

PRIVATISATION AND MONETISATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS AT THE BEHEST OF IMPERIALIST FINANCE CAPITAL!

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has grandly declared that “The government has no business being in business”. He also swore that “The culture of abusing private sector is not acceptable any longer. We cannot keep insulting our youth like this”. This declaration of Modi is neither a new political philosophy nor the P.M. represents our youth nor he respects the aspiration of our youth. He is merely repeating the tenets of Thatcherism the main and real objective of which is “reversing the effects of socialism” and “to dismantle the socialist” scourge”;

One need not be deceived that the P.M. Modi and his government are going to devote to the governance to alleviate ever growing poverty of the masses, engender more and more opportunities for employment and eradicate the scourge of ever growing unemployment, stop and control perpetually raising prices of essential Commodities and vegetables, create better living and working conditions to toiling masses and workers, provide affordable health services, housing, public transport and education to the majority of the people that have no access to those services and create peaceful conditions without repression, oppression and hateful violence on the common people. With his skill of word-jugglery he is grandly hood-winking people to implement the agenda of the imperialist masters to whom he and his government are subserving. That is why now he is preaching about the respectability of privatisation, deliberately choosing to insult the people of India.

In fact in 1991 when our economy is in deep crisis and when our position of balance of payments is in a worst condition even unable to meet the Commitments of foreign debt servicing, while the imperialist financial organisations the World Bank and International Monetary Fund granted loans for the bailout have imposed the condition of privatisation of public sector enterprises and public industry, along with some other conditionalities, to which our rulers have willfully accepted and taken up privatisation as the holy task. Privatisation is a central feature of global capitalism under neo-liberalism to facilitate capital accumulation by dispossession; which our rulers have accepted to implement.

From then onwards the process of privatisation has been started and successive governments have taken steps to implement them. Initially the process started in the form of disinvestment and subsequently it took the form of strategic sale of shares of PSES. The NITI Aayog has identified 34 entities of the so called strategic sale of Shares of PSES.

During the past six years the NDA government of Modi has moved fast to sell selective rail lines and routes, airports, national highway projects and power distribution contracts are given to private players. Now it permitted the government to

do business with private Bank. It is planning to minimise the number of public banks, dilute equities in LIC and privatise numerous public undertakings. All the public sector undertakings possess massive land as their assets. Now the government intends to monetise these land assets which are currently under its ownership and control. Prime minister announced about monetising 100 public sector assets, oil, gas, ports, airports, power and other segments of economy. According to the announcement of the budget, the total resource mobilisation through privatisation and dispossession is targeted to R. 4.25 lakh crore.

2021 Budget documents show that the financial deficit—the gap between the government income and expenditure is at Rs 18.48 lakh crore. To bridge this gap, by capping the deficit at Rs. 15.06 crore government intends to borrow Rs. 12 lakh crore and to mobilise funds through privatisation and monetisation of the land assets of PSEs' during this year.

The Modi's government justifies this move of privatisation and monetisation of PSE assets, by stating that since the majority of 250 odd PSUs' are making large losses. It cannot allow to lose money collected by taxes from the people in the form of PSU losses. With such a "lofty" sentiment it skillfully collars up the fact and truth that the losses in PSUs' in the consequence of the policies adopted and implemented by the very governments itself. But they choose to blame the PSUs' for the losses.

Instead of imposing high taxes on corporates, presently the corporates are taxed at the lowest. Besides this the government has been providing incentives and tax concessions at a large scale to the corporates. Modi government has been implementing pro-rich tax policies. But hiding these facts he talks about PSU losses and financial deficit to hood-wink people.

On the other hand privatisation is being justified for efficiency improvements. But there is no evidence of net benefits of privatisation. The seeming improvement after privatisation is most often only at the expense of working conditions, consumer protection and the quality output and environment.

We are already having bitter experience in our country by allowing private sector to operate the Indian insurance business. Private companies are arbitrarily enhancing to premiums and cost of their financial products. Health insurance became unaffordable. Private players are manipulating the stock market and exploiting small and retail investors. We have experienced huge scams associated with opening of coal, mining and telecommunication to the private sector. We have witnessed how the Satyam failed. We have seen how many private enterprises are reporting bankrupt and the piling up of NPAs in the banks due to failure of many a private business organisations. We know how in developing countries privatisation programmes are being usually manipulated by political elites to follow particular groups and to secure private benefits, corruption and abuse. Now with this move the government will be

selling the public assets at a substantial discount to foreign and Indian big Capitalists. Our entire economy will be going into the control of imperialist international finance capital weakening our financial sovereignty. This is nothing but a loss of national resources.

By this sudden massive scaling up of privatisation and monetisation of public assets, our country is being pushed in to more and more economic crisis which cannot be ended, but increases our dependence on imperialist capital without any rescue.

Arrogated with the absolute majority in Loksabha, and bettered position in Rajyasabha, Prime Minister Modi has chosen to subserve the imperialism with much more zeal, through this privatisation and monetisation of public assets in furthering the interests of big capital. He made "ease of doing business" and furthering the interests of international finance capital as the business of his government in the name of not doing business.

Movement of the workers and the patriotic and democratic forces of our country shall resist this loot of the privatisation and monetisation of public assets of all sections of the people of our country.