervention, and quickly agreed to a ceasefire. The US rulers used the situation to their own benefit. First, before either India or Pakistan could announce the ceasefire, US President Trump himself announced it on social media, and made clear that it was the US that had brought it about. This refuted the Indian

rulers' claim that the Pakistani military had approached the Indian side for a ceasefire, and the Indian rulers' attempts to claim an Indian victory.

Trump boasted that he had prevented a nuclear war, saving the lives of millions. As time went by, Trump, keenly aware of the embarrassment he was causing the Indian rulers, kept repeating his claim over and over. Further, he emphasized that he had achieved the ceasefire by threatening the two countries that he would stop trading with them. Finally, Trump added to the Indian rulers' humiliation by mentioning the loss of five planes in the conflict. Trump's aims are clearly to apply further pressure to open up India to US imports, to buy US weapons, to fall in line even further with US global strategy, and to act as a US proxy in the region.

This situation underlines how, given the character of the Indian ruling classes, India's nuclear weapons do not confer it any greater strength, since these weapons are not to be used in defence against an imperialist attack. Rather the existence of these weapons creates greater opportunities for the imperialist powers to meddle, in the name of preventing nuclear conflict.

Bankruptcy of parliamentary Opposition

All the Opposition parties supported the Modi regime's military attack on Pakistan. They indeed competed to show that they were as national chauvinistic as Modi, or even more so. In this the revisionist CPI and CPI(M) were equal participants. In order to extract maximum political advantage of this situation, the Modi regime sent seven all-party delegations (including CPI(M) and others) to different countries, supposedly to explain the Indian government's stand on Pahalgam and the subsequent steps. In fact these delegations were non-events in the countries they visited. The main purpose of these delegations was for internal political gains for the Modi regime – by playing on the differences within different parliamentary parties, consolidating BJP's hold, and by further strength-

ening national chauvinist sentiments. The Opposition parties fully supported the idea of sending such delegations, and pathetically complained that their leaderships should be allowed to select the party representatives. In this way the parliamentary Opposition showed its complete political bankruptcy.

The Indian rulers announced that, in response to the Pahalgam attack, they were holding the India-Pakistan River Waters Treaty "in abeyance", that is, they were suspending its operation. This amounts to punishing the ordinary people of Pakistan, who critically depend on these waters for agriculture, for the actions of communal terrorists in Kashmir. Moreover, this Treaty has been in operation since 1960 without interruption, despite two wars and several armed conflicts between India and Pakistan, and all disputes so far have been resolved within the framework of the Treaty. For it to be put into question now will create another burning dispute between the two countries, which will give imperialism additional scope for intervening and playing off the two sides against each other to extract maximum benefit for itself.

Tasks

Irrespective of the fact that the reactionary Indian and Pakistani rulers do not intend for such a conflict to become a war proper, it cannot be ruled out that the conflict may get out of hand, and escalate into a full-scale war. This will have terrible consequences, especially for the people in the border regions, but potentially much wider sections as well. The political stakes for each country's respective ruling classes will multiply in such conditions. Particularly in India, a communal national chauvinist ideology has been drummed up so much that it pushes for the complete defeat, even wiping out, of Pakistan. This ideology requires that India be able to display victories in every engagement. It drives the rulers to engage in further and further aggression. At some point in this escalation it cannot be completely ruled out that the rulers of one or the other

country may use nuclear weapons, which will trigger a similar response, with unimaginable catastrophic results for the people of both countries.

Thus recent events confirm the importance for communist revolutionaries of the struggle against war hysteria, the struggle against national chauvinism and communalism, and the struggle for supporting the right of self-determination.

Even as the Palestinian People Bear Great Torment and Sacrifices, the Foundations of a Liberated Palestine Are Being Laid

The Palestinian people are undergoing unbearable torment and sacrifice. But their sacrifice will not be in vain. Even though not visible to the naked eye, the resistance of the Palestinian people is weakening the edifice of the Zionist fascist state of Israel, and the US imperialist superpower that sustains Israel, more and more. The foundations of a liberated Palestine are being laid. And this struggle is sharpening the class contradictions worldwide, not only the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations and peoples, but also the class contradictions within the imperialist countries.

By now it is no longer in dispute that Israel, with the full backing of the US imperialist superpower and other western imperialist powers, is carrying out a genocide, that is, the destruction of a people, in Gaza. In July 2024, the leading British medical journal Lancet estimated that nearly 1.86 lakh persons had died in Gaza by that date as a direct or indirect result of the Israeli assaults, which have been going on since October 8, 2023. Extending the same methodology, the death toll of Israel's assault is over 4 lakh people by now, or one in five people in Gaza before the Israeli assault.

Children have been slaughtered at the rate of 1 child an hour for 22 months. They have been specially targeted by Israeli soldiers, deliberately shot in the heads, necks, chests and testicles. Gaza has more child amputees than anywhere in the world. Many, if not most, of the amputations have had to be carried out without an-

esthesia. Children have also been taken away and tortured, as of course have many adults.

Israel has dropped 70,000 tonnes of bombs supplied by the US and other imperialist powers. This is 6 times the amount of explosive dropped on Hiroshima, in an area half the size of Hiroshima, with 6 times the population. By February 2025, 92% of Gaza homes had been damaged/destroyed. 90% of schools and universities have been destroyed. 94% of Gaza hospitals have been damaged/destroyed, and half of them no longer function at all. 83% of Gaza cropland is destroyed; 95% of cattle; and 72% of the fishing fleet. All 5 wastewater plants and most sewage plants are shut down; less than half of the drinking water plants function. A large number of mosques, including the most ancient and historic, are destroyed; cultural heritage of all kinds has been annihilated. Entire cities have been levelled to the ground. Well over a thousand medical workers, including senior doctors and surgeons, have been killed. Over 200 journalists have been targeted and killed. The Zionist fascists have announced that the entire population must move to giant concentration camps, with each individual being verified by the Israeli military. In this way the Zionist fascists have blatantly shown that they are today's Nazis.

Now the Palestinian population is being starved to death in a famine enforced by the Israeli siege. Even if the siege were lifted now, the famine has gone on so long that many Gazans would need special medical care to be able to digest food at this stage. Vast numbers of Gazans have been rendered so weak that they may never recover strength, and may succumb to various infections. Thousands of children are already past the point of no return, and will be permanently disabled physically and mentally by starvation.

For the first time in history this genocide is being carried out in front of the world, in the full glare of publicity. The daily horror being enacted in Gaza is being watched throughout the world. This western imperialists and all fascistic forces, including the rulers of

India, believed that in this process atrocities would become routinised, people's consciousness would be brutalised, and this would enable the consolidation and further spread of fascistic terror.

