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# COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)



## Central Committee

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### Report on Political Developments

*(Adopted by the Central Committee Meeting held on October 6-8, 2018 at  
New Delhi)*

### International Situation

#### Global Capitalist Crisis

As anticipated by us in our 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress, the global capitalist systemic crisis continues to intensify. The IMF *World Economic Outlook Report* released in October 2018 reconfirms our assessment. The report covering the economies of 180 countries says that the majority of the countries are yet to reach the pre-2008 crisis output levels. It has also pointed out the alarming increase in income inequalities testifying to the fact that profit maximization is being undertaken through intensified exploitation. The report points out that employment has fallen as investment levels in the majority of the countries was 25 per cent below the pre-crisis levels. But profits are rising despite growing unemployment due to increase in the levels of productivity. Though capitalism prevents the full realization of human potential due to its production relations that fetter growth of productive forces, this is temporarily being achieved through the replacement of human labour with technology, particularly the adoption of artificial intelligence in the production process. This is a tendency that is likely to increase further in the future, but unsustainable.

Confirming our assessment of the economic crisis, the financial meltdown of 2008 has led to a situation where the banking system and the financial system is in the midst of a continued crisis. The IMF report says that “government debt-GDP ratio stands at 52 percent, up from 36 percent before the crisis; central bank balance sheets, particularly in advanced economies, are several multiples of the size they were before the crisis”.

This confirms the fact that neo-liberalism is in a severe crisis and no amount of reforms within the capitalist system can provide relief to the people.

As we have been suggesting, it is only through the increases in government spending and public sector investment in developing the socio-economic infrastructure that can lead to the growth of employment and purchasing power among the people. This generates higher levels of domestic demand. The IMF appreciates such an approach by People's Republic of China and the stimulus package it had employed to weather the crisis. The IMF report also warns against the dangers of adoption of protectionist policies while noting the growing opposition among the people to neo-liberalism's trajectory.

The US economy is showing signs of increased employment and marginally higher output growth. This, Trump projects as delivering on his electoral promises to the white Americans that he will improve their livelihood. However, this is being done, through the growth of xenophobia, racial discrimination, prevention of immigration and drastically reducing the entry of foreign skilled professionals through visa restrictions. The trade wars have been resulting in a policy of protectionism for domestic industries. All these may produce some temporary benefits but are unsustainable in the long run, as noted above.

## **Trade Wars**

As noted by us in the last Central Committee meeting, the trade war between US and China is intensifying, adversely affecting the global economy. Having imposed higher tariffs on Chinese imports valued at \$50 billion earlier, the USA is now imposing tariffs of over \$200 billion worth of Chinese exports. China has retaliated by imposing tariffs on 527 categories of US products worth \$110 billion. This escalating trade war between the world's two largest economies is adversely affecting global economic growth and the IMF has warned that the escalating tariff war between the US and the rest of the world could cost the global economy a loss of \$430 billion and the global output can be 0.5 per cent below the current projections by 2020.

The countries of the EU and UK are planning and considering options to protect their economies from this escalating trade war. This will create further tensions and conflicts within the imperialist camp.

## **Growing Protests**

During the period since the last Central Committee meeting militant protest actions against neo-liberal offensive and intensification of exploitation is taking place in many parts of the world. Russia has witnessed large demonstrations against the pension reforms being pushed by Putin, in Greece the working class is in militant protest actions against the Syriza government's austerity policies, in Romania huge protest actions on the issue of low wages and high level corruption was met with police brutality injuring severely hundreds of protesters. The German working class including pilots struck work demanding better pay and working conditions.

The most militant protest actions are continuing in Latin America. Big people's actions have taken place in Argentina, Mexico and the Dominican Republic apart from Venezuela. In all Latin American countries, US engineered right-wing offensive is on the rise. Elections in Brazil are due on October 7. Massive mobilization by the right and the anti-right forces is currently taking place in the run up to the elections.

## **Worsening US-China Relations**

Apart from the trade war, the US has now imposed sanctions against Chinese military for purchase of Sukhoi SU-355 fighter jets and S-400 surface to air missile systems from Russia. China has made it clear that it has not joined the US sanctions against Russia for the latter's role in Ukraine. China immediately summoned the US Ambassador, recalled its naval chief from a visit to the US and postponed military talks.

