

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



### **Central Committee**

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### **Report on Certain Developments Since the 22<sup>nd</sup> Party Congress**

(Adopted at the Central Committee meeting held on June 22-24, 2018)

Certain important developments have taken place since our 22<sup>nd</sup> Party Congress.

#### **International**

##### **Inter-Imperialist Contradictions**

The political resolution adopted by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress anticipated that there will be growing inter-imperialist contradictions in the coming period. These will relate to the conflict of economic interests leading to trade wars and the USA's reneging on previously agreed international treaties. This anticipation has been resoundingly vindicated by the recent developments in the G7 Summit. Hours after issuing a joint communique, US President Donald Trump withdrew from the agreed document threatening the cohesion of the world's club of the most powerful economies.

Earlier, on May 8 the Trump administration unilaterally withdrew formally from the nuclear agreement with Iran. The other five countries which were party to this agreement – Russia, China, France, UK and Germany – have expressed their strong disagreement and indicated that they will proceed with the agreement. USA announced that it may reimpose earlier sanctions and also impose additional sanctions on Iran and others. This would mean that any country, including India, which has trade and commerce relations with Iran could also attract sanctions and penalties.

##### **Trade Wars**

The imposition of tariffs and counter-tariffs has begun. USA increased tariffs on \$ 50 billion of Chinese imports. China has retaliated in equal measure. USA has also increased tariffs on imports from Canada and other G-7 countries.

##### **Global Protests**

The crisis of neo-liberalism, as analysed by our 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress, is imposing a greater intensification of economic exploitation of the vast majority of the

working people in the world. Protest actions against such attacks continue to grow in many countries.

Militant working class actions took place in many countries starting with the May Day demonstrations. In France, railway workers, one of the largest trade unions in the country, led demonstrations against the French government's decision to amend the labour laws and impose further austerity measures. The confederation of trade unions, PAME in Greece, too led working class actions demanding an end to the austerity measures and attack on working class rights. Protests were organised in Jordan by various workers and youth organisations, together with other civil society groups protesting against the government's IMF-prescribed austerity measures, price rise and tax reforms. They demanded that the government completely overhaul its economic and social policies. In Argentina, workers led protests against the government's decision to amend labour laws and approach the IMF for financial assistance. Workers from transport and oil sector struck work in Brazil. Similarly various teacher's organisations too took to the streets against the attack on their rights in various countries like Argentina, Canada, UK and US.

### **US-DPRK Summit**

The Summit meeting between President Donald Trump and DPRK leader Kim Jong-Un took place at Singapore on June 12, 2018. The joint statement issued by both the Heads of States spoke of the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula and the immediate cessation of the US-South Korean military exercises which are a regular feature in that region.

If properly implemented and the USA continues to adhere to this commitment then this will have far reaching consequences in the entire region.

The relations between North and South Korea that thawed earlier are bound to improve further as a consequence of this summit. Preceding the Trump-Kim summit, the North-South Korean summit at Panmunjom laid the foundations for rapprochement. The groundswell of opinion favouring unification amongst people in both North and South played an important role.

This summit meeting constitutes a major victory for the DPRK and should lead to ending its international isolation that was imposed unilaterally by US imperialism for over six decades.

### **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation**

Simultaneously with the G7 summit the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting took place in Qingdao, China. The Qingdao declaration unanimously adopted, affirmed the SCOs support to the Belt & Road Initiative (BRI). In order to accommodate India, this formulation was restricted to those

members who support the BRI. Except for India all other members have joined the BRI.

India's equation with Pakistan appeared shifting at the SCO summit. Armies of both countries will now participate in joint SCO military exercises. This will be the first time in seven decades of post-independence that both India and Pakistan would be together in a joint military exercise.

The cohesion seen at the SCO comes in stark contrast to the G7 turbulence.

