

MORE ABOUT NAXALBARI

KANU SANYAL

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The Naxalbari peasant uprising is going to complete its sixth year. During these six years, a storm of many events has swept over the whole country. The formation of the "Naxalbari Aid Committee" in 1967 and thereafter the creation of the "All India Co-ordination Committee of the Communist Revolutionaries," centering around the peasant uprising of Naxalbari, was a big step forward in the history of the Indian Communist movement. The slogan of building up of Naxalbari type of struggles under the leadership of AICCCR brought about an enormous new wave of struggles all over the country. This enormous new tide was so extensive and deep that it created stir amongst the majority of the oppressed people and youth of West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Punjab, Assam, Orissa and Jammu and Kashmir. It can only be compared with the post-war events of 1946-47.

This stir, on the one hand, created panic within the ruling classes and on the other, enhanced the process of disintegration amongst the reactionary, revisionist and neo-revisionist parties. Why this new indication of vast possibilities brought about by the Naxalbari peasant uprising suddenly failed, from the beginning of 1969, needs thorough re-examination.

The peasant uprising of Naxalbari acted as a decisive factor in uniting the Communist Revolutionaries all over India. After the formation of the AICCCR, some of its correct steps also opened up new possibilities. As the AICCCR did not make a proper and correct evaluation of the Naxalbari peasant uprising, Naxalbari was reduced simply to an image. Over and above, the Co-ordination Committee, not being able to discuss and reach a clear decision on the 'Terai Report' (even with its shortcomings), hampered the cause of developing itself into a leading team. On the other hand, for unknown reasons, no discussion took place on the 'Terai Report' in the Darjeeling district; as a result, the Communist Revolutionaries of Darjeeling district failed to give a correct and complete history of Naxalbari peasant uprising before the Communist Revolutionaries of the country. This helped a clique of political careerists, who were trying to utilise Naxalbari for their narrow group ends from the outset to come in the limelight of leadership. The All India Co-ordination Committee failed to realise the mischief of this political careerist group even after the publication of the article "Spring Thunder Breaks Over India" by the Chinese Communist Party. The net result of this was that this clique of political careerists utilised the glorious role of Naxalbari uprising to project a single individual as the creator of Naxalbari within the Co-ordination Committee. Taking the opportunity of confinement in jails, their living underground and the exclusion from the Co-ordination Committee for unknown reasons, of the Naxalbari Communist Revolutionaries, this clique of political careerists established Charu Majumdar as the leader-creator of Naxalbari with the plea of "Lessons of Naxalbari" and "Evaluation of Naxalbari." The

subjective outlook of the AICCCR towards the Naxalbari peasant uprising and its lack of political vigilance led to the split in the unity of the Communist Revolutionaries. Availing of this chance, this careerist clique were successful in their conspiracy to make this split permanent by hurriedly forming the CPI(ML), basing on the slogans : "guerilla warfare is the only way" and "individual annihilation is the only strategy and tactic." After twenty years of the Telengana peasant rebellion, the peasant uprising of Naxalbari in 1967 brought anew the basic question before the Communist Revolutionaries : What should be the role of the peasantry in the stage of the New Democratic revolution in a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country like India ? On the solution of this question depends the success or failure of the democratic revolution of India. To state more explicitly, is it the bourgeoisie who will lead the peasants, or is it the proletariat who will establish hegemony over its dependable and numerically bigger ally, the peasantry, in the stage of the democratic revolution ? The revisionists and the neo-revisionists pose the peasant problem in an agrarian country like India as a mere economic problem ; in the question of seizure of political power they tag the peasants to the coil of the ruling classes and leave the peasants at the mercy of the bourgeois leadership. And the left adventurists deny the economic reasons of social development by putting forward the theory that "force" or "political power" creates and regulates the economic relations, deny the very programme of agrarian revolution in the stage of democratic revolution and push the peasantry towards the bourgeoisie.

Almost a hundred years ago, Engels, while fighting against the conspirators within the social democratic movement, said in his work, *Anti-Duhring* : "In short, always and everywhere it is the economic conditions and instruments of power which help "force" to victory and without which force ceases to be force, and anyone who tried to reform methods of warfare from the opposite standpoint...would certainly earn nothing but a beating."

