



## **COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)**

### **Central Committee**

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### **Note on Some Political Developments Adopted by the Central Committee At its November 13-16, 2015 Meeting**

Since the last Central Committee meeting in August many important developments have taken place, both international and national. However, since our basic agenda for this meeting is to finalise the documents and preparations for the organisational plenum, we may not have sufficient time, like in the last meeting, to have a detailed discussion on all these issues. Hence, only the important aspects that have a bearing on our understanding and current tasks are being noted here.

#### **International**

##### **Terrorist Attacks in Paris**

The CPI(M) strongly condemns the terror attacks in Paris. These recent spate of terror attacks in Baghdad, Beirut and now Paris clearly indicate the mushrooming of such terrorist groups as a counter to US/NATO military operations in Syria and military interventions elsewhere in West Asia.

The response of some European countries which have sealed their borders will further accentuate the ongoing refugee crisis in those parts of the world.

##### **Global Capitalist Crisis**

The world capitalist economic crisis continues despite all the efforts to emerge from this crisis by further intensifying exploitation of the people. The IMF World Economic Outlook 2015 points to a weaker global economic recovery in 2015 and 2016 than previously envisaged. Global growth declined in the first half of 2015. It is now projected at 3.1 per cent, slightly lower than 2014. World trade volumes also slowed consequently in 2015. Both output growth and employment growth were much weaker in 2015 than in the period 2008-14.

Global corporate debt levels have exponentially grown. This is up by about \$ 1 trillion since the global financial meltdown began in 2008. The volume of corporate loans outstanding is 14 per cent higher than it was before the financial crisis.

Thus, global income inequalities have sharply grown. The richest one per cent of the population control nearly half the world's total wealth. In most countries the average wealth of the top ten per cent is more than 10 times the average wealth of others. Worse, the top one per cent exceeds the average wealth by a hundred times of all others, in most countries.

True to the inherent logic of capitalism, profits are enlarged by intensifying the exploitation of the people through the universally implemented "austerity measures".

The resistance against these measures of "austerity" is finding political expression in different ways in different countries.

**Greece:** Defying the people's mandate of the popular referendum, the Syriza government had succumbed to the pressures of international capital and accepted the conditionalities of bail out packages imposed by the EU. Despite the austerity measures that followed, in the recent elections the Syriza was once again reelected to government even while it was short of the requisite majority. It formed the government by allying with the rightwing party with which it had allied during its earlier stint in government as well. Immediately after forming government it accepted another round of austerity measures imposed by the European Union and other multinational financial agencies.

**Portugal:** In the recent elections held in October the rightwing coalition (PaF) received 38.6 per cent votes, 12 per cent less than in 2011. Despite not having a clear mandate of over 50 per cent, in a proportional representation system, the President of Portugal had asked them to form the government. This government however could not prove its majority on the floor of the house. The Portuguese Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the Left bloc came together to offer an alternative. The PCP stated that while maintaining its ideological and political positions, it is committed to ensure the departure of the right wing policies in Portugal. PCP is supporting this government from the outside. How this new government will face the pressures for greater austerity measures has to be seen. Currently Portugal has the highest debt burden amongst the countries of Eurozone and is slated to grow at a mere 1.5 per cent GDP. The PCP led Left alliance (CDU) increased its vote share in October 2015 from 2011 receiving 8 per cent of the vote and one additional MP.

**Syria:** For over a month now Russian military operations have been going on in Syria. Between 50 to 80 air strikes by Russian planes

are being conducted daily in support of the Syrian military. Consequently, in most of the areas occupied by the militant fundamentalists, Syrians are now on the offensive. These gains by the Syrians Army against the militants forced the US now to negotiate with Iran which subsequently could involve the Syrian government. However, since March 2011 more than 2.5 lakh people have been killed and hundreds of thousand displaced as a result of the current crisis. The refugee crisis continues to remain acute as a consequence of this unrest in Syria.

It is now confirmed that the Russian passenger plane was destroyed by a mid air bomb pointing to the retaliation by the militant fundamentalist forces.

**Turkey:** In the recent elections, the ruling AKP rode back to power on the basis of the resumption of hostilities with the Kurds and creating an atmosphere of fear after terrorist blasts. On the eve of the election, more than hundred people were killed as a bomb exploded in the peace rally organised by various working class movements. These results will have an impact on the ongoing crisis in West Asia.