## **Palestine**

More than 58 Palestinians were mercilessly killed, on a single day, in firing by Israeli armed forces on people demonstrating at the Gaza border fencing demanding the return of occupied lands. These protests gained added significance in the wake of the US shifting its Embassy to Jerusalem in open defiance of international public opinion and UN resolutions. This move by the US has emboldened the Israeli government to pursue its Zionist policies with inhuman vigour.

## **Venezuela**

Nicolas Maduro was reelected the President of Venezuela in the elections held on May 20, 2018. Maduro polled 67.79 per cent of the votes cast while his nearest rival got 21.01 per cent. Despite the boycott called by the Democratic Unity Roundtable coalition, 46 per cent of the electorate cast its vote. These elections were held in the background of the overt and covert intervention by the US administration and its imposition of a slew of sanctions.

## **Cementing Military Ties with USA**

In preparation for the two plus two Indo-US dialogue (foreign and defence ministers of both countries) in Washington next month, India is negotiating the draft Communications, Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA). This provides a legal framework for the transfer of communication security equipment from the USA to India facilitating "interoperability" between Indian and US armed forces. This also links with other pro-US militaries that use such technology. Overriding some defence ministry reservations that fear US intrusive access to Indian military communication systems, the Modi government is proceeding to further strengthen its status of a subordinate ally of US imperialism. This comes after the strategic defense agreement, Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), we noted in the Party Congress Political Resolution.

## **India's Foreign Policy -- Vacillations**

Contradictorily, India is showing some signs of shifts in foreign policy positions. These are of course early indications and nothing firm can be said about it at the moment. Some signs of such shifts were visible in Prime Minister Modi's summit meetings with President Putin in Sochi and President Xi Jinping in Wuhan. They were also visible at the SCO summit as noted above. It appears that India is trying to come to terms with the growing inter imperialist conflicts in a changing world. India has decided to buy arms from Russia despite the US Congress legislation which will impose sanctions against countries that engage in significant transactions with Russian defence and intelligence agencies. Even on Iran, India's foreign minister stated that India will accept sanctions only by the United Nations and not by any individual country, indicating that its commercial dealings with Iran may continue even after US has withdrawn from the nuclear agreement.

## **National Situation**

### **Assembly Elections**

The BJP has suffered a setback in the recently held elections to the Karnataka assembly as well as the other bye-elections to the Lok Sabha and assemblies. Out of the total fourteen seats it has been able to win only two. Of the bye-elections to four Lok Sabha constituencies held last month the BJP was able to win only in Palghar (Maharashtra) in a five cornered contest. Out of the ten assembly bye-elections it could win only one. Its defeat in Kairana in Uttar Pradesh is significant as it follows its earlier defeat in the bye-elections in its sitting Phulpur and Gorakhpur Lok Sabha seats. In Kairana the RLD candidate was backed by the Congress, SP & the BSP.

### **Kerala**

Our Party has retained the Chengannur assembly constituency by a big majority of 20,956 votes, in the bye-election held following the death of our sitting legislator. As compared to 2016 both in terms of the number of votes polled and the percentage we have performed better. We got 36.37 per cent of the polled votes in 2016 while we got 44.2 cent now. Whereas the UDF performance remained more or less the same the BJP's vote share reduced from 29.26 to 23.19 per cent.

### **Maharashtra**

We contested the Palghar bye-elections which was held in the wake of the sitting BJP MP's death. For us fighting this election became important in the wake of the intense struggles that we have conducted in recent times culminating in large number of tribal peasants participating in the kisan long

march. It was a five cornered contest with the BJP, Shiv Sena, Bahujan Vikas Ahadi, Congress-NCP and the CPI(M) in the fray. The BJP won the seat and we came fourth. We secured 71,887 votes, i.e., 8.37 per cent of the polled votes as against 7.74 per cent in 2014.

## **Karnataka**

In the recently held elections to the Karnataka assembly, the Congress lost its sitting government. People's verdict delivered a hung assembly. Though the BJP with 36.2 per cent of the polled votes came out as the single largest party, the Congress-JD(S) combine which fought the elections separately together polled 56.6 per cent.