The Naxalbari peasant uprising forcefully presented this peasant problem and its importance before the democratic revolution of India. In order to confuse this question, an effort was made to show in a subtle and cunning way, since 1967, as if Naxalbari was suddenly created in 1967, Naxalbari was the creation of the documents written by Charu Majumdar known as *Eight Documents* and Naxalbari could not preserve its existence because of not following the instructions of Charu Majumdar. To make a scientific analysis of the real history of the Naxalbari peasant uprising, a new post-mortem is necessary. Mao Tsetung in his article, 'Reform Our Study', has said : "Marxism-Leninism is a science and science is knowledge come by honesty ; absolutely no trickery will do." In the same article he again said : "Instead of relying on sheer enthusiasm one must, as Stalin says, combine revolutionary sweep with practical spirit. With this attitude one will not chop up history...such an attitude is one of seeking the truth from facts and not one of impressing people by claptrap."

The Naxalbari peasant uprising was not suddenly created in 1967. It did not fall from the heaven by the grace of God nor was it a spontaneous movement. Lenin has taught us : "Socialism is not the invention of any dreamer ; on the other hand, it is the necessary result of the development of the productive forces in modern societies. The past history of human society is the history of class struggle. This class struggle will continue until private property and anarchy in social system of production, which are the foundations of class-contradiction and class domination, are liquidated." The idealists refuse to accept this interpretation of history. The conspirators within the socialist movement want to chop up the past history. They want to show that history was not created by the slaves. According to them, heroes, intelligent and wise persons create history. To them the past history is full of ignorance and full of mistakes. They say, one or two wise heroes will enlighten the world. Unfortunately, such one or two wise heroes did not illumine the path of Naxalbari.

The past history of the workers and peasants of the Naxalbari area is a history of glorious class struggle. The beginning of this class struggle dates back to 1946. Then there was an interruption in the struggle from 1948-51 owing to the ultra-leftist, adventurist line of the Communist Party of India. Thereafter, commencing from 1951 at a stretch upto the year 1967, the history of the Naxalbari area is a history of longdrawn class struggle. This class struggle surged ahead through zig-zag course, both peaceful and violent means, legal and illegal clashes and through consistent painstaking work of the communist cadres. The aim of this article is not to go into details about the class struggles of the workers and peasants of the Naxalbari area. It can be described in short through a few stages.

The Darjeeling district was a non-regulated area under the British rule. After 1947, though not considered as non-regulated area, the ill-effects were still felt. While the workers throughout the country were enjoying trade union rights, it was impossible for an outsider to approach the workers in the Naxalbari area, and to approach the peasant huts, a person from a political party had to depend on the mercy and the permission of the landlords (*joteders*). Amidst this condition, 1951-54 was the period of the organisation stage in the Naxalbari area. During this stage, the peasantry of Naxalbari advanced through clashes to get themselves organised. This stage was a period to organise and to put a stop to illegal small extortion of the jotedars. Even at this primary stage the peasants' class struggle could not advance through the so-called peaceful means ; on the contrary, it was a path of bloody clashes with the jotedars. Tea gardens and villages being adjacent to each other, the peasants learnt through their class struggle that without the presence of the tea workers by their side, their class struggle would not surge forward. From this angle, the peasant cadres of Naxalbari area, by skilfully organising the tea workers, proved their class consciousness.

The second stage from 1955 to 1957 was the period of development of united class struggle of the workers and peasants of the Naxalbari area and it was a higher stage. It was a higher stage for two reasons :

(1) The worker-peasant unity was not merely a slogan-mongering one ; the working class understood that in order to realise its class demands the active support of the peasantry was indispensable and sought active support of the peasantry in each of their struggles and supported the peasantry in the same way. In short, a firm alliance of the working class and the peasantry developed and it remained as it was till 1967.

(2) The class struggle itself shook their illusions on legalism and they in turn armed themselves with conventional weapons, not depending upon customary, legal and peaceful means. The years 1955-56 were memorable in the class struggle of the workers and peasantry of Naxalbari. During 1955, in the Bonus struggle of the tea workers, thousands of tea workers and peasants not only forced the tea planters but also the police to retreat. On one occasion, about ten thousand armed tea workers and peasants disarmed the police force. Armed workers and peasants transformed the Bonus movement into a political struggle.