The US pursuing its policy of "containment of China" is selling arms and military equipment to Taiwan. A US warship in the waters of South China sea had to be warned by a Chinese naval vessel destroyer and sent into international waters.

## **Sanctions on Iran**

After withdrawing from the multi-national nuclear deal with Iran, the US has imposed sanctions. The first set has already come into force from August 7 and the second set which seeks to cripple the Iranian economy through the restrictions on the sale of oil and petrochemical products is to come into effect from November 4. These sanctions have been imposed by the USA despite the IAEA international team of inspectors concluding that Iran is complying with the nuclear accord.

Succumbing to the US pressures on India to stop oil imports from Iran by November, the Modi government has imported less than half the amount of oil from Iran in the first two week of September.

### **Inter-Imperialist Contradictions**

This unilateral US action, as noted by us in our 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress and the last Central Committee are intensifying the conflicts between the US and the EU. EU leaders insisted that they would resist the sanctions. However, many European companies are slowly withdrawing from trade with Iran under pressure of the US sanctions. EU governments are hoping to neutralize the effects of US sanctions through a ‘blocking statute’ aimed at shielding European business working in Iran from these sanctions. The International Court of Justice unanimously ordered the USA to lift sanctions on humanitarian goods to Iran. At the recent U.N. General Assembly session, Donald Trump has reported to have said that Israel, Saudi Arabia and India are the ‘best friends’ of the USA.

### **North & South Korea Talks**

The Presidents of both the DPRK and ROK met for another round of talks in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang. A South Korean President visited the North Korean capital for the first time since October 2007. These talks resulted in the establishment of a buffer zone on the frontline, suspended artillery drills and field maneuvers and to withdraw eleven border guard posts by the year end. They also agreed to suspend firing of artillery and maritime drills in the Yellow sea as well as No Fly zones in border areas to prevent accidental plan clashes. South Korea’s largest corporates accompanied the President to strengthen economic ties between the two. Both Koreas also agreed to send a joint Korean team to the 2020 Olympics and make a joint bid for hosting the 2032 Olympic games.

These agreements are being seen to lay the basis for another round of US-DPRK presidential summit.

### **Israel: Zionist Offensive**

The ultra right wing Israeli government has enacted a new “Jewish nation State Law” rendering all Palestinians of their rights and to treat them as second class citizens. This law constitutionally validates discrimination and openly declares Jewish supremacy thus encouraging the establishment of Jewish settlements as a “national value”. Such Jewish settlements have already driven away hundreds of

thousands of Palestinians from their homes and homeland. This law openly declares that the “unified and complete city of Jerusalem is the capital of Israel”. This is a complete negation of UN resolutions and a rejection of the accepted two-State solution. Israel now refuses to accept the 1967 borders or East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine thereby denying the right for the existence of a Palestinian State itself.

While thousands of Israelis have come out to the streets protesting against the passage of this law, the Modi government went along with the USA as one of the major countries in not condemning this discriminatory law.

## **Venezuela**

The ultra-right wing forces along with the US-backed opposition groups made an assassination attempt on the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro. The US has intensified its attacks to destabilise Venezuela and its elected government. This is part of its larger strategy to regain its hegemonic control over Latin America. Largescale protests in Venezuela and other countries in opposition to such US interference in the affairs of other countries are building up.

## **Syria**

A far-reaching agreement was brought about at Sochi between Russia and Turkey regarding Syria on September 18. This relates to the *Idlib* province, the last major stronghold of the rebel and jihadist groups who have been trying to overthrow President Assad for the past seven years. This civil war has claimed more than 3,50,000 people in Syria during these seven years.

The Sochi agreement creates a demilitarized buffer zone in Idlib. The agreement entails the withdrawal of all fighters against the Syrian government as well as the heavy weaponry including tanks, rocket launch systems etc operated by the rebel groups from this demilitarized zone by October 10, 2018. This demilitarized buffer zone seeks to separate the government and rebel forces. Turkey has agreed to stand guarantee to the agreement on behalf of the rebels. If Syria succeeds to take control of *Idlib* then the rebels would be left with few scattered pockets across Syria signaling their military defeat. Another outcome of this agreement is that it prevents the possible air attack by the USA on *Idlib* and once again demonstrates that the USA has now very little role for maneuvering in Syria.