The BJP won 104 seats, the Congress 78 (it has won two bye-elections later) and the JD(S) 37+1 (pre-poll ally BSP) seats.

The BJP/RSS's attempts to cobble a majority through horse-trading were thwarted and a JD(S)-Congress government has assumed office. In the light of the obnoxious role played by the Governor in this as well in other instances over the last four years, the demand for abolition of this office needs to be reiterated.

The CPI(M) contested in 19 seats and polled 0.2 per cent of the votes polled. We got a respectable 51,697 votes in Bagepalli where we stood second. In 15 of these 19 constituencies we were placed third, fourth or fifth. Of these, in 12, we polled less than 2,000 votes. In one of these, we got less than 1,000 votes.

Unfortunately, the Left parties in the state could not come to an agreement on a common approach to be jointly taken.

## **West Bengal**

Maheshtala bye-election results show that we have been relegated to the third position from the second in the 2016 Assembly elections. This is a constituency on the southwestern outskirts of Kolkata with a sizeable Muslim minority population. There was targeted terror. In about 10% of the polling booths, our agents could not enter. While we have lost substantial amount of votes, both TMC and BJP have gained. There is a significant rise of communal polarisation. The overt and covert attempt by both the TMC and BJP indulging in competitive communalism, duly amplified by the mainstream media reinforced the impression that the electoral contest is limited between the two. This also cost us loss of support. This has been further compounded by the huge amount of money pumped in by both these two parties.

	2016	2018
TMC	93,675(47.84%)	1, 04,959(58.15%)
CPI (M)	81,223(41.48%)	30,157 (16.7%)
BJP	14,909(7.61%)	41,754 (23.13%)

### **Four Years of Modi Government**

These four years of Modi Government has seen unprecedented attacks on people's livelihood, the sharpening of communal polarization accompanied by murderous assaults on Muslims and the Dalits, severe undermining of institutions of parliamentary democracy and independent constitutional authorities. The developments that we had noted in the Political Resolution adopted by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Party Congress continue to deepen in these aspects.

The relentless rise in the prices of petroleum products apart from burdening crores of consumers is leading to a cascading inflationary spiral with the inflation rate now going up despite the weak economic activity as a consequence of demonetization and GST. During these four years, the BJP government had hiked the excise duty on petroleum products eleven times.

Agrarian distress continues to mount with no respite in the distress suicides of the farmers. Consequent to the big agitations and militant movements by the peasantry, the BJP governments in various states had made several promises but none of these have been implemented. A further round of militant actions and struggles are in the offing.

There is an alarming increase in the overall atmosphere of hate engendering violence across the country especially in BJP ruled states. Apart from the violence perpetrated by private armies in the name of 'cow protection' and 'moral policing', incidents of mob lynchings and horrendous gang rapes and murders of minors are on the rise.

### **Mazdoor-Kisan Rally and Jail Bharo**

The working class and the peasant organisations including agricultural labour have jointly given a call for a march to parliament on September 5. The Party must ensure that this programme is a big success. The Party should extend its support to the signature campaign and the joint worker-peasant jail bharo on August 9.

The *Jan Ekta Jan Adhikhar Aandolan* platform has also given calls for protests and actions on people's issues. The Party must support our mass organisations in making these programmes a success.

## **Banking Crisis**

In addition to the over 2.5 lakh crore waiving off of defaulting loans by corporates from public sector banks in the first three years of the Modi government, it is now reported that an additional Rs. 1,44,993 crores were written off. The Governor of the Reserve Bank of India has now stated that the RBI is not equipped to monitor the over 1.6 lakh branches of the banks all across the country. The RBI is a regulator of the Indian banking system and formulates the monetary policy for the country. The central government must strengthen the RBI to discharge its constitutional responsibility. It is clear that in the four years of this Modi government massive loot of people's money is taking place and the perpetrators are allowed to leave the country and the government remains virtually a spectator.