In 1958-62—in the third stage—the West Bengal Kisan Sabha gave a call to regain possession of ‘benami’ land. The sub-divisional Kisan Samiti in Naxalbari declared from its conference that the partial struggle for the recovery of the ‘benami’ land within the four walls of land would not serve the purpose of real land reforms and would not help build peasant unity. So the conference gave a call to confiscate the entire produce of jotedar’s land. The call of the conference was : (1) Reap and store the harvest at your own place and raise the Red flag ; (2) jotedars must furnish proof of their ownership before the peasant committee without which no share to them ; (3) arm yourself to protect the crop ; and (4) save your crop from the police. The intensity of the struggle of 1958-59 could be felt from the following facts :

About two thousand peasants were arrested in that year ; seven hundred criminal cases were instituted ; police could not arrest any leading cadre ; clashes with the jotedars, clashes with the police and snatching of arms etc., took place. Naxalbari, in that year, turned into a Red flag area. The peasantry could keep 80% of the crop in their possession and saved 70% of the crop from the hands of the police in that struggle. In one occasion, a big Congressite jotedar planned to loot the paddy of the peasants in a weak area by mobilising Congress volunteers. Hearing this news, five thousand armed peasants resisted the Congress goondas and police and helped the peasants to get back their entire produce. 1958-59 was the year of terror for the jotedars and planter-landowners. The fighting mood and class consciousness of the peasants of Naxalbari was no lesser than that of 1967. The role of Charu Babu in this movement was peculiar. Though he was not directly connected with this struggle, he arbitrarily declared withdrawal of the struggle at the instruction of the State Kisan Sabha leaders without prior consultation with the participants of the struggle. The intensity of the struggle can be understood from the fact that the struggle was branded as 'left adventurist' in the Political-Organisational report of the West Bengal conference of the Communist Party held in the year 1960. In spite of this, the peasantry of Naxalbari carried on their struggle to preserve the fruits of the struggle till 1962.

During the fourth stage—1962-64—in the years of India-China border clash, the workers and peasants of Naxalbari stood, in support of China, fearlessly. Even in these years of chauvinism and bitter anti-communism, the workers and peasants of Naxalbari boldly stood firm and did not allow even any meeting to be held by the chauvinists in the rural areas. As a result, besides many middle class cadres arrested throughout West Bengal, more than a hundred workers and peasants were arrested only in Naxalbari. Even then the workers and peasants preserved their organisational strength by resisting onslaught of the jotedars and tea planters. In 1964,

the worker, peasant and middle class party cadres in Darjeeling district fought vehemently against revisionism, isolated the Dangeites from town and rural areas and formed CPI(M) and registered their unequivocal support to the stand of the Chinese Communist Party in the international communist movement. These events prove the higher level of political consciousness of the worker, peasant and middle class cadres of the Party of the Siliguri sub-division.

The struggles, as described from 1951 to 1964, did not develop spontaneously. These struggles could be organised because there was a leading team of self-sacrificing cadres of the Communist Party dedicated to the service of the people. It should be mentioned that there was no wage-earning wholtime of Party. A few episodes have only been mentioned here of the important struggles during the period 1951-64. Therefore, the Naxalbari peasant uprising did not take place suddenly in 1967. It is for the existence of this glowing history of the past glorious class struggles that Naxalbari became a reality. Those who do not want to perceive the past history, whatever they may be, are no Marxists.

Now let us come to the '*Eight Documents*' written by Charu Majumdar. To many, these eight documents may seem mysterious; because many do not know their source and their existence. Particularly, 90% of those connected with the AICCCR and the CPI(ML) do not know about them. There was constant propaganda since 1967 that the '*Eight Documents*' written by Charu Majumdar were the creators of Naxalbari. How far is this claim justified can be seen from the events of the communist movement in the Darjeeling district from 1965 to 1967.

After the formation of the CPI (M) and just before the holding of its (Party) Congress in 1964, the reactionary Congress Government arrested the communist cadres all over West Bengal. At that time, beginning from October 1964 upto the first part of 1965, workers, peasants and middle class Party cadres of Siliguri subdivision (Naxalbari) were arrested en