## **Brexit**

The talks for UK's exit from the EU following the Brexit referendum has run into severe difficulties. The European Union refuses to accept the terms laid down by the Tory government of UK and has firmly said that the UK cannot "have the cake and eat it too". It is uncertain how this will proceed. This is already causing a domestic political turmoil in the UK with demands being raised for another referendum. There are also demands for the resignation of Prime Minister Theresa May and the Tory government. Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party have in their recent national convention worked out an alternative plan to be presented to the EU for negotiations on the terms of UK's withdrawal from the EU.

## **Pakistan Elections**

In the recent elections in Pakistan, Nawaz Sharief was defeated by former captain of Pakistan Cricket team Imran Khan who now heads the Party PTI. He has announced Pakistan's intentions for resuming talks with India. The Modi government however has said that till cross border terrorism is put an end to talks cannot resume.

## **Two Plus Two Talks**

After many postponements the foreign and defence ministers of USA and India have met and the COMCASA that we noted in our last meeting was formally signed. This reflects the further deepening of India's strategic relationship with the USA and cements India's stature as a junior strategic ally of the USA. This agreement is an attack on India's sovereignty. It will sanction the opening up of Indian military installations for US inspections, their monitoring the equipment of US military supplies and material. USA can now monitor communications of the Indian military. This will put India's military and the armed forces completely at the dependence of US technology and will render the arms already purchased and being used by India from countries like Russia becoming incompatible.

## **Indo-Russia Defence Deal**

India and Russia signed the Rs. 40,000 crore defence deal. Accordingly India will buy five advanced S-400 Triumf surface to air missile squadrons. This is the biggest defence deal after over two decades with Russia. This would be delivered from the beginning of 2020.

Nine other agreements were arrived at. In the area of space cooperation, Russia promised to launch two Indians into space in 2020. In the economic sphere Russia has shown interest in collaboration in the railways and civilian aircraft manufacturing sectors. Bilateral trade is said to increase to \$30 billion by 2025 from \$10.7 billion in 2017-18.

The Modi government has also accepted the US proposal for a quadrilateral military alliance between US, Japan, Australia and India. This will cement India as a major defence and strategic partner of the USA's global security strategy.

This will impact beyond military ties. India is already succumbing to US pressures, as noted above to implement US sanctions on Iran. The US has demanded that India buy more American goods apart from arms and relax all restrictions on US investments in India. India, however, has not been given any compensatory concessions on increased tariffs on steel and aluminum products or relaxation of visa norms for Indians.

### **Vacillations in Foreign Policy**

As we noted in the last Central Committee meeting, despite the cementing of the junior strategic ally status with the USA, Indian foreign policy in the background of growing inter-imperialist conflicts and Russian assertion continues to show signs of vacillation. India has declared that it will not accept the US sanctions on Iran and will continue to buy oil from it despite reducing the quantum. The Indo-Russia defence agreement and large scale purchases are being seen in the USA as a affront to its own military priorities to deal with both Russia and China. This deal comes despite US threats that any arms purchase from Russia would invite sanctions through the Counter America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA). India is seeking a waiver of this act for this deal. We shall have to wait and see what will be the US response to this.

## **National Situation**

### **Our Strongholds**

#### **Tripura**

Party condemns the fascistic attacks against the CPI(M) which are continuing in Tripura since the assumption of office by the BJP-IPFT government. 96 per cent of the local body bye-elections were won uncontested by the BJP as the opposition

candidates were violently prevented from filing their nominations. This is the real face of the RSS/BJP.

The cancellation of the registration of the CPI(M) associated newspaper and the second largest circulated daily, *Deshar Katha*, is an authoritarian attack on the freedom of the press. While condemning this, the Central Committee noted the widespread opposition growing on this issue and demands that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting under the Modi government must immediately rescind this order.

