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ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

What did Obama serve Manmohan Singh when he invited him for the great American dinner on 24th November?? American Chopsuey? Nobody knows why it is called American Chopsuey, but it is one of the most common recipes in the Chinese restaurants. It is basically a stir fry vegetables sautéed in sauce served over crispy noodles. And where did Obama learn to make American Chopsuey? From the Chinese of course, when he had visited them in early November.

That perhaps is the story of all products in the world today. Call it whatever you may; turn it around and you will always see the small print, 'Made in China.' Nay, it is not just limited to material products alone. In almost every field of human activity, the Chinese dominate including the field of sports as they have recently demonstrated in the Beijing Olympics. Yet China has to play second fiddle to America.

If we for the time being restrict our attention to the rise of three nations, we will notice they have a common period of sprouting. America, China and India changed qualitatively in the post second world war as compared to its health prior to the Second World War. America jumped into the seat of the most

THE INDO-AMERICAN CHOPSUEY

Mukul Sinha



powerful and wealthy nation whereas China and India attained its political independence, albeit in different ways.

Led by Mao, the Chinese peasantry smashed the semi-feudal, semi colonial social structure that made China pregnant with not a socialist revolution but an aggressive capitalist mode of production. Deng Ziao Peng rightly

diagnosed the nature of the embryo in 1976 and in the next one decade had delivered the fastest growing capitalist child that started running before it crawled.

India on the other hand, led by Jawaharlal Nehru, opted for the capitalist path using the public sector as the foundation and an apologetically slow land reform. Despite socialist slogans, the real intention was

never to empower the people and thus after six decades of Independence, 40% of the population still languishes below the poverty line. The Globalization of nineties and thereafter has ofcourse benefited the monopoly capitalists of India who hope to gain by their close collaboration with America.

The relation between America, China and India is becoming more akin to the monkey and the two cats which were fighting over a loaf of bread. The monkey, pretending to deliver equal justice, eats away bits of the bread of both the cats but the antagonism between the cats blinds them to the treachery of the monkey. That is where Deng Ziao was wrong when he had said that, " it does not matter whether a cat is black or white as long as it can catch the mice" . Deng was commenting against the Mao's line that the worker must learn socialist politics as much as he learns productive skills. For Deng, politics did not matter, as long as the workers gave production- the standard capitalist mantra. But Deng was wrong. The color of the cat matters. The capitalist cats can only fight and allow to be fooled by the monkey; exactly what China and India is doing in the present time. As nations, China and India should unite and cook their own Chopsuey.

*Jana Gana Mana Adhinayak Jaya Hey
Bharat Bhagya Vidhata
Punjab Sindh Gujarat Maratha
Dravid Utkal Banga...*

When Rabindranath Tagore wrote the national anthem, he was obviously dreaming about a vast united India, the India where people are not divided on the basis of narrow domestic walls. But people like Raj Thackeray and Bal Thackeray however want to revise and rewrite the national

THE DIVIDING LINES

anthem altogether. Despite immense differences and diversities, India has emerged as a integrated nation-state and has survived several divisive forces; But can it now overcome the present divisive politics?

Sachin Tendulkar is not just another sports man playing in some obscure corner of the country. His domination in the field of cricket has not only made him a national icon but he

may be the best in the world. Sachin has thus become the pride of every Indian and a common pride is always a powerful cementing force. Sachin was only voicing this sentiment when he declared that he was an "Indian" first and then a "Maharashtrian". What Bal Thackeray has achieved by castigating Sachin is to destroy this very foundation of national integration. To reduce the stature of Sachin to a "Marathi Manoosh" is to shrink India to the size of Maharashtra.

EDITORIAL

Dubai is known as the land of the real estate. Unlike the other six emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Dubai does not have any oil reserves and its economy flourished primarily on construction and financial investments to emerge as an international city. A city that can outsmart any of the western cities with its tall buildings, malls and seven star hotels. Out of the population of 17 lakhs, 2.5 lakhs are construction workers from outside.

DOOB DOOB DUBAI DOOB DOOB DUBAI

With finance capital pouring in from all across the world, the barren piece of land became the pride of the Arab world but with the recession setting in, the party seems to be over. The huge constructed spaces now do not have any takers and Dubai has run up a staggering debt of over 80 billion dollars. The Dubai World, a

state controlled business group alone accounts for 60 billion dollars.

The ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, has however remained as reckless as he used to be. He has shifted the burden of the crisis on the shoulders of lakhs of workers, engineers and architects by rendering them jobless and sit tight hoping that the neo-rich of China, India and of course the other emirates bail him out of is not so real state!

NEWS

THE AMERICAN UNEMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE

Sriram

America has always boasted about their superior production system and claimed to be the work house of the world. But when the September results of the US Bureau of Labor Statistics came out, it showed that unemployment for the month was 10%. This was higher in 2009 than in 2008. For any economic crisis to be classified as a depression, like what happened in the US in the 1920s, the unemployment rate has to be around 20%. At the rate has been the unemployment rate was rising, America appears to be heading towards one.

With finance capital given a free, de-regulated hand in the present era, crisis in capitalism are

emerging with greater frequency. One of the reasons for the periodic rise in unemployment in the US is because of footloose capital that shifted to low-wage production regions like Mexico and China in the cold pursuit of profit. With each crisis come the need to understand what the working-class needs to do in order to usher in more progressive change and ensure job-security.

This holds a lesson for a country like India, which still has the bulk of the market for its production within the domestic base and need not allow itself to be subjected to the fleeting nature of monopoly capital. Any industrialization process aimed

at stable and long-term economic growth needs to be tied in strongly to the domestic market and a steady controllable resource base which would protect the gains of that industrialization.

How does this relate to the working-class in India? It is imperative that, in order to hold on to secure and viable work, unions across the country demand that economic production and growth not be subject to whims of monopoly capital. Apart from agitation and collective-bargaining at the site of production, it is imperative for trade unions to fight to secure production and therefore secure workers rights. This can

happen if there is a broad-based coalition across unions to ensure that the economic growth of the country is not at the mercy of marauding footloose capital.

This has been exemplified by some of the struggles led by the GFTU including the most recent one against the privatization of public utility institutions like the AMTS, as well as larger federations like TUCI, which has been agitating against the hijacking of the economic integrity of India by imperialist capital. It is imperative that like-minded unions join forces in these large struggles in conjuncture with the local struggles at the factory-floor.

BHARAT ZALA AND VINOD PANDYA WINS NDTV RTI AWARD

There was a time when apart from the Upper caste, no other person had the right to know. In case the dalit or the lower caste ever dared to learn, they were severely punished. The Manusmriti prescribed the punishment of pouring molten lead into the ear of a dalit who heard Gita! From those black days of our society, we have atleast come to the new horizon of knowledge. The Right of Information Act does to some extent empower the people as the law now permits to a limited extent his right to know.

But just the right to know alone does not benefit the poor unless the information is converted into a powerful tool of struggle. Two members of Jan Sangharsh

Manch, Bharat Zala and Vinod Pandya has demonstrated the strategy of converting information received under the new law into actual benefits for the struggling masses. Bharat used the information received in relation to the flood affected farmers whereas Vinod successfully used the information received regarding the primary teachers to reach help to the cause of the farmers and primary education. As a recognition of their effort they have been chosen from Gujarat for the RTI award by NDTV which carries with it a cash award of one lakh rupees. On behalf of NSM, we congratulate our activists and urge them to continue their good work.

THE INVISIBLE CONFLICT

Mukul Sinha



As the paints spread across the canvas, they chart out not just visible outlines but imprint the ideas of the artist. The dialectical development of ideas finds its place on the canvas as contradictions of different hues and Pravin Mishra's abstract paintings were no exception. What set apart Pravin's work from others were the uninhibited strokes that boldly told the story

of his inner mind. While most of the paintings displayed by Pravin in the Hutheesing Visual Art Centre in Ahmedabad in November were remarkable, one painting was indeed outstanding, the hands that unitedly pulled the rope from one side while the other side was invisible. That precisely is the story of all development, the story of invisible unity and the struggle.

ARTICLE

The special session held by the CPI(ML) at Bhopal between 7th and 12th November, 2009 to deliberate on their ideological line was noteworthy atleast for two reasons: Firstly, the meeting was held in a very democratic manner and secondly, a sincere attempt was made to break from the past and do "concrete analysis of concrete conditions", as was repeatedly asserted by the spokesmen of the party.

Three delegates from New Socialist Movement attended the meeting as representatives of fraternal party. Delegates from 14 states also attended the session alongwith delegates from Germany and Argentina..