However, the world people have not stopped protesting the US-Israeli genocide in Gaza. Instead, in the very belly of the beast, in the US imperialist superpower itself, there has been a wave of protest. Opinion polls show that disapproval of Israel among Americans is at its historical peak. In Europe, while fascist forces have been rearing their heads for some years, now there is a wave of protests in countries such as Spain, Italy, France, and Netherlands against the Gaza genocide. In countries such as France and England, sections of social democratic or revisionist forces such as Corbyn (England) and Melenchon (France) have come out into open criticism of their own countries' complicity in the genocide. In New York, despite the efforts of the Zionist lobby, the reformist Zohran Mamdani appears likely to win the election for mayor. Whatever the class-compromising character of these political forces, their emergence objectively reflects cracks in the ruling class politics of these imperialist countries and the growing revulsion against the Zionist genocidal regime.

While the genocide has been carried out in the name of suppressing the Palestinian militant group Hamas, that pretext has fallen by the wayside. It is clear as daylight that Israel wants to slaughter or expel the Palestinian population and seize their land. But the people are refusing to leave their land, and their political representatives, the resistance forces, continue to battle the Zionist occupation forces. During the brief ceasefire in February 2025, when the exchange of hostages was being carried out, it became clear that, even after the enormous destruction, and even after the killing of the two topmost leaders of the resistance in Gaza (Yahya Sinwar and Mohammad Deif), and the topmost leader outside Gaza (Ismael Haniyeh), Hamas remains an organised, disciplined force with the support of the masses. It has continued to struggle not only on

the battlefield, but through statements and through negotiations with the enemy forces. The notorious US Secretary of State and war criminal Henry Kissinger once noted that when fighting guerrillas, the aim must be to eliminate all the guerrillas. If the guerrilla survives he is victorious. In that way, the survival of the resistance forces within Palestine under unprecedented attacks is a great victory for the resistance and a great defeat for the imperialists.

The aim of the US imperialists and their Israeli proxy is not only to crush the resistance in Gaza and seize its territory. It is also to change the entire region.

--In this period the US imperialists have gained control of Syria through the fanatical Muslim fundamentalist Ahmed al-Sharaa (also known as Jolani).

-- Israel carried out hundreds of terrorist bomb explosions in Lebanon, as well as direct aerial bombing, martyring the great leader of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah. The US is interfering in Lebanese political life to bring it to heel.

-- The US bombed Yemen in order to make it submit and stop its solidarity with Palestinians.

-- Using the pretext of Iran's nuclear programme, Israel and the US jointly carried out a bombing campaign on Iran.

However, the US is facing resistance in every theater of war.

* In Lebanon, the Hezbollah, after taking heavy losses at the top, has survived and continues to defend itself and its people.

* In Yemen, due to the resistance, the US had to unilaterally stop its bombing campaign without making any gain.

* Most significantly, despite suffering heavy damage and loss of life in the Zionist-US imperialist bombings and terrorist attacks, Iran dealt a heavy blow to their seeming invincibility with its retaliation.

By firing hundreds of missiles at Israel, some of which got through Israel's missile shield and hit military targets in Israel, and by demonstrating the capability to continue its retaliation, it boosted the morale of the people of the region and anti-imperialist forces everywhere. It was the US and Israel that had to ask for a ceasefire.

By analogy with Kissinger's statement about guerrilla war, the survival of the forces and countries resistance the terror and dictates of imperialism is a great victory for the world people.

Various Arab regimes, such as Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the Gulf emirates are silently colluding in the genocide. The centre of the Arab world, Egypt, with the largest population, is tied hand and foot in financial bondage to the imperialist countries. Its military rulers cannot dare to oppose the genocide, for fear of plunging into a debt crisis. They see the struggle of the resistance forces as a threat to their own rule. The Saudi rulers too hope that the Palestinian resistance fighters are crushed, after which they can more openly collaborate with the Zionist fascists. The Jordanian monarchy, which has been a solid pillar of support to the Zionist state since its birth in 1948, continues to play this role, going as far as to shoot down Iranian missiles heading in the direction of Israel. As yet in these countries there is no visible mass movement against the genocide in Gaza.

However, this is a deceptive calm, below which mass anger is simmering. For in those countries, to oppose the genocide in Gaza is to oppose the autocratic and repressive rulers of their own countries. Hence protests concerning Gaza may come forth in the form of mass explosions of wrath. The rulers of these countries are aware of this, and hence are maintaining an intensely repressive atmosphere.

In this entire period imperialist Russia and monopoly capitalist China have been watching the US imperialist superpower and Israel carry out atrocities. Let alone at the military level, not even at the diplomatic level have they attempted to intervene and unite various

countries against the genocide. Such efforts as have taken place to rally world opinion and countries against the genocide have been undertaken by countries such as Colombia and South Africa. This exposes the talk of those, including various revisionist parties and individuals, who claim that the rise of China and Russia will be a liberating force in the world. The intensification of contradictions in the enemy camp may be a reserve for the world revolutionary forces. However, in order to take advantage of these contradictions the world revolutionary forces must have the necessary strength as well as clarity. At present, the various revolutionary forces are still engaged in achieving these prerequisites.

In our own country the Hindutva fascist Modi regime has closely identified with the Israeli-US imperialist genocide of the Palestinians. It has built close ties with Israel, becoming Israel's number one customer for weapons. In turn, India is exporting weapons to Israel made by Adani in collaboration with the Israeli weapons manufacturer Elbit. The Modi regime organised the supply of manual labourers from India to Israel to make up for the sacking of Palestinian workers there. The Modi regime has distanced itself from UN Resolutions condemning the Gaza genocide, on the excuse that the 'terrorism' of Hamas is also to be condemned. It distanced itself from a resolution of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, of which it is a member, which condemned Israel's unprovoked bombing of Iran.

Most important is the political support provided to Israel provided by the Modi regime's suppression of all opposition to Israel in India. On the one hand, this is carried out by the police cracking down on all mass protests. For example, the protest of the joint forum Indian People in Solidarity with Palestine outside the Israeli embassy in Delhi was suppressed. On June 23, cases were foisted on protesters in Mumbai. In this different wings of the state machinery act in concert. For example, the Mumbai police refused permission for a demonstration against the genocide, and the CPI(M) approached

the Bombay High Court for permission. The court refused the permission and lectured the petitioners against taking up such issues.

At the same time, this suppression is carried out with the help of the fascist Hindutva ideology. Since the Palestinians are Muslims, the Hindutva fascists have always identified the Zionist fascists, and built direct ties with them. The Hindutva fascists consider the genocide by the Zionists as a model for their own fascistic attacks on Muslims in India. There is thus a ready-made base to mobilise against anti-imperialist forces supporting the Palestinian people. In this manner, a demonstration by youth outside Domino's Pizzas in Pune was attacked by a BJP leader. On July 19, a demonstration by democratic individuals in Nehru Place, Delhi, was hounded and attacked by a fascistic mob, instigated by the police. Online Hindutva trolls are the most active and vicious supporters of Zionists worldwide. In this fashion, the Hindutva fascists are merely exposing their own character as stooges of imperialism.