## **Kerala**

**Flood Relief:** Our Party places on record its high sense of appreciation of the manner in which the LDF government, the Party and the people of Kerala rose as one to tackle the damage caused by the recent devastating floods. The Kerala LDF government is not merely seeking to rehabilitate the victims but to rebuild a New Kerala. The Central Committee appreciated the fact that people across the country and abroad have, cutting across all political lines, enthusiastically donated to the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund.

**Sabarimala Verdict:** Our Party welcomes the judgment of the Supreme Court on entry of women of all ages to the Sabarimala temple. This verdict upholds equal rights for women.

The BJP and the RSS are opposing this judgment and are conducting an agitation in Kerala against it. The all India Congress leadership had welcomed the Supreme Court judgment as a progressive step. But surprisingly, the Kerala unit of Congress is opposing the implementation of the verdict and is protesting along with the BJP. By such a stance the Congress is only helping the RSS-BJP combine's campaign against secular-democratic values and the right to equality enshrined in the Constitution.

## **West Bengal**

Our Party and the other Left parties, in spite of incessant attacks and terror, are on constant move. Agitational programmes continue on each and every issue. In the last four months, series of programmes of the Party and the mass fronts conducted state wide drew wide response of the people. All the programmes are spread over across the state.

The intensive programme of agitation through Bengal Platform of Mass Organizations extended from September 11 to October 3, covered all the areas, both rural and urban, touched most of the polling booths of West Bengal on people's issues apart from defending democracy and secularism.

### **Deepening Economic Crisis**

**Price Rise:** The Indian economy is experiencing one of the severest crisis in recent times. The overwhelming rise in the prices of petroleum products coupled with the unprecedented fall in the value of Indian rupee is having a double whammy impact on the Indian economy. The Indian rupee has never fallen to such low levels since independence having now fallen to Rs. 74 to a dollar on October 5.

The rise in prices of petroleum products is devastating the livelihood of the vast majority of the Indian people. The consequent cascading inflationary impact is worsening people's woes.

The Modi government reduced the prices of petrol and diesel by Rs. 1.50 per litre. The oil companies are additionally required to reduce Re.1. This is a pittance of relief to the people. This, coupled with a reduction in the prices announced in October 2017 of Rs. 2 per litre, is now claimed that the government has reduced Rs. 3.50 per litre. The reality is that since this Modi government took over, the excise duties on petrol was hiked by Rs. 12 per litre and on diesel by Rs. 14 per litre. If the pre-2014 levels of excise duties were to be there, petrol today would cost Rs. 70 per litre, instead of around Rs. 90 a litre. So this announcement hardly provides much relief and is clearly a pre-election sop in view of the impending Assembly elections.

**Agrarian Distress:** The agrarian distress continues to deepen. Kisans' suicides continue as they are unable to escape from crippling debt burdens. The Modi government refuses to implement the promises they made in their 2014 Election Manifesto and the Prime Minister's speeches on agrarian issues. Kisan agitations are on the rise all across the country demanding relief. These are being met with repression as the recent police action against protesting kisans in the outskirts of Delhi.

Big mobilisations and actions have been undertaken by our trade union, kisan, agricultural labour front activists, which resulted in the historic jail bhara struggle on August 9 and the Mazdoor-Kisan Sangharsh Rally before Parliament on September 5 (Details are given in the Work Report of the Polit Bureau).

Following the earlier protest actions in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and the Kisan Long March in Maharashtra, BJP state governments had given assurances and in Maharashtra, a written agreement was drawn up between the Maharashtra state government and the AIKS. None of these assurances by any of these state governments have been implemented. Fresh round of kisan agitational movements are in the offing (Details and the proposed actions of the Jan Ekta Jan Adhikar Andolan are given in the Work Report of the Polit Bureau).

Despite all the sloganeering and claims, agricultural growth rate fell from 5.2 per cent between 2011-12 and 2014-15 to 2.5 per cent under the Modi government from 2014-15 to 2017-18. The prices for agricultural produce have fallen as per the Wholesale Price Index from 11.07 to minus 4.04 between July 2013 and August 2018. This is the truth of the agricultural sector despite the Modi government's grand announcements of doubling farm incomes initially by 2019, now shifted to 2022.