## **Assaults on Public Sector**

The erosion of the public sector continues to proceed unabated. Blue chip public sector companies like the ONGC reported an erosion of 90 per cent of their cash reserves because the central government forced it to pay a record dividend, forced purchase of government stake in other public sector companies and in the Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation that is engulfed in a scam that began when Narendra Modi was the State Chief Minister.

## **Walmart Take Over of Flipkart**

The \$ 16 billion acquisition by international retail giant Walmart of Indian e-retail Flipkart facilitates the backdoor entry of foreign capital to take over India's huge multi-crore retail trade sector.

The BJP, while in opposition had opposed FDI in retail trade, is now facilitating the entry of foreign capital through the e-commerce route. This would completely destroy India's retail trade that employs more than four crore people directly. This would further destroy the small scale and medium scale sector which is the largest provider of employment after the agricultural sector.

## **Atrocities Against Dalits**

There has been a concerted attack on organisations and individuals championing the rights of Dalits and those who had participated in the April 2 all India bandh called by various dalit organisations, particularly in BJP ruled states of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

The Party at all levels needs to actively associate with these protests and take these movements forward.

It is condemnable that despite the increasing number of attacks against Dalits that are taking place, the Central Government is refusing to promulgate an ordinance to nullify the effect of the Supreme Court judgment that rendered the provisions of the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities (POA) Act ineffective. In a complete reversal of the stand that it had taken earlier to restore the status quo ante, the Central Government refused to make a public commitment to introduce a Bill in the monsoon session of Parliament to rectify the situation.

While a Bill should be introduced in the forthcoming session of Parliament, in the interregnum an ordinance should be promulgated so that the situation existing prior to the SC judgment is restored and the sense of insecurity of these communities about their constitutional rights is addressed.

The anti-dalit nature of the BJP became more pronounced with the manner in which the Maharashtra government is dealing with the aftermath of the widespread violence against large sections of the Dalit population who had congregated in Bhima Koregaon to commemorate its anniversary. The BJP state government, instead of booking the culprits who perpetrated the violence in Bhima Koregaon, is persecuting those who are engaged in defending the victims. The RSS-BJP has coined a new terminology of “urban Maoists”. Five activists have so far been arrested under this garb for supporting the Dalit agitation. BJP state government has also invoked the dreaded UAPA. These double standards of the state government will only lead to further alienation of the Dalits.

### **UGC Circular**

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court upholding the Allahabad High Court judgment on the reservation roster for SCs & STs in teaching posts in colleges and universities, the UGC came out with a circular on March 18. According to this circular now rosters would be prepared department wise instead of taking the institute as a whole. Since departments are smaller in size, as compared to the institution as a whole, there is a genuine apprehension that there would be a delay in fulfilling the Constitutionally mandated reservations for STs, STs and OBCs. Even while the UGC and the MHRD filed Special Leave Petitions seeking a review of the court order, the UGC has not withdrawn the notification.

### **Attacks in Tripura Continue Unabated**

Ever since it assumed office in the state, the Party, the Left Front and their mass organisations have been at the receiving end of the violence perpetrated by the BJP/RSS.

Since the assembly elections four comrades have been killed; nearly 100 offices of the Party and mass organisations have been demolished apart from eviction/forcible occupation of a number of them. In the face of these unabated

attacks nearly 500 comrades have had to shift from their homes and are temporarily accommodated in camps at Party offices.

Apart from physically targetting Left cadres, even programmes and events conducted by the Party and the Left have come under attack. Even May Day celebrations were sought to be disrupted in various parts of the state. The Party run daily *Deshar Katha* has become a target with transporters carrying the paper as well as subscribers being threatened.

Pradhans, Chairmen and elected members of various local bodies including the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) are being coerced either to resign or join the BJP.

The complicity of the state administration is revealed by the fact that Party leaders are being attacked even inside the police station where they go to lodge complaints.