masse but Charu Majumdar was not arrested because of his illness, and eventually he too was arrested at the end of 1965. During the period, 1964—June 1966, the Party cadres of Darjeeling district had to wage ideological struggle with the CPI(M) leadership while in jail. And during this very period, they prepared themselves politically and arrived at the firm conclusion that the liberation struggle of India must follow the Chinese path. Just at the same period, Charu Majumdar wrote six documents and distributed them among the party cadres expressing his opinion about the democratic revolution of India and about the CPI(M) leadership. Many cadres of Darjeeling district could know about these documents while they were in jail through the press report of UNI of Kalimpong in the bourgeois papers. The threats of the CPI(M) leadership regarding these documents on the one hand and the ignorance of the real contents of the documents on the part of the cadres of Darjeeling district created an uneasy chaotic situation. Charu Majumdar sent 5/6 of his selected cadres to the rural areas with these documents. These new young cadres went to the villages and made a futile effort from 1965 to June 1966 to propagate according to these documents. Meanwhile, cadres of Darjeeling district came to know about the contents of the documents after their release from jail in June 1966. Then the discussions on the basis of these documents started between them and Charu Majumdar.

In short, the major points of the documents were : CPI(M) is a revisionist party and should be unmasked ; the Chinese path is the path of liberation of India ; armed struggle is the immediate task ; to form secret combat groups is immediate task ; setting fire to jotedar's house, attacking the individual jotedar and collection of guns through these combat groups are the immediate tasks ; not political campaign but 'action' will mobilise the people and there is no necessity of mass organisation and mass movement. The leading cadres of Siliguri Local Committee after discussion with him agreed on some points and disagreed on some others. The points on

which agreement was arrived at were : Chinese path is the path of liberation of India ; agrarian revolution can be completed through armed struggle ; propagate the politics of agrarian revolution among the workers and peasants and organise them to build up a secret Party organisation. The points on which the leading cadres of the Local Committee put stress were : the indispensability of workers' and peasants' mass organisations and mass movement ; necessity of inner-party ideological struggle inside CPI(M) ; political work and 'actions' are not opposed to each other ; on the contrary, 'action' will be meaningless if politics is not in command and so political work is the necessary condition for preparation ; necessity of mass struggles through which organs of struggles are to be built up and necessity of mass organisation in urban areas. Charu Babu declined to agree on these points. In short, from the very start there were two distinct opinions which may be called confrontation between two lines. At this stage a compromise was reached. It was decided that the cadres of the Local Committee would put into practice, in Naxalbari area, those agreed points in accordance with their own experience, and the new cadres would act according to Charu Babu's opinion in an area adjacent to Naxalbari, Chater Hat-Islampur area in West Dinajpur district. As Charu Majumdar was connected with the workers' and peasants' struggles in Jalpaiguri district till 1952, the cadres of the Darjeeling district were respectful to him and so this compromise was possible.

The work in Chater Hat-Islampur area was started exactly on the basis of the six documents. Secret groups were formed, a little political propaganda was made and actions were started. That is, efforts were made to set fire to jotedars' houses, some paddy were harvested at night and plans for snatching guns failed. As politics was not given importance, as the necessity of building up mass organisations and mass movements was ignored, actions based on combat groups became the assembly place for some lumpen elements. During the Naxalbari up-

rising in 1967, the jotedars of this area mobilised the entire peasantry behind a certain political party and attacked the houses of the known combat group cadres. The combat group cadres were bewildered in the face of this attack of the jotedars accompanied by the peasants. Why the peasants went under the leadership of the jotedars, they could not account for. As a result, combat groups became ineffective and disorganised. Some leaders of the combat groups and party cadres, having no shelter in the face of jotedars' attack, were forced to leave the area. It should be remembered that this happened when Naxalbari was at its peak. After this nothing was left in that area excepting a handful of peasant families. The party cadres of that area isolated themselves from the masses by trying to apply the '*Eight Documents*'. It is enough to quote Mao Tsetung here : "Thus any practice that isolates us from the masses has no sanction at all, and it is simply the mischief done by the sectarian ideas of some comrades' own invention."

In Naxalbari area, or more precisely in Darjeeling district, the party cadres decided to gain majority in the District Committee by carrying on ideological struggle inside the CPI(M). Out of a total of 26 members of the District Committee, all but six accepted the politics of the Local Committee and a separate secret committee was formed inside the District Committee. The party members of the tea gardens in Darjeeling district both in the hills and in the plains started supporting the politics of the secret District Committee. At that time the struggle inside the CPI(M) reached to such an extent that the West Bengal State Committee was forced to withdraw its decision of expulsion of Charu Majumdar from the party membership. Although Charu Majumdar apparently accepted the necessity of ideological struggle in the CPI(M), in practice he disregarded it and so in an unguarded moment the West Bengal State Committee got the opportunity to dissolve the Darjeeling District Committee. In spite of this, the ideological struggle inside the CPI(M) spread to the adjacent districts.

