

G-20 Summit: Wrangling Over Spoils

G-20 Summit has met in the first week of July 2017 in city of Germany. Growing struggle and conflict among the imperialist powers and the people's protest against the imperialist dictated policies of capitalism had provided the back drop of this Summit. The Summit has finally released an unanimous or consensus communiqué after hectic negotiations among the major powers. But, even before the ink was dry, the leaders began talking in different voices reducing the communiqué into a nominal piece of paper.

The Summits like G-7 and G-20 had come into existence out of the need and realisation on the part of main captains of world capitalist economy that some sort of occasional consultations are necessary among themselves to I) keep their competitions and conflicts within manageable limits; and II) put up a show of unity among themselves *vis-a-vis* the world people and leadership over the world economy.

The G-20 was launched in 2009 in the aftermath of 2008 economic crisis. The Communiqué released in this context boasted, "Our forceful response helped stop the dangerous, sharp decline in global activity and stabilise financial markets." They patted their own backs saying that the "crisis of financial capitalism is not crisis of capitalism.....The crisis of capitalism calls for moralisation, not its destruction." Here, the captains of world capitalism are not bothered about how the crisis had revealed the fundamental weaknesses of capitalist system and how the bailout measures had further impoverished the billions of world people. Last decade had shown that the bailouts did not halt the industrial collapse and future financial crisis.

The state of present tensions and relationship among the major imperialist powers is attributed by some to the 'isolationist policy' of Trump and weakening of US leading role in the capitalist world. But it will be simplifying the problem. The contradictions among the imperialist powers had not begun or will end with Trump. These are a basic feature of imperialism. They end only with the end of imperialism.

In the last one decade, the US imperialism had tasted serious setbacks, losses and opposition in the course of its offensive drive for hegemony through wars of invasion and occupation. Its attempts to bring Iran to its knees have failed. It failed to topple Assad's regime in Syria. Backed by Russia, the Syrian regime remains firmly in power. US moves to enlarge its economic, political and military hold in Asia and Pacific region are encountering hurdles and opposition from China and other Countries of the region. North Korea continues to be a hard nut to crack for the US. The economic financial crisis that rocked the US in 2008 continues unabated. It had further aggravated the problems of inequality, unemployment, indebtedness and heavy costs of life, etc in US. Consequently, the US rulers are faced with growing anger, protest and opposition from the American people. The slogans like, 'America First'; 'American jobs for Americans'; 'fair trade'; 'protectionism' and fair trade practices' raised by Trump are only part of the exercises on the part of American rulers to console or pacify the unemployed youth, meet the needs of trading and industrial community in US and tide over the crisis. All this had erected several hurdles in the path of US and put it in a disadvantageous position in pushing its global aims. At the same time, one must be clear that the US imperialists had neither abandoned their ambitions, designs and attempts for global hegemony nor lost the strength as a leading economic, political and military power in the world.

The contradictions among the imperialist powers are sharpening in the present world. Russia is more assertive today. While consolidating its leading position in Europe, Germany is trying its best to utilise the contradictions between the US and Russia and the troubles faced by the US to place itself in a better position for a better share in the loot of world's wealth. So is the case with the other imperialist powers. Yet the inter-imperialist contradictions have not reached a breaking point. While stepping up the competition and contention to grab the spoils, the imperialist powers are striving to reach compromises and consensus on the issues of conflict. In one word, the imperialist are still in a state of contention and collusion. Here they wish the real challengers of capitalist system must not get further emboldened to attack the capitalist system and the unity among the captains of world capitalist economy is projected. The exercises to arrive at unanimity or consensus in the G – 20 Summit were only a pointer to this. At the beginning of the Summit, the US and European Countries appeared to be seriously at logger-heads on the question of trade policy (US for 'fair trade' and others for 'free trade') and climate change (US walked out of Paris Climate change Agreement and other European powers declared the Paris Agreement as "irreversible"). The first point of difference has disappeared (at least on paper) when the Communiqué "urgently called for the removal of distorting subsidies and other types of support by the Governments and related entities". The deference on Paris Climate Change Agreement only turned out to be a fake one as many of the G-20 Countries who claim to be upholding the agreement (such as Canada, Italy, Germany, France, South Korea and Japan) themselves are maintaining and expanding the carbon order. Ignoring the Agreement, they are spending billions of public money every year to subsidise oil, gas and coal production. Thus they have no voice to criticise the US. So, an unanimous or consensus communiqué could be signed at the end of the G – 20 summit.

Right the Hamburg city – the venue of G-20 summit became a focal point of protest against the imperialist dictated policies of capitalism. The protesters in tens of thousands came from different parts of Germany as well as other Countries such as Switzerland, Netherland, France. They were of different classes, streams of thought, activity, age groups, workers, youth, rural folk, women; artists and musicians. They raised slogans against capitalism, globalisation and the attacks on the rights and lives of working and toiling people. They sang, danced and performed depicting an end of demon of capitalism and welcoming a new society and world which banishes a plunder and oppression forever.

The German Govt. made every arrangement well in advance to crush the people's protest. It had massively deployed the armed police; put up barricades all over; convoys of police swept through the roads; the helicopters swirled over the head constantly. As 100000 protesters began to assemble for a "shutdown" protest, the police assaulted a central March of 12000 people, arrested many and attacked others with tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets and water cannons. The entire city was virtually turned into a war zone. Yet, the protesting people stood undaunted. All this happened while the G-20 countries were deliberating and cooking up consensuses on how to better loot and share the spoils. They extended their consent and solidarity to the brutal way the German Govt. sought to crush the protesting people.

Despite patch up work and consensus exercises, the G-20 summit could not conceal the crisis of capitalist system, and the intensifying inter-imperialist contradictions. The unity and mutual solidarity exhibited by the imperialist powers in brutally crushing the peoples protest in Hamburg cannot wipe out the truth, a fundamental truth, a growing and irreversible phenomenon that more and more people are coming out against imperialism and the capitalist system in the world. They are looking for the working class to come to the fore, lead all the exploited and oppressed classes of people into a decisive battle against capitalism, imperialism and for a socialist world.