The anti-imperialist masses of India must raise their voice in militant protest against the Zionist genocide in Gaza, and express unstinting solidarity with the brave Palestinian people fighting the Zionist occupiers. This is a part of the Indian people's own class struggle, even more so as the Hindutva fascists in India are allied with the Zionist fascists in Palestine. And in that dawn when the Zionist fascists are finally defeated and Palestine is free, it will inspire all fighters for liberation throughout the world, including India.

Fascist Dreams of Wiping Out the Revolutionary Movement Will Fail

The Masses Will Take Forward the Cause of the Martyrs

On May 21, 2025, com. Basavaraj (Nambala Keshava Rao), general secretary of CPI (Maoist), was martyred by the Indian army, paramilitary and Chhattisgarh state police in a joint operation. Along with him 27 other fighters of the CPI (Maoist) too were martyred. This grievous loss to the revolutionary movement comes as part of an offensive by the Indian state against the communist revolutionary movement (popularly called the Naxalite movement). The Union Home Minister Amit Shah loudly claims that 'Naxalism' will be wiped out by March 2026, trying thereby to create a fear psychosis among the masses who are attracted to revolutionary politics.

This offensive has been taking place in Chhattisgarh for the past 20 years or so, beginning with the Salwa Judum in 2005. This was the juncture at which the Indian comprador big bourgeoisie and imperialist capital laid their eyes on this region as a source of huge mineral wealth. They viewed the tribal masses as an obstacle to plundering this wealth. They decided to remove them by violent and terroristic means, creating armed bands from local criminalised elements. Lakhs of tribals were forced to flee to Telangana and live as refugees.

Thereafter this offensive has been going on under different names, such as Operation Green Hunt, and at present Operation

Kagaar. A large number of police camps have been put up throughout the region, and roads have been built to bring in troops and to carry out minerals. The offensive has been going on in other states too, particularly Jharkhand. In the course of the last one and a half years, over 540 communist revolutionaries and struggling adivasis have been martyred. The Indian state has created a sizeable informer network in these areas, and these informers get exposed in turn to retaliatory actions.

Some individuals and platforms have criticised both the Indian state and the CPI(Maoist) for the sufferings of the Adivasis, tacitly equating them. Though such critics may be well-meaning, and do in this manner raise their voice against state terror, their stand is mistaken. The attacks by the Indian state on the Adivasi masses are not due to the presence of the CPI(Maoist) among them; rather, the CPI(Maoist) is facing attacks because it is present among and identifying with the Adivasi masses. Since the state is determined to separate the Adivasi masses from the natural wealth of their regions to hand it over to the compradors and the imperialists, it sees the CPI(Maoist) as an obstacle to grabbing this natural wealth, and is attacking them. So even if any individual or political force differs with the tactical line of the CPI(Maoist), all democratic and revolutionary forces must unitedly and steadfastly target the state terror as responsible for the people's suffering.

Comrade Basavaraj was born in a village in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. He joined the revolutionary movement during his student days in the 1970s, and became a professional revolutionary soon thereafter as part of the erstwhile CPI(ML) People's War Group. He worked as an underground comrade in the forest regions, first in East Godavari, and later in Dandakaranya region. Over the course of time, he rose to the top levels of the organisation, in particular its military wing. After the formation of CPI(Maoist) in 2004, and later the decline in the health of the general secretary com. Ganapathy, comrade Basavaraj came to assume steadily

greater responsibilities. In 2018 he was made general secretary of the organisation. He continued to lead the organisation till his martyrdom.

According to reports, during the attack in which com. Basavaraj was martyred, the Maoist guerrilla fighters present asked him to escape the encirclement while they kept the enemy engaged. He refused, saying: the younger comrades should be made to escape first, as they had a longer life left to fight.

Fearful that his funeral in his native village would turn into a mass gathering, the rulers refused to hand over his body to his family, and cremated it themselves. They thus proved themselves to be heirs to the British colonial rulers, who had tried to secretly dispose of the remains of Bhagat Singh and his comrades.

The rulers of India have been dreaming of wiping out the communist revolutionary movement since its inception. They have repeatedly tried to drown it in blood. The killings of Naxalite youth in West Bengal and elsewhere, the martyrdom of hundreds of fighters of Srikakulam in undivided Andhra in fake encounters, the massacres by landlord upper caste armies in Bihar, the continuing killing of communist revolutionaries and ordinary people in fake encounters in Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, and elsewhere have all failed to wipe out the communist revolutionary movement over the last 58 years. The dream of Amit Shah will meet the same fate as earlier such ruling class dreams, as people's consciousness rises for real democracy.

Homage to Com. Kamalsai Majhi

Com. Kamalsai Majhi, general secretary of Malkangiri Zilla Adibasi Sangh (MZAS), died of a very rare disease, aplastic anemia, in a hospital on July 23, 2025. He was 52 years old. With his sudden and unexpected death, the CCRI, the MZAS, and the mass revolutionary movement of Odisha have suffered a heavy loss.

Background

Com. Kamalsai Majhi was born in 1973 into a poor peasant family of the Halwi tribe in Sargiguda village, Temurpalli panchayat, Mathili block, Malkangiri (part of undivided Koraput district). His formal education ended without completing matriculation.

Struggles

Com. Kamal joined MZAS during the 1997-99 struggle against the mining of tin ore in the region by the Hamco company. Before this he had worked in an NGO, but in the course of the Hamco struggle, Kamalsai came into the MZAS and emerged as a militant leader. After the firing by Hamco's security guards on a gathering of tribals, he came to the forefront of the struggle, and took an active part in giving it a militant turn. He joined the Party immediately afterwards. In 2001, he was made secretary of the Tulsa zone of the MZAS, and in the 4th conference of the MZAS in 2007, he was elected general secretary. From that time on, he was in the forefront of all the struggles by the Sangh.

Among the important struggles in which he was active or played a leading role were the struggle against land acquisition for an Es-sar iron slurry pipeline, the struggle against displacement for the

Meenakshi minor hydel project, the struggle against displacement for the Avantika minor hydel project, the struggle for compensation for lands lost to road construction, the struggle against cutting of trees by the Odisha Forest Corporation in the Dusanad-Bhatiguda area, as well as innumerable struggles against alienation of land by *sahukars* and others, particularly in the Mathili block. The organisation has listed about 92 struggles against land alienation in Mathili block alone, and he was at the frontline in almost all of these, involving not less than 1,500 acres. In all of these, he developed volunteer teams to conduct the struggle and guard against attacks during the course of the struggle.