## **Nepal**

After the adoption of the secular Republican constitution the former General Secretary and Chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal (UML), K.P Oli was elected as the Prime Minister. Later, Bidhya Devi Bhandari (wife of later Com. Madan Bhandari, General Secretary and a popular mass leader) also of the CPN(UML) was elected as the President of the country.

Nepalese, mainly in the plains, called Madhesis are opposing this Constitution on the grounds of not having delivered justice to the demands of the Madhesi population. This opposition is resulting in violent protests in some parts of this area. The Hindutva organisations in India are openly supporting this agitation. Consequently, this BJP led central government is virtually blockading the border between India and Nepal in many border points. This is having a crippling effect on Nepal as it relies mainly on supplies from India for day to day survival of its people. This is creating a high degree of hardships for the Nepali people. Consequently, the anti-India sentiments have sharply escalated in Nepal. The "unofficial" blockade of movements of essential goods to Nepal is a result of this Modi government's actions reflecting the opinion of the Hindutva forces and their disappointment with the Nepali constitution as not having declared Nepal as a "Hindu Rashtra".

This attitude of the current Indian government is opening up newer doors of cooperation of Nepal with neighbouring China. China is

being requested now to supply Nepal with its required fuel and other needs.

## **Myanmar**

According to unofficial but universally accepted reports, the recently held elections in Myanmar have indeed been historic. The opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Aung San Su Kyi has emerged triumphant by reports of winning a record three-fourths of the seats. The results are yet to be officially declared fully. This emphatic expression for the restoration of democracy in Myanmar is indeed historic for the people of that country and will have an impact in the region.

## **Bangladesh**

The recent murders of foreign nationals in Bangladesh and continuing attacks by fundamentalist groups on bloggers and publishers have created a situation where the Australian cricket team has cancelled its tour to Bangladesh. The US Deputy Secretary of State has also cancelled his visit on the pretext of growing insecurity of foreign nationals in Bangladesh. Some media reports point to the growth of ISIS activities proving such fundamentalist attacks. The Awami League government on the other hand alleges that the opposition BNP and its Islamic fundamentalist allies are organising such attacks to malign the elected government.

These developments are serious with the potential of impacting upon the fundamentalist groups and their activities in India, particularly in the bordering states of West Bengal, Assam and the North East.

## **National**

In the background of the continuing global capitalist economic crisis, the BJP led government and PM Modi are aggressively pursuing the agenda of further cementing India's role as a subordinate ally of US imperialism.

## **Economic Situation**

PM Modi has unilaterally announced measures to further facilitate the loot of Indian resources and markets by vastly enhancing the access of foreign capital into India. Fifteen areas, including single brand retail, banking, construction, media, airlines, defence, banking, plantations etc., are to be opened up for approval under the automatic route. 32 new investment points will now allow FDI automatically. The cap for approval of foreign investments has been raised to Rs. 5,000 crore from the existing Rs. 3,000 crores.

All these decisions have been taken on the eve of the winter session of the Parliament. Worse they have been taken even without the Cabinet approval. This is a complete travesty of our system of parliamentary democracy.

These announcements have come as Prime Minister Modi embarks on yet another programme of foreign tours to London, G-20, Malaysia and Singapore. PM Modi made these announcements with an aim to appease foreign capital prior to his visits. This once again confirms that PM Modi is pursuing more aggressively the policies of neo-liberal economic reforms.

### **Further Economic Burdens on the People**

This license to loot for foreign capital comes at a time when the majority of the Indian people continue to groan under newer economic burdens. Price rise of essential commodities continues unabated. The prices of 'dal', an essential source of protein nutrition for the vast majority of the Indian people, have risen beyond their reach. The prices of all other essential commodities continue to rise.

The agrarian distress is deepening. The agricultural sector is suffering a second successive year of depressed output. According to the advanced estimates, the 2015-16 foodgrains production in the khariff season is lower than the corresponding levels of the last four years. Already the sown area for the rabi crops is lower by 3.8 per cent than last year. The increases in the minimum support prices are nowhere near the promises made by PM Modi during the election campaign of pegging them at 150 per cent of the production costs. The current announced increases are so meagre that they do not even cover the production costs. This is accelerating the distress suicides of our farmers.