**Rising Unemployment:** The Modi government promised to create 10 crore new jobs during its five years. Now the Modi government is working overtime to conceal data on employment, which is showing a massive fall in employment levels. The quarterly employment survey has not been released for the last two quarters. The annual Employment-Unemployment Survey (EUS) for 2016-17 has not been released, 18 months after the financial year ended. The 2015-16 EUS report found a rise in unemployment rate for people above fifteen years from 4.9 per cent in 2013-14 to 5 per cent in 2014-15. A study conducted by the Azim Premji University, '*State of Working India 2018*' has stated that unemployment in India is now at its highest compared to the past 20 years. The numbers of under employed have also swelled. As a consequence, India today was ranked at No. 158 among 186 countries, according to a study released by University of Washington in the human capital global rankings. Our youth front is preparing to hold a big demonstration in Delhi on November 3 on the slogan "*Where is my job?*".

### **Crony Capitalism, Mega Corruption**

**Rafale Deal: A Mega Scam:** The Rafale deal has ripped open the veil that covered the corruption and crony capitalism within the Modi government. The statements made by former French President, Francois Hollande, have exposed the lies and the cover-up attempt of the Modi government. This has countered the stand taken by the Modi government that it had no role to play in the choice of the Indian partner, by the corporate Dassault. The reason for scrapping the earlier contract

which had gone through a lengthy process of bidding and evaluation is not yet explained.

The arbitrary action by the Prime Minister has also done great damage to national security. The Air Force was desperately short of squadrons of fighter jets had placed a request for 126 fighters, which has been drastically reduced to 36 in the fresh agreement signed by Modi. Also, the work-share agreement with the public sector Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd has been scrapped and Anil Ambani's Reliance Ambani Defence, which has no track record of defence production, has been made the partner. This apart, the price of the fighter plane is double of what it was in the original contract.

Thus, this is a scam of gigantic proportions, which the Modi government is desperately but unsuccessfully trying to cover up. Nothing less than a Joint Parliamentary Committee can be accepted to go into the entire gamut of the issues and fix responsibility for the loss to the exchequer and compromising the security of the country.

**Corporate Loan Defaults:** It is by now well-established that the Modi government has patronized big corporates for taking loans from the banks and leaving the country without repaying it. The government says that they are not responsible, after having facilitated such loot of people's money. According to RBI data, between April 2014 and 2018, the country's 21 State-owned banks ended up by writing off Rs. 3,165 lakh crores while they recovered Rs. 44,900 crore – less than one-seventh of the total loan waivers. This waiver is more than twice the budgetary allocations on health, education and social protection for 2018-19 at Rs. 1.38 lakh crores. This unprecedented loot for chosen corporate favourites of this government has put the entire banking and financial sector in a crisis. The latest in this being the takeover of the Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) company. While the corporate favourites of this government can get such huge loan waivers and patronization to leave the country, the farmers are denied any loan waiver, further deepening the agrarian distress.

**Coal Auctions:** The Modi government had tom-tomed the auction of coal mines as a great success and announced in 2016 that the government has got Rs. 2 lakh crore because of his "corruption-free politics". Three and a half years later, it turns out that the coal auctions and have got a mere Rs. 5,684 crore, less than 3 per cent of what Modi claimed.

Having institutionalized political corruption through the changes made by this government of electoral bonds, such crony capitalism is becoming the conduit for funds for the ruling party with no questions being asked and no one being accountable.

### **Ayushman Bharat: A Cruel Joke**

With great fanfare PM Modi announced Ayushman Bharat scheme as the world's largest health insurance scheme. This is a hoax. This scheme consists of two parts. One is the creation of 1.5 lakh "health and welfare centres". These are simply old sub-centres of the primary health centres (PHC) being given a new name. Each of the 1.53 lakh sub-centres was allocated a meagre Rs. 1,200 in the 2018-19 budget. The other part is the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) which again is the dressing up of the existing Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) in new clothes.

This so-called new scheme is supposed to cover 10 crore families (50 crore people) and provide insurance cover upto Rs. 5 lakh per family per annum, or, Rs. 1 lakh per capita. The budgetary allocation, however, is a meagre Rs. 2,000 crores which translates to Rs. 40 per person per year. If the expenditures to be made by the state governments are added (60 per cent Centre and 40 per cent states), then the per capita provision comes to a dismal Rs. 67 for one year.