A feature of com. Kamal was his refusal to be defeated by adverse circumstances. Instead he would doggedly persist in finding ways to overcome the obstacles. In the last two years, he was building a movement against the Dalmia and Adani corporate houses, which are determined to acquire, by all means, land in Kotametaru (Malkangiri block) and Uskalbagu (Padia block) to mine limestone for their cement factories. The corporates had created an atmosphere of anxiety, divisiveness, mistrust and fear in the area. Since this was a Koya region, and com. Kamal could not speak the Koya language, he took Koya comrades along with him after much effort.

It was only after com. Kamal consistently concentrated in the area for 6 months, going house to house in 7-8 villages, that the Sangh could win the confidence of the fear-stricken people there. At last the people responded; they attended the May Day rally in Mathili in 2023 in large numbers. Each month he would spend much time in the Kotametaru-Uskalvagu area, organising marches, rallies and different functions such as observing Tamadora Martyrs' Day. (The zone itself was named "Tamadora zone" by the MZAS at a gathering in 2023, in memory of a tribal revolutionary from the region who fought the British in a historic guerrilla struggle during 1872-1880.)

The above are only some of the prominent struggles out of in-

numerable struggles in which com. Kamal played a leading role in his two-and-a-half decades as a frontline fighter.

Com. Kamal wanted the Sangh to be self-reliant, and not dependent on any leader. He emerged as a capable principal organiser of the various functions of the MZAS, including its principal annual function, the May Day rally. At the height of the Covid lockdown in May 2020, the Sangh under his initiative organised May Day rallies at 5 locations. As the lockdown continued in 2021, the MZAS organised a central function without taking permission or making a public announcement. In the face of severe mobility restrictions and prohibitions, 2,000 gathered.

In the process of making the Sangh self-reliant, the organising of the successful May Day programmes of 2024 and 2025, with participation of around 10,000, was a significant advance.

Nature and conduct

Com. Kamal married a fellow activist of the Sangh from the Koya community, for which he had to defy opposition from his own Halwi community. He steadfastly opposed such sectarian divisions.

Com. Kamal was a good orator, and was fluent in the Odiya, Desia, and Halwi languages. He wrote songs which won the hearts of the people in all three. He could also express himself in Durua. He wrote, directed and staged street plays in tribal languages on themes such as communalism, displacement, etc., which awakened the consciousness of the masses. In almost all the rallies he kept time for such dance-dramas, as well as traditional dances by all the communities – Koyas, Duruas, Bhoomeyas, and Halwis.

He lacked pretension or boastfulness. But he was conscious, self-respecting, and brave. In negotiations with the enemy, he asserted himself, and never compromised the Sangh's interests. He would insist on the full text of all agreements being translated into Odiya.

Com. Kamal had important political qualities that revolutionaries must imbibe. In meetings of the Sangh, he was democratic, and

insisted that all must get a chance to speak. After participating in the discussion in the organisation on any question, he would steadfastly implement the decision arrived at. In the face of danger, he was neither foolhardy nor would he back down; instead he would search for ways to overcome the challenges. When he faced criticism in the organisation he did not get agitated, but showed the proper comradely spirit.

He applied himself to difficult political-ideological documents and discussions, strove to grasp the essence, and converted the understanding into his own language, free of jargon. Till he understood a political stand, he would not accept it. Once he understood it, he would carry it to the units and explain it to them in simple terms. This was a great strength. He was thus good at conducting classes for units on different political questions. He was also indispensable for various technical organisational tasks in the region. He was given important political-organisational leadership responsibilities in 2016 and was discharging them at the time of his death.

In certain periods, the Sangh faced opposition from alien political forces on various pretexts, and open death threats were issued to com. Kamal. At the same time the intensifying repressive activities of the state posed a grave challenge to the work of the Sangh. Com. Kamal faced all these threats and continued undeterred in the work.

Certain forces have been trying to divide the tribals on community lines by forming separate organisations for Parajas, Koyas, Bhoomeyas, Duruas, Halwis, etc. With this they hope to get political mileage within parliamentary politics and with the state. Com. Kamal opposed these forces vehemently and warned all those who were falling into this trap. He saw the struggle of the adivasis as a part of the broader revolutionary struggle of the oppressed and exploited in the country and the world.

He firmly stood with the agrarian revolutionary perspective, and worked seriously with this orientation. In the recent period, he

prepared detailed writings regarding the agrarian conditions in his area, and he was preparing a third round of such notes at the time of his sudden illness and death.

Com. Kamal's death and the response of the people

The news of com. Kamal's death on July 23 spread rapidly through the region. His body was brought on July 24 to the town of Jeypore, where the workers of Sewa Paper Mill paid their homage. Then it was taken to his village Sargiguda. There was a large spontaneous gathering of people. Despite the heavy rains, people came from all corners of the district, walking, on motorcycles, in vehicles, carrying umbrellas. By 12 noon there were over 4,000 people, and more kept arriving, from places such as Chitrakonda, Tapu, Motu, Kalimela, Podia, Malkangiri, Padmagiri, Khairput, and Kudumulguma. Even people from bordering regions of Chhattisgarh reached there in 3 vehicles.

Com. Kamal's body was wrapped in the red flag. The leading cadre of the Sangh, some 20-25 in number, went inside the house where the body was kept. They raised slogans such as "Kamalsai Majhi Amar Rahe!", "We'll never forget your commitment and determination!", "We'll follow the goals you set!", "We'll never leave your path!", "Inquilab Zindabad!"

People from various other organisations – Dalit and Adivasi organisations, and workers from Chitrakonda, Balimela and Indrabati projects, also joined the funeral procession. Everybody expressed determination to fill the gap left by Kamalsai. Then his body was put in a *doli* (a palanquin covered by a bamboo shell, decorated with a colourful cloth), carried to the *bejarna* (place where the used items of the dead person are discarded), and then to the cremation site.

After returning from the cremation, there was a discussion among the activists. They took an oath that whatever work was being done by Kamal would be taken up by them immediately. Five or six comrades came forward to attend all the dates on which he

was to attend meetings in different zone and sub-zones. In fact, all the monthly meetings in Tulsa zone, central zone and Tamadora zone were successfully held. On July 25 comrades went to Tamadora zone at night despite the rain, stayed there, and attended the meeting of executive body members with large participation. The July 28 meeting in Temurpalli (Tulsa zone) was similarly well attended. There it was decided that the 11th day ceremony on August 3 would not be a family gathering but would be organised by the Sangh, and held at the Tulsa zonal office. A martyrs' pillar, with a plaque, was built at the Tulsa zone office. A district-level homage gathering would be held in the first week of September.