As far as the industrial sector is concerned, notwithstanding the manipulation of GDP statistics that we noted earlier, the deceleration set in 2012 is continuing. Even according to the data released now by this government the index of industrial production fell to a growth rate of 3.6 per cent from 6.4 per cent last month. Likewise, the growth rate of manufacturing fell to 2.6 per cent from 6.9 per cent last month.

The crucial economic indicator, gross fixed capital formation has been so little that the investment: GDP ratio has fallen from 30.7 per cent to 30 per cent. This indicates there is no upturn in investment this year. Indian exports continue to decline further given the state of the global economy. All these factors put together are depressing further the employment generation in the country.

In this background whatever little relief that was being provided to the Indian people through schemes like the Rural Employment

Guarantee are also being depressed due to lower financial allocations.

The consequent growing economic burdens on our people is accelerating popular discontent across the country.

All the Party units must, in this background, intensify popular people's protests on the basis of the demands that arise from local conditions.

### **Defence & Military Collaboration**

Between October 14 to 21 joint Indo-US military exercises were conducted called "Malabar Exercises".

Begun in 1992 as joint naval exercises between the Indian and US navies and institutionalized with the Indo-US defence framework agreement signed in 2005, the exercises are notable this year, for the participation of the Japanese navy. This reflects the strengthening of the trilateral security ties established between India, USA and Japan. In fact, the United States has been pressing for including Japan and Australia. This is part of the US "pivot" to the Asia-Pacific region, the aim of which is to contain China.

Joint military exercises amongst two or more countries are normally conducted when these countries perceive a common enemy. In this instance, who is the common enemy of India, USA and Japan? In the absence of such a common enemy, it is clear that this BJP government, under Prime Minister Modi, is signaling that the Malabar exercises symbolize India's complete integration with the US military strategy in Asia.

Japan has made it clear that it considers China's moves in the South China sea and the region its prime concern for strengthening security ties with India. Such a strategic military tie up with the United States and Japan is harmful for India's strategic independence and autonomy. India should not become a subservient ally of US military strategy in Asia.

### **Bihar**

The people of Bihar have given a resounding defeat to the BJP alliance in the assembly elections. They have rejected the rank communal campaign conducted by the BJP, led by the Narendra Modi-Amit Shah duo with divisive issues like cow and beef and the bogey of reservations for minorities etc.

The decisive victory of the JD(U)-RJD alliance is a clear indication that the BJP-RSS brand of politics is getting increasingly exposed. It is also an indication that the eighteen month record of the BJP

central government which has imposed economic burdens on the people has met with disapproval.

The Bihar verdict should strengthen the fight against the rightwing communal forces all over the country.

The campaign by the United Left bloc including the CPI(M), CPI and CPI(ML)-Liberation was well received by the people of Bihar and has won three seats. The CPI(ML) contesting 99 seats polled 5,87,701 votes (1.5 per cent), the CPI contesting 98 seats polled 5,16,699 (1.4 per cent) and the CPI(M) contesting 43 seats polled 2,32,149. These three parties together polled 13,36,549 votes, which is 3.5 per cent. The CPI(M) came second in one seat and third in three other seats.

### **BJP's internal crisis**

Senior leaders of the BJP who were consigned to its "*margdarshak mandal*" have written a much publicized letter demanding that accountability be fixed for the BJP's rout in the Bihar elections. While this is an internal organisational matter of the BJP, it is clear that all the seniors, owing allegiance to the RSS as well, have expressed their dissension against the Modi-Amit Shah duo's style of functioning. This has begun a process of unsettling the present affairs of the party and the government. However, as the BJP functions only as the political arm of the RSS, how these developments will manifest will have to be seen.

### **Kerala Panchayat elections**

In the elections to the local bodies in Kerala, the LDF has come out victorious. This verdict is a popular rejection of the UDF government's anti-people record and corruption. The people have also rebuffed the communal politics of the BJP and its efforts to rally leaders of caste-based organisations.

The LDF has registered success in the various levels of the local bodies. It has won 549 out of the 941 gram panchayats declared so far; 90 out of the 152 block panchayats and 7 out of the 14 zilla panchayats. Of the urban municipalities, the LDF has won 44 out of 86; of the six corporations, the LDF has won outright 4, while in one there is a tie. The UDF has won only one corporation.