## **West Bengal**

The recent panchayat election held in the state was turned into a total farce by the ruling TMC. The ruling party in a pre-election rigging “won” 34 per cent of the seats without contest. During the entire election period attacks were mounted on opposition parties and their candidates through collaboration of police, state administration, state election commission and the terror brigade of the TMC. Even family members of candidates were targeted for attack. Ten comrades were martyred since the notification of the Panchayat Election.

There are all-out violent attacks on the Opposition, particularly on the CPI(M) and the Left, including implicating thousands of cadres with false cases, attacks on livelihood and properties of our cadres and their family members across the State.

At the same time the BJP-RSS is making an all-out effort to expand its base in the state. RSS shakhas have increased manifold. Competitive communalism indulged in by the TMC and the BJP is encouraging fundamentalist forces of both hues, creating a dangerous communal situation in the state.

The Party must conduct an intensive independent campaign against the attacks on people’s livelihood mounted by the BJP Central government and the TMC state government. Combined with the campaign against Hindutva communalism, a plan of action must be worked out.

## **Assam**

The proposed amendment to the Citizenship Act on the basis of religious affinity of the people is straining the already fragile unity of the people in the

state of Assam. Religious and linguistic minorities are under severe pressure due to incomplete and deliberate discrimination in the process of the updating of the national register of citizens (NRC) and the category of doubtful voters.

The unity of the people belonging to different religions, languages and ethnicity must be the foremost objective. Playing with emotive issues for electoral gains by the BJP/RSS is worsening the situation.

The Assam Accord must be strictly adhered to and its gains must be consolidated. The Party shall oppose any amendment based on the religious affiliation of the people to determine their citizenship.

### **Darjeeling Hills Situation**

Attacks on democracy, freedom of speech and State-sponsored terror is the hallmark of TMC rule in Darjeeling hills as witnessed elsewhere in West Bengal.

Autonomy guaranteed through tripartite agreements is completely eroded. While CPI(M) had advocated a higher level of autonomy under VI Schedule of the Constitution, TMC-led government is operating through handpicked henchmen. Four urban bodies and other boards are allowed to loot resources meant for development.

Protection and usage of Nepali language and development of Nepali literature and culture is seriously jeopardized. We demand recognition of Nepali-speaking people throughout the country as a linguistic minority as envisaged in our Constitution.

For restoration of peace, democracy in this hill region, withdrawal of false cases and draconian laws, a serious political dialogue process involving all stakeholders is of utmost importance. BJP-led Union Government has, apart from the TMC also, failed miserably to address these issues through the established tripartite arrangement.

### **Jammu & Kashmir: Total Failure of BJP's Political Approach**

The decision of the BJP to withdraw from the coalition government with the PDP in Jammu & Kashmir at this particular moment has the potential of creating greater political instability in the state. It signifies the total political failure of the BJP's approach in Jammu & Kashmir.

This alliance was untenable since the beginning. It was an alliance between forces that never saw eye to eye on any issue but came together in an act of sheer opportunism to share the spoils of office.

The BJP was party to all decisions of the state government during the past three years and hence cannot absolve any responsibility for contributing to a further deterioration in the state and towards deepening the alienation of the people.

The BJP being a coalition partner of the state government and holding office in the central government had promised the people of Kashmir: a) immediate introduction of confidence building measures; and b) immediate starting of a political process by initiating a comprehensive dialogue with all stakeholders in the valley. Neither of these two promises which were publicly announced by the Union Home Minister after the all party delegation visited the valley in September 2016 have been fulfilled. If they were sincerely followed up the situation could have improved.

The BJP central government unilaterally announced, first, the ceasefire and later, its withdrawal. It is during this period that the gunning down of the Editor of Rising Kashmir, Shujaat Bhukhari and a soldier Aurangazeb took place.

Under these circumstances, plunging the state into greater uncertainty and the impending imposition of Governor's rule may not help in addressing the issue of the deepening alienation of the people.