During the Naxalbari uprising in 1967 it was possible to hold 105 meetings of the Party members and sympathisers in 21 days only in Calcutta. From 1966 to the month of May 1967, working as one disciplined team, the cadres of the Local Committee and District Committee organized the Party members on the one hand, led mass struggles on the other, and were able to resist the attacks of the CPI(M) leadership. It was possible because the cadres could practise firmness in principle and flexibility in policy as far as practicable. But after May '67 this style of work could not be maintained because Charu Majumdar could take advantage of some factors present at that time : (1) Party cadres' extreme hatred against revisionists of all types ; (2) The state leadership's ill treatment towards the cadres of the Darjeeling district for their criticism of the CPI(M) revisionist leadership since 1966. This, together with the discontent amongst the cadres led to blind antagonism among cadres who lost the sense of flexibility ; (3) Treating the rank and file members and the leadership of the CPI(M) at par by the cadres of the Darjeeling district, i. e., forgetting the glorious anti-revisionist role of the rank and file members of the CPI(M) ; (4) The absence of secret and skilful party centre to resist the attack of the CPI(M) leadership, to preserve the mass struggle in face of the police onslaught of the United Front Government and above all, to lead properly the Naxalbari uprising ; (5) Unbearable conditions of underground life of Naxalbari cadres in the face of brutal attacks of the U.F. Govt. police (with order to shoot at sight). (6) Lack of self-reliance and self-confidence of the Naxalbari cadres and their unconditional faith in Charu Majumdar. At this period Charu Babu was staying at home due to illness ; it was not possible for him to move about. So he had no direct connection with the struggle. But these aforesaid reasons opened up scope for him to distract the Party cadres.

The period June—December '66 may be termed as a springboard of Naxalbari uprising. The District and Local

Party cadres propagated the politics of agrarian revolution among the tea workers. As a result, tea-worker Party members and the general tea workers mobilised around the revolutionary party cadres. Workers' discontent against the revisionist Union leaders on the one hand and economic clashes on the other, pushed the workers towards struggle. In that sense, nine days' general strike in tea industry in September '66 played the preparatory role of the Naxalbari peasant uprising and the tea workers played the role of the vanguard. When the tea workers' strike in the adjacent Jalpaiguri district was fizzling out, the militant mood of the tea workers of Darjeeling district scared the revisionist leadership who hastily took to the path of settlement of the strike. In Darjeeling district, the strike was more extensive than that of 1955. Besides the workers of the Red flag union, workers of other unions and even the workers of unorganised gardens had to join the strike. At the death of a worker in police firing during clash with police in the hills, the workers' mood of revenge rose so high that the revisionists got panicky. In the plains, that is, in Naxalbari, the peasants stood firm by the side of the workers leaving aside their intensive agricultural work. Armed workers and peasants continued the strike scaring the blacklegs away and forced the police to retreat. The struggle was not confined within the bounds of the tea workers' economic demands but turned into a political struggle of the working class and the peasantry. By withdrawing the strike without realising any basic demand, the revisionists got all the more isolated from the workers. The District and Local cadres took full advantage of this situation and passed resolution on the programme of agrarian revolution from the branch conferences of the plantation unions. In the annual conference of the hill tea workers, the revisionist leaders were severely criticised and ousted from the trade unions. The annual conference of the plantation workers in Naxalbari advanced one step farther and called upon the peasants to start struggle for land. The correct method of work of the

party cadres in respect of mass organisation and mass struggle helped to mobilise the workers and peasants of the district as well as Naxalbari area, build up anew more trade unions which led to drawing them in the struggle. It was found that during Naxalbari uprising the tea workers observed general strike three times in support of the peasant struggle. The Party cadres of Darjeeling district defeated through practice Charu Majumdar's line of ignoring the necessity of trade unions for the time being.