Among various ongoing struggles, the Sangh had been fighting a company that was building a road through the Tulsa parbat, and wanted to carry out blasting and crushing of stones for road construction. The work had been stalled due to the struggle. On hearing of com. Kamal's death the company seized the opportunity to start stone-crushing. But the Sangh immediately sent a team on July 31 to stop the work.

Future course of the organisation

Com. Kamal arose from the struggle-oriented mass movement in Malkangiri, and rose to leadership of the movement. His life shows the revolutionary potential that lies within the oppressed and exploited masses.

Let us pay homage to him by persisting in the task of building the people's revolutionary mass movement with the agrarian revolutionary orientation – the task he was working to carry forward consciously in his last two years.

Homage to Dwaimati Hantal

Dwaimati Hantal, one of the seniormost women comrades in Malkangiri, passed away at the age of 60 on January 16, 2025, after suffering from serious diabetes for about 5 years. She joined the Malkangiri Zilla Adibasi Sangh (MZAS) in 1990, in the course of the struggle for drinking water. She came from a poor blacksmith family in Birlakhanpur village. She married a Natguru (director of Adivasi people's drama) but shortly thereafter terminated the relation, when her husband joined with another woman.

In this situation of her life she started working in the Sangh as an activist. She worked shouldering the responsibility of an organiser in the women's wing of the Sangh in Chitrakonda area for about two decades. Though quiet by nature, she could express the woes and sufferings of women in Desia language. Moving from house to house and village to village, she mobilised people, organised monthly meetings, and took an active part in all the ongoing movements, among them the drinking water movement, forest land occupation movement in her panchayat, timber movement in Padmagiri area, Essar pipeline movement in Chitrakonda zone, and the bamboo movement in Balimela forest area.

One of the first movements was the drinking water movement during 1990-92. People were dying of disease and dysentery with blood due to lack of drinking water. The women activists would visit village to village and door to door to convince women and organise them in militant gatherings at the block and district headquarters demanding tubewells in adequate numbers for each village. They went to block and district headquarters with empty pitchers on their heads.

She joined the Sangh at a crucial juncture, when it was being reorganised in the face of certain opponent political forces. Along with other women activists like Menaka, Kamala, Lakhmi and Radha, she made a daring team. They led various campaigns with songs and street plays against liquor as well as against other forces of social oppression. They virtually led the sustained timber struggle against the timber mafia and forest officials at Padmagiri-Tulenguda area during 1995-96.

Com. Dwaimati was very helpful to comrades when any of them fell ill. Her motherly and sisterly behaviour earned her the name of 'elder sister' ('*nani*' in the local tongue) among tribal people. Wherever she went she could mobilise the people, even in new places. She could create confidence among people in struggle. Whenever necessary she gave protection to the comrades, like a strong shield, against the goondas of enemy forces.

After her death at her sister's house Bapanpally, Sangh comrades gathered there to express their homage to her. A commemoration was held by the Sangh in the same village on 28th January 2025.

After her marriage was broken, she decided not to marry again, but spent her whole life in service to the oppressed people through the Sangh. She became a full-time activist. In course of various ups and downs of life, many women activists became inactive, but she remained active. She was an outstanding representative of the struggle of women, the struggles of the Malkangiri Zilla Adibasi Sangh, and the spirit of Adivasi people's democratic struggle.

Homage to Com. Gurdial Singh Paharpuri

It is with a heavy heart that we report the death of Com. Gurdial Singh Paharpuri, a Central Committee member of CPRCI(ML), and before that of CCRI (1988-95). He spent more than five decades of his life as an underground professional revolutionary, and served at the leadership level for most of that period.

Com. Gurdial Singh was born in Paharpur village of Punjab in 1944. He was a student in Nabha College in the late 1960s when, inspired by events in Naxalbari, West Bengal, revolutionary upsurges and movements broke out in different corners of the country. In 1969 he was part of the student organisation in Punjab that came out of the CPI(M) fold and took to the revolutionary path. Within a year of joining the communist revolutionary ranks, he became a professional revolutionary. Com. Gurdial would remember with his trademark humour his early underground days, when for a time he lived under cover as a morning call-giver in a gurdwara. It was he who reorganised the Punjab Students Union (PSU) in its early days, and later became its political organiser. Following the famous Moga struggle of 1972, PSU under the mass leadership of Pirthipal Singh Randhawa rapidly emerged as a statewide organisation with the correct mass revolutionary orientation, countering Left adventurist trends which had initially dominated the communist revolutionary camp in Punjab.

Com. Gurdial was part of the core leadership of the Punjab Communist Revolutionary Committee (PCRC) led by comrade Harbhajan Sohi, establishing the mass revolutionary orientation and building party cells, particularly on the youth, student, and teacher fronts. He had a firm grip on the question of demarcating from Left adven-

turism (CM) and Right opportunism (NZC, SNS). His special strength was in translating the line and theory into practice and building the organisation. He may be termed the builder-in-chief of the organisation in Punjab. He had political depth, and studied the Marxist-Leninist classics carefully, but did not show off his learning or attempt to shine personally.

He played a significant role in the unification of PCRC with UCCRI(ML) in 1977, and again in the unification that formed the original CCRI in 1988. In the context of integration following unification, he had friendly relations with comrades coming from different backgrounds and organisational traditions. In discussions, he would explain to others what Punjab comrades were saying by relating it to Punjab's practice and experience.

For a short period he served as secretary of the UCCRI(ML) headquartered in Punjab. He was elected to the CC of CCRI (1988-95), and then of CPRCI(ML) at the latter's Inaugural Conference in 1995, and remained in that post till the end of his life.

A marked feature in his understanding was that, however big the mass movement may be or may become, without a properly and correctly grounded political (party) organisation, it cannot sustain itself and go ahead steadfastly in revolution. He played an important role in establishing in practice the distinction between, and necessary relationship between, the mass organisation and the party organisation.

He recognised the role of every level and cell in the organisation and spared no effort to develop and train the different levels for revolutionary practice (following the Leninist principle concerning the party organisation functioning like a machine). This made him a good leader to different levels of the organisation. He was very systematic in educating/training, working out tasks for units, taking reports, and responding with guidance.

He was keen to have CC writings go out to the organisation on different questions of national/international developments and on

organisational orientation, in order to achieve unified understanding and practice.

He was alive to the other aspects of party life as well. For example, he pointed to the importance of struggle against consumerism in the party organisation, and the need for comrades to raise consciousness about this in their families.

He suffered a prolonged period of illness, nearly 20 years, and a vicious cancer in the last years. But he struggled throughout with revolutionary optimism. He remained alive to the organisational situation till very near the end of his life.

We differed on certain key questions of the line in more recent years. Nevertheless we affirm his status as an outstanding communist revolutionary and cherish his legacy as our own.

Red salute to comrade Gurdial Singh Paharpuri!