The central government should implement the assurances it had made earlier to urgently enforce confidence building measures and start a political process through dialogue with all stakeholders. The Central Government must initiate talks with Pakistan to ensure cross border terrorism is stopped by a mutually agreed ceasefire along the Line of Control. The situation in Jammu & Kashmir cannot be allowed to deteriorate further.

With Governor's rule now imposed, there is a widespread apprehension that the RSS-BJP will embark on a more hardline position under the pretext of combating terrorism. There are apprehensions of growing dangers of human rights abuses and violations of democratic rights of the people. The effort appears to be to sharpen communal polarisation not only in Jammu & Kashmir but to aid the process of consolidating the Hindutva communal vote bank elsewhere in the country in the run-up to the general elections.

### **Killings in Thoothukudi**

Thirteen people were killed while they were taking out a protest march against the expansion plans of the Sterlite Copper plant in Thoothukudi, Tamilnadu. Over a hundred have been reported injured. The brutality of the state police is revealed by the fact that many of those killed and injured have bullet injuries on their heads and faces.

The protests arose because of the inadequate response of the state administration to the genuine apprehensions of the people concerning air, water and ground contamination.

The Sterlite Copper, a unit of Vedanta Limited, was established in Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, despite non-fulfillment of requisite safety norms. The failure to regulate and monitor the use of various toxic chemicals and metals at the plant soon led to contamination of air, soil and water sources in and around the plant. Incidents of toxic gas releases were reported as early as May, July and August 1997.

The one-man enquiry commission set-up by the state is inadequate to probe the issue in its entirety. A court monitored CBI enquiry must be instituted into these killings and to comprehensively enquire into the lapses and how permissions were granted and the failure of the regulators to monitor the use of toxic chemicals and metals. The guilty should be punished appropriately. A compensation of rupees one crore to families whose members have died in the firing and at least Rs. 10 lakhs to those injured must be announced. The Sterlite Plant which has now been closed down must not be allowed to restart.

## **Judiciary**

The interference by the executive into the judiciary had taken unprecedented proportions with the four senior-most judges after the Chief Justice holding a press conference. Subsequently after the Party Congress we had noted that the government is not clearing the appointment of Justice K M Joseph despite the unanimous recommendation of the collegium. The independence and integrity of the judiciary thus is seriously undermined by this BJP government. These developments, once again, vindicate our demand for establishing a National Judicial Commission. This will deal with the appointments, transfers of judges and complaints of commission and omission, amongst other matters related to the judiciary.

## **CC Calls**

The Central Committee calls upon the entire Party to extend full support to the countrywide Kisan-Mazdoor jail bhara stir on August 9 and the joint Mazdoor-Kisan rally and march to parliament on September 5.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress Political Resolution has spelt out the urgent electoral reforms required. It has also called for propagating the Party's stand for proportional representation with the partial list system. The Polit Bureau shall prepare a document on electoral reforms which should be used for campaign and to conduct seminars and discussions with other parties and forces. This campaign should be conducted in the next three months.

The Central Committee decided to hold a national level protest against the murder of democracy in the state of West Bengal and Tripura in the month of July.

The Central Committee decided that on the grave situation emerging in Jammu & Kashmir a national level convention will be organized for popular interventions to restore peace and normalcy in the state.

The Party must strengthen the links with the dalit protests that are occurring all over the country.

The Party at all levels must immediately identify the basic problems before the people and organize movements and actions on specific demands at all levels. Through this the Party must strengthen its links with the Indian people and implement the direction of the mass line given by the Kolkata Organisational Plenum.

### **Forthcoming General Elections**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress Political Resolution says: “*Appropriate electoral tactics to maximize the pooling of the anti-BJP votes should be adopted based on the above political line of the Party.*”

The next Central Committee meeting shall discuss and work out the electoral tactics for the 2019 general elections as directed by the political line of the Political Resolution.

In the meanwhile, the state committees should discuss this issue and send their proposals to the Central Committee before the next meeting that would regularly be held in September. A meeting of the Left parties in the state should be convened to discuss and efforts must be made to arrive at a common approach.

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