From the experience of these struggles, Charu Babu changed his opinion and was compelled to accept the utility of economic struggles and wrote document Nos. 7 and 8 on these experiences. But wrong ideas cannot be got rid of by winning only once in the struggle against erroneous ideas ; so consistent struggle must be waged against incorrect ideas. It is always urgent and indispensable task to make the party cadres, general party members and the people vigilant against the mistaken ideas. But unfortunately because of the continuation of struggle inside the CPI(M) and the mass struggles simultaneously, events advanced with such a speed that this could not be possible. So though some formulations of document Nos. 7 and 8 were correct, Charu Majumdar was able to drag the cadres to his own old line easily. The tea workers' struggle of September 1966 influenced the peasantry so immensely that in November/December of the same year the peasants' movement for seizure of crop started. This movement quickly spread all over Naxalbari area. Utilising the experience of the struggle of 1958-59 and enthused with the politics of agrarian revolution, armed workers and peasants created terror among jotedars and planter land-owners. Thousands of organised armed peasants harvested paddy and also snatched guns and this took place without the help of any such combat groups. When the armed police force came to seize crops, hundreds of armed tea workers prevented them. At this time warrants of arrest were issued against the workers and peasants. As a result, the Party cadres had to go under-

ground. In 1967 the question of election came just at the time when warrants of arrest were hanging on the Party cadres, ordinary workers and peasants. The District and Local Party cadres utilised the election to propagating the politics of agrarian revolution. During this period, the Party cadres gathered some experience of combining legal with illegal works in an illegal condition (because of warrants). A difference occurred between the District cadres and some new cadres on utilising this election. The cadres of Darjeeling district pointed out that at this moment utilising this present election to serve the politics of agrarian revolution and the advocacy of the parliamentary path—these two are not the same. In practice, the emergence of Naxalbari uprising immediately after the election proved the correctness of the District cadres. From this it should not be concluded that it is a tactic for all the time. The unity of the workers and peasants of Naxalbari was further strengthened through the election and a basis of unity between the poor peasants and middle peasants, on the one hand, and a part of the rich peasants along with a few small landlords, on the other, was created. During the past election period the work of Party cadres multiplied. The division of share produce remained postponed owing to the election. As a result, immediately after the election, the share-croppers started taking away the entire produce depriving the jotedars, which sparked off clashes with them. The jotedars were forced to retreat in face of combined resistance of workers and peasants. In these circumstances, the peasantry compelled the Party cadres to declare the practical task of the agrarian revolution. Consequently the proposal for seizure of land started pouring from numerous area conferences. This was reflected in the sub-divisional joint conference of the workers and peasants held on May 7, 1967.

This historic conference of May 7, 1967 brought forth Naxalbari before the whole country. The creator of the Naxalbari peasant uprising was the mass organisation and mass struggles of workers and peasants. The implementation of the

task of seizure of land gave birth to this uprising. The programme of seizure of land taught the peasantry that only by smashing the political domination and power of the jotedars and planter-landowners in the rural areas and in their place by establishing the political domination and power of the workers and peasants in the rural areas, the task of the agrarian revolution can be completed. The lesson of Naxalbari is that the main content of agrarian revolution is to distribute land to the peasants ; it is for the preservation of that land in his possession that resistance struggles will develop in rural areas which, in its turn, will transform into a struggle for political power. So in the stage of democratic revolution or agrarian revolution, struggle for land and struggle for political power are intertwined. The writer of the *Terai Report* has correctly described how the Naxalbari peasants' struggle for land surged forward and how the peasants' revolutionary committee established political power in the rural areas. In spite of that he failed to understand the scientific conclusion that in the stage of agrarian revolution, struggle for land and struggle for state power in the rural areas are intertwined. For this reason he diverted himself to a mechanical and incorrect formulation by trying to explain the real lessons of Naxalbari uprising in terms of erroneous anti-Marxist-Leninist line of the *Eight Documents*. Practically Naxalbari uprising is a living protest to the *Eight Documents*. Lenin said : "Both economic and political agitations are equally necessary to develop class consciousness of the proletariat ; both economic and political agitations are equally necessary for guiding the class struggle of the Russian workers, because every class struggle is a political struggle. These two kinds of agitation are inseparably connected in the activities of the social democrats as the two sides of the same medal."