**CC,
CCRI.**

Document

Theoretical Frame for Understanding Semi-Feudalism (1991)

This document was prepared in 1990-91 under the CC of the CCRI (which preceded the CPRCI till 1994) by two CC members, one of whom was the late com. Harbhajan Sohi. Its purpose was to concretise the anti-feudal Path of the Indian Revolution. It was informally called the theoretical framework, and was followed by three questionnaires to carry out investigations in different regions of our all-India work so as to enable local comrades to work out a course of work pursuant with our basic line.

This task could not be carried out at the time for various reasons.

We are publishing the frame here as it provides a conceptual apparatus to study class relations in the present Indian political economy.

In subsequent issues of the organ we hope to publish the questionnaires.

We are publishing these without modification as they have a historical significance.

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Introduction

On the feudal base of Indian society, colonialism has wrought changes such that it is no longer traditionally feudal. However, it remains basically feudal. Semi-feudalism is feudalism that has been adapted to imperialist exploitation; but this is an aggression that does not seek to consume or finish off feudalism as feudalism is no longer, in these historic circumstances, a contending mode. So it

can stay and serve imperialism.

Colonialism, which is capitalism in its world expansionist aspect, has by its own modal nature introduced into the original feudal economy organisational elements of the capitalist mode that here and there appear as capitalist forms and urges. But these remain crucially and systemically limited, constricted: first by the intricately sustained retrogressive features of the feudal economy; and secondly by its stranglehold on the national economy through comprador bureaucrat capital.

While the general modalities of colonial and semi-colonial exploitation have been substantially spelled out so far, those of the semi-feudal base of our country remain to be. The modalities of the semi-feudal base also give the particular form to the colonial exploitation which we face in practice. These modalities need to be explored and spelled out in a systematic and integrated manner based on the concrete experience of our work and struggles. To do so is centrally important for the substantiation of our programmatic analysis.

For this we need a theoretical frame that will assist us in seeking out the general characterisation of our society within the particular concrete situations in which our comrades work – particularisation that would help bring our local programmes, demands and slogans dynamically in line with our overall programme.

Such a theoretical frame proceeds from the standpoint of the world proletarian revolution. That is to say, from the standpoint of effectively conducting the proletarian revolutionary movement here on the basis of a concrete grasp of the economic relations, hence class relations, in our society. It bases itself upon the established Marxist concepts that define the two historic social productive modes – and their associated modes of exploitation – which today are intertwined in our semi-feudal semi-colonial society and political economy: *viz*: the modes of feudalism and capitalism. And it bases itself upon the Leninist theory of imperialism.

Part I

So we begin with the knowledge that each mode of production has its associated mode of exploitation. The expropriation of labour – the appropriation of unpaid labour by the exploiting classes – can encompass more than surplus labour, i.e., cut into necessary labour as well.

The methods of exploitation under feudalism are termed rent, interest of usury, and the profit of merchant capital.

In rent there is no exchange: it is an exaction. Depending on the level of development of productive forces, feudal ground rent traditionally has been exacted as direct labour service, or as gift of produce (rent in kind), or as money rent. Rent is levy for the monopoly hold on land. It is a claim by dint of property in land on the produce of the land yielded by the labour of the primary producer. Thus ground rent is the main form of surplus appropriation in a society where land (not capital) is the main means of production. The expropriated unpaid labour encompasses all the surplus labour but could also reach into the necessary labour of the primary producer. To the extent this happens, the subsistence of the direct producer is whittled down and the simple reproduction of the conditions of his labour is undermined. As the surplus is always snatched away from the primary producer by parasitic exploiters the development of productive forces cannot take place. The landlord class, in no way involved in direct production, has no interest in its development and uses the surplus either for extravagant living or for extending, by purchase or war, its monopoly over land. Any sporadic as may be undertaken (or allowed to be undertaken) would be for the stability and assured overall collection of rent (e.g., the irrigation systems in old feudal India maintained by the landowner State); but the natural tendency is to maintain rent by claiming part of the necessary labour of the primary producer by rack-renting. Thus extra-economic coercion (the exercise of direct political power) is

the basis of feudal exploitation and the source of its utter arbitrariness in the rate of rent and the rate of exploitation. (Rate of rent = Rent as proportion of yield. Rate of exploitation = Rent of all kinds as proportion of need for subsistence or Necessary Labour.)

Usurious capital is the interest-bearing capital starting from antiquity. Its existence requires in the development of productive forces merely the existence of commodity production and the existence even to a limited extent of money as a means of exchange. It accretes, indeed, by loaning out at exorbitant rates of interest previously accreted surplus and necessary labour by a similar route. It has no contribution whatsoever to make to production. Usury is thoroughly parasitic and can ruin the mode it flourishes on – ruining both serf and lord. The greater the scope for usury the higher the rate of interest of usurious capital.

Merchant capital (the other form of capital since antiquity) plays the circulatory role in commodity production. It buys surpluses, transports them to wherever they may be bought, and sells them at the maximum possible prices. Merchant capital organises these functions for the extension and stability of its market. It may lend stability to production by the placing of orders (or may give a boost to a mode by trading as, say, in slaves). Because of its travels, exposure to different lands, natural resources, cultures and civilisations, it may lead to cross-pollination of ideas and methods or localised improvements in them. With its capital base it is capable of underwriting of such changes. But merchant capital, as such, essentially expropriates via circulation; taking advantage of the isolationism, lack of socio-economic “organisation”, and narrowness of feudal life to maximise merchant profit. Merchant capital developed with artisanry, and with organised exchange and trade even outside of particular settlements. It exploits artisans in the main. But its high prices to the feudals get compensated in turn by their adjusting upward the ground rent from the serfs, whom merchant capital thus exploits indirectly as well as directly. The markets, however, remain

segregated, local, uneven – and so do prices. Moreover, merchant profit has to be high enough to make merchandising more attractive than usury. Merchant capital can in time provide the base for capital proper, other circumstances materialising; but merchant capital by itself does not develop into industrial capitalism. Merchant profit presumes commodity production, money, and exchange. Such “exchange” could take place for profit or because of need and out of distress.

All three methods of exploitation under feudalism – rent, interest of usury, profit of merchant capital – are thus essentially parasitic with respect to production. But rent conditions the other two means of exploitation under feudalism – usury and merchant profit.

Thus the higher the rent beyond surplus labour, the more usury (loaning at undermining rates by usurious capital) flourishes, as the primary producer must borrow to replenish his subsistence and his routine conditions of labour. Usury also flourishes on the lavish extravagant life-styles of the parasitic feudal lords. The higher the drain of the feudal's resources through usury, the higher the levy of ground rent, and hence the greater the resort to borrowing from usury by the primary producers.

Similarly, rent conditions merchant profit, since the feudals are the main clients of merchant capital.

The growth of productive forces is slow and halting under feudalism. Simple reproduction takes place precariously.