While presenting the party's line on International situation, Shri Sanjay Singhvi emphasized the shift of his party's position from

THE COLONIAL HANGOVER THE BHOPAL MEET OF THE CPI(ML)

Mukul Sinha



the past CPI(ML) position of 1970. It was declared that post second world war period ought to be described as neocolonial period and the American Imperialism has established its hegemony over the world and nations like India were merely neocolonial states devastated and looted by the American Imperialism. The status of Afghanistan and Iraq were

virtually that of colonies of America.

While New Socialist Movement believed that shifting from the old CPI(ML) line of semi-feudal, semi-colonial was a welcome change, the concept of the neo-colony was not acceptable as it does not in any manner describe either the mode of production or the political economy of globalization. NSM believes that during the era of globalization, the erstwhile nation states are forming a network to safeguard the flow of capital across the world and capital itself was fast

losing its "national" tag.

To maximize the extraction of surplus in the era of falling profits, the monopoly capitalists of developed and even developing nations enter into various types of agreements and contracts while at the same time compete with each other to maximize their own share. Thus the flow of surplus is no longer linear or unidirectional and therefore the idea of neo-colony with America as the fountain head is no longer a correct analysis of the present day's concrete conditions. The immense enrichment of the Indian and Chinese bourgeoisies clearly establishes that they have been able to accumulate capital and a far higher rate than before. Be that as it may, the debate initiated by CPI(ML) at Bhopal is most welcome.

SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES NEW MECHANISMS FOR EXTRACTION OF SURPLUS

Sriram

No scheme of the Indian government has evoked as much controversy in recent years as the creation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for industry aimed at exports. This has resulted in the displacement of poor farm families and villagers, brutal land acquisition, and gross human rights violations by the state at the behest of private capital. Thus far, the argument in the mainstream Indian media has tended to revolve around displacement and compensation, with an unspoken sentiment that if adequate compensation was given there would be no problems with SEZs.

The crux of the argument needs to change to address whether there is economic validity in SEZs. The

stated rationale is a wholly economic one and constituted, in a nutshell, economic growth led by mostly private investment capital and the promotion of exports. However, this economic rationale falls apart when examined closely. While industrialization aimed at exports might be important, it has to be diversified in order to protect it from the whims of the international market. Past Indian SEZs have made neither a particularly high contribution to exports, nor are they diverse. In 2004-05, SEZs accounted for barely 5 percent of India's exports.

Among the stated benefits of the SEZ scheme has been an increase in employment and improvement

in infrastructure. There is little evidence to suggest that either will happen with the SEZ plan. Employment generations are merely a guideline and not even a mandated requirement for approval. On the contrary, large corporations have always lobbied from the state, "labor flexibility". However, due to the relative strength of unions and other formations in India, this was impossible to implement throughout the country, which is why separate zones were required. In SEZ, the rights under the labor laws are now taken away.

One of the most important impacts of investment resulting in growth is widening the tax base of the national exchequer, which can then be used for a variety of social security measures, public sector undertakings, public health systems, scientific research, public education, subsidies for farmers, further industrialization measures, and a host of other social programs. The revenue loss coming from SEZs will amount to more than \$40 billion over the next 5 years, by some conservative estimates, and possibly much more. This money could feed the country's 320 million hungry people for a couple of years or provide employment to at least 2 members of every rural family for the next 5 years! It does not bode well for Indian society to take this kind of a fiscal blow to cater to private capital and convert public money into private capital.

The SEZs have likewise seen no real infrastructure development except in real estate growth and speculation. It has already been reported from different areas that such land mafia are using the SEZs to carve up huge chunks of



overpriced real estate.

The final argument given by Indian policy-makers for SEZs is the supposed Chinese success. The reality is that SEZs in China have resulted in arable land loss, inequities in development, rampant real estate speculation, labor violence and abuse, increasing crime including smuggling, sex trafficking, and child labor, as well as huge resource and environmental costs.

The widespread protests resulted in the federal government announcing a suspension of all land acquisition for establishing new SEZs in February 2007 until a new rehabilitation program for displaced people was realized. This temporary retreat on the part of the government represented a significant victory of sorts for the various movements and gave particular cheer for those believing in participatory democracy and people's enfranchisement.. But it is this variety that has exemplified the popular nature of resistance against SEZs and proved that a truly people-friendly and democratic industrialization alternative should be sought.

LEFT ALIGNMENT



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