Here one more side of the *Eight Documents* is to be mentioned. If the cadres of Darjeeling district could scrutinise the *Eight Documents* they would have understood that Charu Babu remained in Siliguri from 1952 till 1965—

which was the time of writing these documents ; but surprisingly enough, in the first six documents no mention was ever made of the worker-peasants' class struggle of Naxalbari. Even in document Nos. 7 and 8 there was no mention of the implementation of politics of agrarian revolution in the Naxalbari area from June to December, 1966. From these omissions some fair questions arise, such as : Did Charu Majumdar omit this unintentionally ? Was there nothing worth learning from the long-drawn 17 years' of glorious struggles of tea workers and peasants in Siliguri sub-division of Darjeeling district ? Was the glorious struggle of the tea workers and peasants of June-December '66 so insignificant that it could not be mentioned in Charu Babu's document Nos. 7 and 8 ? Some more scrutiny of the document No. 8 will reveal that besides mentioning a partial experience of killing of a scab in the Tebhaga struggle of 1946, he mentioned only the 1965 food movement in South Bengal. It was in no way unintentional on his part. Leaving aside other conclusions it can be said that Charu Babu was suffering from the disease of subjective over-enthusiasm which led to personal egoism. That is why he consciously chopped up the past history and did not take any lesson from it. He did not want to analyse the objective realities and so with his subjective over-enthusiasm and egoism placed personal feelings above principles. Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tsetung Thought teach that subjectivism will inevitably push towards opportunism or adventurism. In fact, that only took place. Charu Majumdar wanted to establish anarchism in a new form. The history following the formation of the CPI(ML) has proved this. In 1878, while repudiating Duhring in the social democratic movement in his work *Anti-Duhring*, Engels said : "...the principles are not the starting point of the investigation, but its final result ; they are not applied to nature and human history, but abstracted from them ; it is not nature and the realm of humanity which conform to these principles, but the principles are only valid in so far as they are in conformity with nature and history.

That is the only materialist conception of the question.” Lenin said : “In this respect Marxism learns, if we may so express, from mass practice and makes no claim whatever to teach the masses forms of struggle invented by systematisers in the seclusion of their studies.” Mao Tsetung said : “We are Marxists and Marxism teaches that in our approach to a problem, we should start from objective facts, not from abstract definitions, and that we should derive our guiding principles, politics and measures from an analysis of the facts.” In connection with “Lessons of Naxalbari” and its “Evaluation” an idea was circulated that Naxalbari could not keep its existence as Charu Majumdar’s instructions were not followed. Social revolutions take place due to the maturity of the internal contradictions of the society, not by any individual’s dictates. Mao Tsetung said : “Changes in society are due chiefly to the development of the internal contradictions in society, that is, the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, the contradiction between the classes and the contradiction between the old and the new ; it is the development of these contradictions that pushes society forward and gives the impetus for the suppression of old society by the new.”

The problem of the existence of Naxalbari becomes clear when it is judged in the light of Mao Tsetung Thought. Mao Tsetung has said that if a red area is to exist, it must fulfil certain conditions. Besides the condition of the contradiction among the ruling classes and their split, he has pointed out to some more, such as : 1) A strong mass base, 2) A correct and well organised Communist Party, 3) Adequately strong people’s armed force, 4) Favourable terrain, 5) Favourable economic conditions for self-reliance. Apart from these, he mentioned two more important conditions, such as : 1) whether the nation-wide revolutionary upsurge is in the high tide or low ebb ; 2) the places where red political power first emerges and can last long are not those unaffected by the democratic revolution, on the other hand it will be there,

where in course of the bourgeois democratic revolution the masses of workers and peasants rose in great numbers. Defying all these it is not possible for any red area to last long. Judging it from this angle it is true that there were the downfall of Congress party in eight of the states due to its internal contradictions and its splits, countrywide mass discontent against the government and there was a strong mass base at Naxalbari. But save these, all other conditions were absent. It should be mentioned first that there was no well organised and skilled communist party organisation in Darjeeling district to cope with the situation, there was no clear-cut plan to lead the struggle, there was no direction to build up a people's armed force inspite of the presence of armed people and apart from this, on the question of the terrain, there was no plan to shift themselves to the hill areas.