Under capitalism, the means of expropriation is surplus value and within that the profit of capitalist investment (and capitalist rent, interest of credit and trading profit).

For capitalist production to emerge, the owners of two entirely new kinds of commodities must confront each other on the market. The owner of “accumulated capital that would be put to productive

use" and the "free labourer" who has his own labour power as commodity to be exchanged (free from bondage and free from the possession of his conditions of labour). Labour power is exchanged for use of capital – its own alienated means and tools of labour. What appears as a commodity exchange of equal values is in fact not an exchange of equal values. For, labour power is a unique commodity: it is itself the creator of value. The labourer creates, by working the machine (which is itself dead labour), an exchange value much above his wage. This surplus labour the capitalist appropriates as many times over as there are workers, and apportions it between capital's profit (which can be ploughed back for further exploitation of labour), and ground rent, interest on credit and trading profit.

Pursuit of more and more profit is the motive force behind the continuous intensification and expansion of capitalist production. For extracting more and more surplus value, the capitalist adds to constant capital (that is mainly machinery, i.e., dead labour) for the greater exploitation of living labour. In this way, higher technology and economies of large-scale increase labour productivity and hence can increase the rate of profit. For the realisation of that profit on the market, the capitalist must also compete with other capitalists for a greater share of that market and for an extension of his market. This competition too drives him to greater and greater reinvestment in machinery and higher technology. This generation of profit for reinvestment for regeneration of greater profit, as a progressively increasing cycle, is extended reproduction. It is distinct from simple reproduction in which a mere replacement of the earlier conditions of production takes place.

Credit as a function of interest bearing capital presumes capitalist production and capitalist profit. That is to say, the capitalist who receives credit is presumed to be capable of generating sufficient surplus value which, after ensuring his own average rate of profit, can pay the rate of interest on the credit. By itself credit is not productive; but it can play a supportive role in production by its

transfiguration into a factor of production and by the fact that its replacement does not undermine the reproductive process.

So under capitalism the role of land (hence rent), of interest bearing capital (hence loan), and of merchant capital (hence commercial profit), undergoes a radical change. Industrial capital by its sheer level and reproductive potential becomes the determining factor. Ground rent, interest on credit and commercial profit are now conditioned by the rate of profit. They turn into mere charges on industrial production for certain facilities and functions. They have a minor share in the surplus value.

Put schematically, traditionally,

-- Under feudalism then:

land is the major means of production;

ground rent (as direct labour service, in kind, or in money) the main form of appropriation of the surplus/exploitation;

usurious interest and merchant profit are limited by this, but all three are parasitic – without interest in direct production;

there is at best simple reproduction;

profit to the primary producer emerges late in this stage;

+ labour is an appendage (an adjunct) to land.

Extra-economic coercion underpins this system and is the source of arbitrariness in it.

-- Under capitalism proper:

Capital is the main means of production;

surplus value (and within that capitalist profit) via “exchange” between labour and capital is the method of appropriation/exploitation;

ground rent, interest on credit, merchant profit are subordinate to/ supplementary to capitalist profit;

there is extended reproduction as that is the means of realising progressively increasing surplus value.

+ labour is "free".

Economic coercion and expansive compulsions rule this system and are first the source of systematic integration (through competition, increase in labour productivity, greater accumulation, expansion of the market) and then (after the emergence of monopoly capital developing into imperialism worldwide) of critical degeneration of it.

It is necessary to consider another important category, i.e., the market as a tool of differentiating the two modes.

-- The term market encompasses organised exchange.

1) As such it presumes that in the course of development of production, surpluses have been created which can be exchanged for some other product with use-value.

2) Commodity production – i.e., production for exchange – led to the development of the market.

As such, the level of development of productive forces is reflected in the nature of the market. In turn, the market reflects the mode of production and the relations of production of that mode.

3) A minimal stable surplus production leads to the development of a local market for exchange in a natural economy; such exchange could be direct or through the rudiments of money.

4) The development of artisanry denotes that the society can produce sufficient surplus to set aside labour for specialisation – to practise division of labour.

Both the industrial capitalist and the merchant *need* the market to materialise their capitalist and merchant profits respectively. But because of their qualitatively distinct character, following from their mode of operation, *their effects* on the market and its prices as well as on the productive forces are contrasting.

Price variations in capitalist production and sale take place according to variations in demand and supply *around the value* of the product (as planned and executed in the course of production), and it is in the interests of capitalist planning and production to narrow the range of these variations – in other words to command speculation to its productive needs and needs of extended reproduction.

On the other hand, price variations in merchant calculations take place independently of the value of the product and according to extraneous considerations which make price levels *arbitrary*; for maximising his profit per unit the merchant can only depress this purchase price and raise his selling price. Speculation too is with a view to maximising merchant profit which is its only consideration.

Therefore, not the scale of the market (countrywide or otherwise) but the nature of the market and of the commercial profit earned through it which basically demarcates the mode: The one would control speculation in its self-interest; the other would thrive on it.

Semi-feudalism is feudalism brought under its commercial influence by colonialism. But this commercialisation by an alien capitalism is distinct from the commercialisation brought about by an indigenous capitalism in the course of its own expansion and competition. In semi-feudalism the commercialisation is distorted by two other features in the economy introduced by colonialism: the introduction of a class of parasitic intermediaries in agriculture with property rights in land and the systematic containment and crippling of the local industry dovetailed to colonial industry. With a retrogressive agriculture and a crippled industry the commercialisation pulls people into the market's ambit without the develop-

ment of productive forces for it, and without the creation of the purchasing power for it in the course of the extended reproduction of capitalist industry. We thus have the paradox under semi-feudalism of the existence of a countrywide market, without the purchasing power required in it for the development of an expanding capitalist industry. On the other hand, the peasantry pinned to the land without an alternative to it can be multifariously exploited by parasitic feudals, usurers and traders who use its distress to buy cheap and sell dear – which means the peasantry sells cheap and buys dear and is forced to turn to the market, however low or non-existent its surplus. Speculative profit, usury and rent work hand in hand to expropriate the peasantry to the maximum, taking advantage of the market to do so, and they have a regressive impact on and depress agriculture. On the other hand, as under feudalism proper, the market for products is narrow and is geared mainly to the consumption needs of a small stratum of parasitic exploiters – and not for demand of production; with a stunted industry the intersectoral demand for productive goods is also severely limited.

Under neocolonialism, when foreign finance capital has set up subservient industry to some extent, the demand for productive goods has even so not picked up as the “widespread” industrialisation has been based in the main on overpriced machinery imports. The green revolution, brought to agriculture, too has commercialised it intensively in some pockets and some crops, tied it to high value industrial inputs manufactured by industry here with foreign collaborations, and progressively put the peasantry at the mercy of foreign industry, bureaucrat capital (“official loans”) and middlemen, powerful local traders and speculators. Thus the same commercialisation of the earlier period is being carried through in a different form by tying the producers to the market and without any real increase in the purchasing power of the producers.