The BJP has gained at the expense of the UDF in the state. In the last Lok Sabha elections LDF secured 40.2 per cent, UDF 42.4 per cent while the BJP got 10.83 per cent. In these elections the LDF vote increased to 41.91 per cent, UDF declined to 40.26 per cent and BJP increased its share to 14.28 per cent.

The Central Committee congratulates the people of Kerala for reposing such faith in the LDF. The LDF campaigned unitedly and

directly took up issues with the people. The electorate responded positively.

The corruption scandals of the UDF government are getting further exposed. Kerala has never seen the depths of such corruption earlier. The UDF finance minister, K.M. Mani has been indicted by the courts directing the Vigilance Department to proceed with the investigations, as prima facie evidence is established. After initial refusal, K.M. Mani had to resign. Given this and more allegations against more ministers, the Oomen Chandy led UDF government does not have any moral authority to remain in office.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> September General Strike**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> September strike, on the basis of the 12-point charter of demands adopted by the Joint Platform of eleven Central Trade Unions and National Federations, was successful in all its aspects. The charter demanded the reversal of anti-worker, anti-people policies of the Modi government. This was the biggest ever strike action the country has ever witnessed. Walkout by RSS-guided BMS from the strike at the last minute had practically no impact on the strike.

There was an unprecedented response to this call from sections like road transport workers in many states. Industrial clusters in many states also observed full strike. Among these sections, large majority are non-unionized. It was the impact of the joint campaign and at many places at our initiative, that the non-unionized workers participated in the strike.

The general assessment is that about 15 crore workers from almost all sections participated in the strike and at least 40 per cent of strikers were non-unionised workers. From the road transport sector alone, nearly 2 crore workers had participated.

CC had decided to extend support and take up the issues related to the general strike in the August campaign. Other mass organizations were also directed to conduct independent campaigns converging on the strike day.

There were some solidarity actions by kisan, agricultural workers, women, youth and students in different states. There have also been some grey areas, where our TU organizations failed to mobilize its full strength in the strike despite the overall favourable situation.

There has to be proper reviews conducted in the states on the Party campaign. The campaign and participation in the strike and solidarity actions by other mass organizations also should be reviewed by the state committees.

TU front has decided to organise independent campaigns, while continuing the joint movement. TU front has also stressed that there should be efforts to galvanise other sections of toiling people in the struggle against the government's neo-liberal policies. Our trade unions, kisan and agricultural workers union should be able to jointly conduct movements. The independent campaign, as decided by the TU front is aimed at exposing policies and politics of neo-liberalism and the BJP government's divisive and communal politics, should be conducted in the month of November.

Organisational efforts to unionise should immediately begin in sectors like road transport and industrial clusters where successful strike was observed. Necessary organizational arrangements, including cadre allotment, have to be made by the state committees.

All efforts should be made to increase the membership in the trade union front and also identify and recruit activists into Party auxiliary groups.

## **Punjab**

Ominous political developments are taking place that gravely disturb peace and communal harmony in Punjab. The incidents of desecration of Guru Granth Saheb, particularly the one on October 12 at the historic Gurudwara Bargari have led to various unruly protest actions in which the Sikh fundamentalists and pro-Khalistanis are emerging as the major elements. The state government failed in capturing the culprits. Its inept handling of the mass protest actions of October 13 and 14 led to the death of two Sikh youth in police firing. This led to a serious disruption of public life and the virtual collapse of police and civil administration in many parts of the state. The Badal government in the state is functioning in a manner that is promoting the rise of Sikh fundamentalist forces and blurring the distinction between religion and politics. This is creating a situation of unrest and uncertainty in the state.

The four Left parties, CPI(M), CPI, CPM-Punjab and CPI(ML)-Liberation have held peace marches in some parts of the state mobilizing the people in favour of maintaining the hard peace and communal harmony. They are warning against the dangerous potential in the resurfacing of Sikh fundamentalist and Khalistani elements. The Left parties are in the midst of struggles on a 15 point demand charter. This charter is a policy based changes that the Badal government must bring about to provide livelihood for the people of Punjab. The non-Left opposition parties including the Congress and various panthic organisations are in one way or the other facilitating the offensive of the fundamentalist forces. These parties remain cut off from people's struggles for a better livelihood.