In 1967, the situation of West Bengal was of a complex nature. On the one hand, the Congress party was defeated and there was a strong aspiration among the people for radical change. On the other hand, victory of the so-called leftists in the election created illusions. So the mood of overthrowing a government of the so-called leftists, formed after a series of propaganda for the parliamentary path throughout some decades, was absent among the people. It should also be borne in mind that the CPI(M) was formed through struggle against revisionism and this party had an image at that time as leader of different mass movements within the parliamentary framework. It is true that the revolt of the communist cadres of Darjeeling district, of some leading cadres of Calcutta and some other districts against the CPI(M) leadership was correct and they proved themselves to be real communists by firmly standing at the side of Naxalbari uprising. But the rank and file members of the CPI(M), though having confusion against the revisionist leadership, were not ready for a revolt.

In these complex circumstances it was possible to preserve the Naxalbari peasant uprising without incurring heavy loss and also it was possible to advance in a disciplined way from

anarchic planlessness. At that period the Naxalbari cadres proposed a dialogue with the United Front Government. But Charu Majumdar did not agree and said that any dialogue with the U. F. Government was revisionism. In this complex situation, subjective tactical mistakes, absence of subjective preparations and absence of flexibility in policy by keeping firm on principle led to the setback of Naxalbari uprising.

Then, was the Naxalbari peasant uprising untimely? Certainly not. The question of timeliness of Naxalbari does not depend on whether Naxalbari could keep its existence as a red area or not. In the context of the countrywide revolutionary upsurge of 1965-67, and judged by the yardstick of the inevitability of fighting against all types of revisionism for the general orientation of India's democratic revolution and the advancement of India's revolution, Naxalbari was a correct, timely and extremely important historic event. It is to be remembered that all the conditions to establish a red area never remain present; some conditions will be present and some others will have to be created. To create the conditions it is essential to preserve the uprising. The Naxalbari peasant uprising presented this general orientation: Revolt of the Indian peasants and revolution of the Indian people are inevitable. So the uprisings have to be organised; but in order to preserve it in a planned way, flexibility in policy while keeping firm on principle is necessary.

The immaturity of grasping Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tsetung Thought in the concrete condition of India is the sole reason as to why such a long time was required to understand the importance of the Naxalbari peasant uprising. So, extreme price had to be paid through heavy losses.

India is a vast and ancient land of many nations. Failure to keep in view the specific features of Indian society and inability to solve the problems of Indian revolution from the traditions of struggles of the Indian people led to subjective super-imposing of the experiences of other countries mechanically; it brought about right and left deviation in the Indian

communist movement. Expressed in the language of Mao Tsetung, it is "cutting the feet to fit the shoes." Denying the materialist truth that it is the Indian people who are the real creators of Indian history since time immemorial, the communist leadership painted some persons of the ruling classes of different era as creators of history and father of the nation. As a result the Indian communist movement sunk to the level of metaphysics—some of the communist leaders revised Marxism-Leninism and diverted the communist movement to right and left deviations ; on the other hand, another section, acting mechanically, landed into devastation. One of the main reasons of the sorry plight of the Indian communist movement is that almost all of its leaders in different levels have come from the impetuous petty-bourgeois class, the class of conservative petty peasant producers with narrow outlook, and from the anarchic, decadent feudal class. The presence of permanent deep economic crisis in the Indian society led to occasional political crises which, in its turn, gave birth to sporadic revolutionary upsurges both big and small. But due to the betrayal of the Indian communist leadership, these have failed time and again. At that time, an honest section within the communist movement tried to find out the correct path. But their impetuous class character and anarchic outlook had pushed them towards subjectivism ; they had fallen prey to adventurism by trying to apply mechanically the much valuable experience of other countries in toto, which was utilised in full by the political careerists. The latest example of that in the Indian communist movement is the emergence of the CPI(ML) and its aftermath.

In order to advance with a correct policy by fighting and defeating revisionism of all shades and subjectivism, the unity of all the honest communist revolutionaries is the prime necessity today in the Indian communist movement. But this unity must develop on the basis of mutual respect, attitude of mutual learning and on the basis of how much unity can be maintained. It is not at all easy to develop this unity, the

situation which developed just after Naxalbari is absent now. On the contrary, an atmosphere of mutual disrespect and expression of arrogance in many groups exist ; they pose great hurdles towards achieving this unity. The CPI(ML) which was formed by a section of Communist Revolutionaries of India has been reduced to groups and sub-groups. The open letter issued by the six leading persons of the CPI(ML) had been a very correct and timely step. In the present context the overall political situation of India demands that the most important task today before the Communist Revolutionaries, along with the CPI(ML) groups, is to build up the unity of all these honest communist revolutionaries of India.

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