With low finance allocations for the scheme, it is clear that this is meant to achieve two objectives, the first is privatisation. In many BJP ruled states already the PPP model has been adopted under the scheme. The insurance companies are to function as the service providers. This twin objective is the privatisation of public health via insurance companies and the abdication of the role of the State to provide universal health care to the people.

### **Atrocities against Dalits**

The attacks on the dalits, both by private armies and by the State machinery have intensified.

Following the Bhima-Koregan violence, many dalits across the country have been slapped with false cases. On the other hand, the culprits who unleashed violence against the Dalits are being exonerated. The Maharashtra BJP-Shiv Sena government has withdrawn at least six cases against the main perpetrators of this violence.

The anti-dalit stand of the RSS-BJP is also visible in the nationwide attacks on dalits after the April 2 bandh call. The dalits were victims of this violence, losing their lives, but no action is being taken against those who have conducted these violent attacks, even though evidence of their activities is publicly available.

While condemning this systematic violence and hatred being unleashed against the dalits, the CPI(M) must strengthen the bonds of solidarity with the dalit protests all over the country.

### **SC/ST Promotions: SC Verdict**

The Supreme Court has said that for promotions of SC-ST category employees, a creamy layer should be introduced like in the case of OBCs. We continue to maintain that the SC-ST reservations are a commitment of the Indian Constitution in recognition of the centuries long social oppression suffered by these sections. Many manifestations of such social oppression continue to linger on even today.

Under these circumstance, this verdict must be opposed. The Central government must take remedial measures through Parliament to overcome the implications of this verdict.

### **Jammu & Kashmir**

Our Central Committee member and elected MLA in Jammu & Kashmir, Comrade Mohd. Yusuf Tarigami, has impleaded in the appeal against the repeal of Section 35A of the Constitution which is the backbone of Article 370 and the promised autonomy for Jammu & Kashmir.

Despite the boycott announced by major parties like the National Conference, PDP and the CPI(M), the Jammu & Kashmir Governor is going ahead with the elections to the local bodies. The first phase is taking place today. In the run-up to the elections, violence has already claimed the lives of two workers of the National Conference.

The Modi government is attempting to use these disturbances that it is fomenting in Jammu & Kashmir to aid its campaign of communal polarization all across the country.

## **Attacks on Non-Gujaratis**

The violence unleashed in the state of Gujarat against people hailing from Northern states, particularly Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, who are working there is condemnable. Also condemnable is the rape of a child allegedly by a migrant worker. This violence has led to an exodus of thousands of workers and their families fearing for their lives. The BJP state government in Gujarat, instead of containing this violence, is allowing these tensions to foment.

The *Thakore Sena* in the state, is rousing passions which is adding to the insecurity of the non-Gujaratis. This is reprehensible.

## **Aadhar Judgement**

We continue to maintain that Aadhar should not be mandatory for any welfare scheme. The reality is that lakhs of poor are being denied universal rights in the name of non-authentication of Aadhar. This renders vulnerable crores of poor people. Unfortunately, the majority judgment of the Supreme Court continues to maintain Aadhar as mandatory.

The benefits for the poor and marginalized sections can only be reached if Aadhar is explicitly made non-mandatory. The struggle on this score must continue.

The apex court has ruled that private companies cannot have access to data and Aadhar is not required for bank accounts, mobile connections, admissions to educational institutions and entrance exams. While this may provide some protection to right to privacy, a major problem arises when this central government has privatized and outsourced to private companies many government responsibilities. Such companies already have access to Aadhar data. This is violative of the right to privacy – a fundamental right - ruled by the apex court itself.

The minority judgment of Justice Chandrachud is welcome. He has held that the passing of the Aadhar legislation in Parliament as a money bill is a fraud on the Constitution.

## **Triple Talaq**

The ordinance on triple talaq promulgated by the central government is uncalled for and is motivated by considerations other than that of the welfare of Muslim women.

The triple talaq Bill is pending in the Rajya Sabha and requires a full discussion including reference to a Select Committee. The ordinance is an undemocratic step bypassing parliament.