## **Judicial appointments – Supreme Court judgment**

In the light of the Supreme Court judgment striking down the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, our stand that there has to be a body for appointment of judges which is not dominated either by the judiciary or the executive has been vindicated. The collegium of judges for appointing judges is not a transparent and democratic process. Also any process which gives the executive the opportunity to determine the selection of judges is detrimental to the integrity and independence of the judiciary.

The National Judicial Appointments Commission which was constituted by this law was not satisfactory in terms of its representative character and independent status. The provision of two eminent persons to be selected by the executive is controversial. In the parliament we had proposed that instead of a legislation covering only the appointments, there should be a holistic legislation to constitute a National Judicial Commission which is more broad-based and representative. This Commission should deal with all matters concerned with the judiciary, appointments, transfers, considering allegations of corruption, acts of omission and commission etc. This is the urgent need today.

## **Growing Communal Violence**

All across India, communal tensions are being sharply escalated by the RSS/BJP outfits. Particularly in the run up to the Bihar elections, such tensions were intensified. During the Dussehra, Muharram festival period, reports of such tensions leading to riots in some places were reported.

Simultaneously, inflammatory campaigns such as against 'beef consumption'; campaigns decrying reservations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs with the RSS chief asking for a review of existing reservations; murderous attacks on dalit families like in Haryana etc are intensifying. Till date, the Union Government and Prime Minister Modi have not assured parliament or the country of any action against any member of the Union Cabinet or RSS leaders and BJP MPs who continue to make inflammatory speeches spreading hatred and communal disharmony.

Given such patronage by the BJP Central and state governments and the refusal by PM Modi to take any action, various outfits of the RSS are being emboldened by the day to mount such attacks that seek to undermine the secular democratic foundations of our country and create widespread insecurity amongst the religious minorities. These activities are undermining the Constitutionally guaranteed fundamental right of all Indian citizens to "life and

liberty" and their individual traits such as behaviour, dress and food habits.

### **Protests by Intellectuals**

The growing intolerance and the spread of hatred across the country has led, amongst other violent attacks, to the murders of rationalist thinkers and activists like Dhabolkar, Pansare and Kalburgi. A large number of award winning litterateurs have returned their Sahitya Academy and other recognition of excellence awards to the government in protest.

They have been joined by internationally reputed historians, film and theatre personalities. Hundreds of Indian scientists of international repute have joined this form of protest. Internationally renowned Dr. P. M. Bhargava, founder chief of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, has announced the return of the Padma Bhushan conferred upon him as a mark of protest.

These eminent personalities have shown the courage and taken this extraordinary expression of protest in the defence of the unity of the Indian people and in defence of the syncretic civilisational ethos of our country. Such action by Indian intellectuals, scientists and creative artists strengthens the resolve of all Indians who cherish the secular democratic foundations of our Republic to defend our country and people's unity.

The protests by such a large number of eminent scientists nails the lie of the RSS spokesmen and BJP's senior Cabinet Ministers that these are 'politically motivated'. The RSS-BJP, reminiscent of the fascistic methods of political bracketing and targeting are seeking to brush aside these largescale protests as ideologically motivated by the Left parties.

The RSS-BJP continue to intimidate and terrorise intellectuals who oppose their efforts to spread hatred in the name of religion. The latest are the threats issued against noted film and theatre personality Girish Karnad.

### **Left Parties Call**

The six Left parties, CPI(M), CPI, CPI(ML)-Liberation, AIFB, RSP & SUCI (C) had decided earlier to meet soon after the Bihar elections. The leaders of these parties met on December 10. Amongst other issues discussed the following was decided:

"The Left Parties will launch a nationwide campaign against the communal hate offensive spearheaded by the RSS and patronized by this BJP led government, from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 through various forms of protest".

Our Party units should get in touch with these parties at the state level and work out concretely how this week will be observed depending on the concrete situation in the respective states.

### **Intensify Popular Struggles**

Under these circumstances while we are preoccupied fully with implementing the mandate of the 21<sup>st</sup> Congress in the preparation for holding the Plenum on organisation, all our Party units must independently intensify popular struggles in the localities, depending on the concrete issues agitating the people there. The protests against the growing burdens on the people and the sharpening of communal polarisation on various issues and through various forms unleashed by the RSS/BJP must form the focus of our attention.

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