Semi-feudalism that thus develops under the impact of colonialism is not a transitional condition of feudalism that is in the process

of yielding to capitalist development within the same society. It is a feudalism that has been and is being constantly moulded to the commercial needs of an alien capitalist order. It is a feudalism in crisis, without the social stability of the traditional feudal order and with constant suppression of those very capitalist elements that colonialism's commercialisation may introduce into it.

Part II

Armed with these conceptual tools for identifying elements of feudalism and capitalism and decisively identifying the mode, we now go on to outline the manner in which these are to be employed to concretely investigate the prevalent agrarian structure in our country. That is to say, we are going to spell out our investigative methodology for identifying the relations of production and the mode underlying them.

The question of the mode of production encompasses the level of development of productive forces and the relations of production based thereon. Thus the level of the surplus becomes an important indicator of the mode, and the ownership of the means of production of labour and the terms on which labour is united with its means essentially define production relations.

If the mode we are dealing with is a complex one – such as the semi-feudal is – with features and elements of two modes intermingled, then we need a method that can decipher the reality behind the duality of appearances.

So, in addition to the method of looking at the ownership of the means of production and the terms on which labour is united with them – which may yield a complex picture – we resort to tracing the means of exploitation: We know that the mode decides the way the surplus is appropriated and the way it is redeployed, so we look at how the surplus is in fact appropriated and how it is

subsequently redeployed to get at (determine) the mode. What we will in effect be doing is to explore the full cycle of production and reproduction.

Essentially, in this methodology, we follow the level of the surplus and its movement by way of appropriation and deployment.

If the generation of surplus is sizeable,

1) determine how much, how many times over, it is to necessary labour because that will be one indicator of whether it is by a backward or an advanced mode.

2) further confirmation of the mode can be had by finding out by which of the four forms the surplus has been appropriated – ground rent, interest of usury, merchant profit (via the market), or capitalist profit by exploitation of labour working on investment on land and machinery. If the first three dominate individually or together then the surplus is not appropriated by way of capitalist profit but indicates pre-capitalist relations. Even if the rent-usury income is not actual, but is what can be potentially had in that area, we take that as notionally so. Only if the element of capitalist profit predominates after this can we say that there are indications of capitalist mode;

3) for a further confirmation of the relations of production we consider how the surplus is being deployed: is it being consumed on comforts and luxuries or is it being invested in productive activity; if non-productively invested, is it being invested in commodities for making merchant profit, or in land for similar merchant profit or for earning rent on the monopoly of the land, or being deployed for earning interest from individuals or financial institutions: if the surplus is being diverted to mainly non-productive channels, then predominance of pre-capitalist mode is indicated. Even if the surplus is going towards purchasing inputs and machinery for the production process – i.e., for productive purposes – it may still indicate a rich and middle peasant situation or landlord economy with capital-

ist elements; only if there is ploughback into machinery (constant capital) consistently and increasingly over a period of time (i.e., if the organic composition of capital is growing), then we can say that there seem to be capitalist production relations;

4) but there is something further to be checked: *viz*, how this machinery is being used – is it being used in the production process and, if so, is it being fully so used, yielding output that is realised on the market; or is it being leased (rented) out to others, being underutilised on the owner's land; or is it being resold for merchant profit; if such use or deployment is made of the machinery, then again the picture deviates away from the capitalist to the pre-capitalist relations of production and more specifically to semi-feudal.

5) how much of the surplus is being reinforced by “credit” from financial institutions (bureaucrat capital) and what proportion does that form of any deployment of the surplus into loans for subsistence or for production and if in production on what specifically.

6) the proportion of merchant profit to producer's profit, over a period of time, would reflect in what direction the economy is moving.

If the generation of surplus is small in relation to necessary labour, or is even negative, i.e., cuts into necessary labour,

1) it indicates a backward mode of production;

2) the ratio of the surplus to the necessary labour indicates the changes there are of redeeming the situation; if it is a small proportion of necessary labour, or if the necessary labour is being cut into for simple reproduction, it indicates a precarious situation that could lead in time, through any crisis and natural calamity, to the loss of the conditions of labour themselves.

3) to get an idea of the production relations, we look at the ele-

ment of ground rent, interest on usurious loan, terms of exchange (prices received as against prices paid for inputs on the market).

4) if reproduction is just about managed or is unmanageable, where are the resources secured from for making it up – usurious borrowing, private borrowings, or “credit” from financial institutions on what terms and for how long.

5) if for making up needs of consumption or of production, in what proportion.

6) if for productive needs, what is the composition of the expenditure.

So from the above we get an idea of the level of the surplus and of how the surplus is appropriated and how deployed. If pre-capitalist relations predominate, the surplus would be low, the appropriation would be mainly through rent, usury, or merchant profit, and the deployment would be sizeably for non-productive purposes and simple replacement for production. If capitalist relations prevail, then the surplus would be large and growing, the appropriation would be mainly of profit on the investment in land and machinery, and the deployment would be increasingly for machinery for productive use. If semi-feudal relations prevail, the basic indicators of the feudal mode would appear in a modified and complicated form, still retaining the essential character. Capitalist elements in this situation would be peripheral to the basic process of feudal appropriation and deployment, howsoever modified, with minimal scope for flourishing and reinforcing themselves.

With hardly any surplus in the hands of the primary producers, they themselves cannot develop productive forces and cannot form a broad base for capitalist development of agriculture. At the other end, as long as those with a sizeable surplus find it more profitable to invest it in non-productive channels rather than in productive activity, the path of development of a narrowly based elitist capitalist farming will also stay blocked.

In sum:

We know that extended reproduction is necessary to capitalist production (or that capitalist profit necessarily flows into extended reproduction). A definite picture about the existence of capitalist production in agriculture, or the trend towards its development, can be had by a look at the existence, or trend towards the development, of extended reproduction.

In semi-feudalism, that has developed under the aggression of colonialism, land remains the basic means of production and ground rent (as an arbitrary and parasitic levy) remains the signal drain internally, which prevents the development of productive forces and extended reproduction of capitalist profit.

The other expropriations in this mode – usury and merchant profit – whatever their quantum and crushing effect, are predicated to the basic expropriation of ground rent. In this sense the question of land is basic and other forms of appropriation are related to the appropriation following the monopoly of land.

In the new democratic revolution, then, our programmatic content is to remove this retrogressive expropriation of the primary producer's surplus from the land. With this control of the surplus the primary producers, through forms of productive association they may choose, can develop the productive forces in agriculture, raise its productivity and surplus, and release them to support the development of industry so it can proceed towards extended reproduction – and in turn help develop agriculture.