The triple talaq form of divorce has already been declared illegal by the Supreme Court judgment. The legislation regarding this has made a civil wrong into a criminal offence with the prescription of maximum three years punishment. This is an ill-conceived measure which will not help the interests of the affected women. There are other flaws in the Bill which need to be rectified.

This ordinance is designed to serve the political interests of the ruling Party and cannot be accepted. Parliament should adopt a revised legislation in this regard.

## **Scrapping Section 377**

The Supreme Court verdict striking down Section 377 of the IPC thus decriminalizing same sex consensual relations between adults is welcome. This constitutes a historic victory for the LGBT communities who have suffered humiliation, bigotry and even violence at the hands of retrograde forces.

We have always supported the struggle against Section 377 which the Supreme Court has rightly held to be arbitrary and discriminatory.

## **Authoritarian Attacks**

The authoritarian attacks by this Modi government are on the rise. The principles of federalism, a fundamental feature of our Constitution, are being undermined. The rights of the democratically elected state governments are being eroded and Centre-State relations have deteriorated. All institutions of Parliamentary democracy, the judiciary, statutory authorities like the Election Commission, CAG, CBI are sought to be utilized for the partisan interest of the Modi government. The control over the media and the dissemination of disinformation is on the rise.

The judiciary in the country has provided some relief to various intellectuals and social activists who were arrested by the police on the charges of abetting the Bhima-Koregaon violence. Some of those who were arrested were protesting against the police harassment of dalit rights and have taken up their legal cases in the courts. On false charges, these people were arrested and the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) was invoked. These concerned activists whom the BJP dubs as “Urban Naxals” are taking legal remedies. Such indiscriminate arrests constitute a brazen attack on democratic rights and civil liberties and shows the dangers of authoritarianism inherent with the BJP/RSS.

### **Worker-Peasant United Actions**

An important development in this period has been the united actions of the working class and the peasantry which was seen in the August 9 Jail Bharo struggle and in the September 5 rally at Delhi. Over five lakh peasants and workers participated in the picketing and court arrests across the country on August 9. This struggle was conducted jointly by the AIKS and CITU. This was followed by the September 5 Mazdoor-Kisan Sangharsh Rally called jointly by the CITU, AIKS and AIAWU. The demands charter of the rally encompassed the major demands of all the three basic classes.

The big mobilization with more than one and a half lakh people participating was a significant step in the efforts to forge worker-peasant unity. This effort must be carried forward through united actions at all levels.

### **CC Calls**

- 1) During this period, all our fronts have been active in mobilizing people on various issues affecting them. These struggles must be further intensified. Party must provide all support to mass fronts in these protest actions. Newer sections of the people are coming out in protest. These sections must be mobilized.

Hailing the significant mobilisation by the workers, peasants and agricultural workers as reflected in the August 9 jail bhara and in the September 5 march to parliament action, the September 10 All India ‘hartal’ called by the Left parties, Party must extend its support to the November 28 to 30 kisan long march; the November 3 call of the youth to march to Delhi demanding from the Modi government “where is my job”; the calls of the *jan ekta jan*

*adhikar aandolan* on pressing people's issues; and the all India strike call given by the central trade unions on January 8 & 9, 2019.

- 2) Despite the recent reduction in the prices of petrol and diesel, these high prices continue to have cascading inflationary impact. The Party units must conduct protest struggles against price rise in an effective manner.
- 3) All Party units must conduct an intense campaign exposing corruption of the Modi government and crony capitalism. These must highlight the Rafale scam and the corporate loan defaults and how these scamsters are patronized by the Modi government.
- 4) Campaign must be conducted against the authoritarian attacks by the Modi government, in particular against the progressive daily *Desharkatha* in Tripura, and attacks on the freedom of expression by the media in general. This campaign must also include the indiscriminate arrests of social activists and lawyers who are taking up matters connected with oppression against the dalits and democratic rights in general. This campaign must highlight the attacks on principles of federalism enshrined in the Constitution and the deteriorating Centre-State relations.
- 5) Along with the Left parties, Party shall observe the second anniversary of the demonetization in November through protest actions all over the country.
- 6) Party will strengthen further the campaigns against communalism along with the Left, democratic and secular forces.

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