



COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)

Central Committee

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Report on Certain Political Developments (Adopted at the Central Committee Meeting October 2-4, 2019, New Delhi)

International

Global Capitalist Crisis

The global capitalist economy continues to be sluggish. There are no signs of any meaningful recovery since the global financial meltdown and the consequent economic crisis that began in 2008.

The **IMF's World Economic Outlook** Report, July 2019, has lowered its Global Growth Forecast and has said that growth will be now be 3.2 per cent for the entire 2019. The main reason for this is lack of demand particularly for consumer durables. Accordingly, global trade also remains stagnant. Global trade volumes have declined by 0.5 per cent in the first quarter of 2019 after dropping below 2 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2018.

As far as India is concerned, the IMF has cut the growth rate by 0.3 per cent because of "weaker than expected outlook for domestic demand".

The **World Bank** in its **Global Economic Prospects** June 2019 had downgraded global growth to 2.6 per cent due to weaker than expected international trade and investment. The global trade growth in 2019 has been the weakest since the global financial crisis. The global industrial production slowed down to 0.6 per cent in June, its lowest since the global economic crisis. This report also points out the contraction in global trade by -1.4 per cent in June.

Trade War: Both the reports have highlighted that the ongoing trade war between US and China which is not showing any signs of resolution despite 13 rounds of high level economic and trade consultations. This has adversely impacted global growth. On September 1, 2019, USA imposed a new 15 per cent tariff of nearly \$300 billion worth of imports from China. Further additional tariffs are to come into effect from December 15, 2019. In response, China has imposed tariffs between 5 to 10 per cent on \$75 billion worth of US products. China has declared to impose further tariffs mid-December of \$185 billion worth of US goods.

Global Protests

The attacks on the working people across the globe as a consequence of this global capitalist crisis is being met with resistance against these policies of austerity and dilution of the hard won social security rights by the working class. Women are protesting in various countries against increased sexual violence. Students, especially children have joined the massive protest rallies across the globe against the failure of the governments to fight climate change and demanding a better world to live in.

USA: A huge working class struggle took place in General Motors, one of the world's largest automobile manufacturers. The working class was demanding new wage agreement and better working conditions when the company is showing increasing profits. **Brazil:** Thousands of students were joined by people in the large scale protest actions against the Brazilian government's attacks on education. The rightwing fascist government decided to rewrite history, change the curriculum and limit access to education. **Argentina:** Working class led protests against fall in living standards, attacks on workers rights and demanding better pay and working conditions are rocking Argentina. **Ecuador:** Women led protests against the anti-abortion legislation introduced by the government and also growing gender violence. Indigenous people are protesting against the eviction from native lands and degradation of the environment.

Europe: Nationwide mass protests were held in **Spain** against sexual abuse and violence on women, demanding changes in legislation. The yellow vests protests are continuing every week in **France**. They are now joined by various sections of the working class protesting against attacks on wages and pensions. Doctors and health workers, lawyers, airline and other transport workers, fire fighters struck work against the government's reforms that massively raised workers' pension contributions and against changes in the retirement age. **Greece** saw huge rallies across the country against the newly elected government's continuing with austerity policies. These protests were led by PAME the militant trade union front.

Asia: Teachers in **Jordan** continue with their protests against the government's refusal to increase their wages and ensure better working conditions. Big protests have erupted in **West Papua** against **Indonesia** seeking independence. Students boycotted classes against racist attacks and joined the movement. More than 30 people have died in firing on peaceful demonstrators.

Africa: Protests have once again started in **Egypt** with huge crowds assembling in various cities including capital Cairo calling for the resignation of President Abdel Fattah el-Sissii. Sissii had presided over the brutal crackdown on opposition forces, dissidents and scores of journalists were jailed. He banned protests in Egypt which is now being defied by these

actions. Protests in **Algeria** forced President Abdel Aziz Bouteflika to resign. The protests continue even after the resignation demanding the dismantling of the old system. People are demanding more democracy, liberties, rule of law and a crackdown on corruption. Big protests in **Sudan** forces the military junta to accept the demands of the people and release political prisoners. Many top leaders of the Communist Party of Sudan, including its General Secretary were arrested by the government as they were leading the protests. All sections, women, professionals, students under a broad platform organised protests demanding the democratic transition to a popular government. In **Zimbabwe** too there were large working class protests against cut in wages and demanding better pay.

Protests Against Climate Change

Millions across the world participated in the 'climate strike' organised by school children over the future impact of an environmental crisis. In coordinated protests held on September 20, unprecedented numbers joined demonstrations across the globe – Australia, China, Greece, Indonesia, Turkey, Nicaragua, all over Europe, entire continent of North America and including India. The organisers estimated that protests took place in 4500 locations across the globe. The international Frankfurt automobile exhibition in Germany was blocked by more than 20,000 people demanding a ban on production of SUVs and diesel-based cars.

Global Rightward Shift

The 22nd Party Congress had noted the global political rightward shift as a consequence of the prolonged global capitalist crisis. The protests against the policies of neo-liberalism and profit maximization that are ruining the lives of billions of people across the world and intensifying exploitation had to be disrupted in order to ensure that they do not reach levels threatening the continuance of the neo-liberal order despite its bankruptcy. A slowdown in the levels of profit maximization cannot but affect adversely the interests of the global capitalism. Rightward political shift of rousing passions, disruptive trends like racism, xenophobia, spreading hatred, suppression of democratic rights and civil liberties have all been brought into play to disrupt the growing unity of the working class led working people's protests across the world.

In **Turkey**, the far right led by Erdogan continues to strengthen itself around the slogan of "Salvaging Turkey's Nationalist Pride". The self-declared fascist, Bolsanaro was declared President of **Brazil**. He openly promotes social and economically conservative policies. Using pro-military rhetoric that glorifies Brazil's authoritarian military dictatorship Bolsanaro is leading the country in a sharp rightward direction. In **Philippines**, Duterte strengthens the rightward shift with promise to clean up the system of corruption. In **France**, the far right Marine Le Pen's Party made inroads in the more conservative parts of France. The far right Alternative for

Germany (AfD) entered the federal parliament for the first time with 12.6 per cent of the votes becoming Germany's biggest opposition party. It pushes for strict anti-immigration policies and exploits anxieties over the Islamic influences. The extreme right-wing gained substantially in **Italy**. The vote share of the Northern League party of Salvini, saw a huge leap by around 28 percent. It is this growth that is responsible for the increased numbers of the extreme-right in the EU parliament. In **Hungary**, Prime Minister Viktor Orban whipping up emotive sentiments had won a third term in office in 2018. He presents himself as the defender of Hungary and Europe against Muslim bigots. The Hungarian nationalism promoted by him has dominated the mainstream political discourse for a decade now. The far right Vox Party in **Spain** surprised many by entering parliament for the first time in elections in April with 24 seats and more than 10 per cent vote. The Freedom Party (FPO) in **Austria** became the only far right Party in power in Western Europe that had joined a coalition in 2017. Anti-immigration **Sweden** Democrats (SD) made significant gains in the 2018 general elections winning about 18 per cent of the votes. This Party has its roots in neo-Nazism. The far right Fins Party in **Finland** though defeated in elections by a narrow margin, continues to spread rightwing hatred. Likewise in **Estonia, Slovenia, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland**, the rightwing political forces continue to be more active.

Of course, the most significant rightward shift in recent years has been the victory of Donald Trump in the USA focusing on national pride under the slogan "Make America Great Again". Rabid racism, xenophobia, hatred and anti-immigration continue to remain his main stay.

All these facts noted here, are not developments that have happened since our last CC meeting. These are being put together only to give an overall understanding of the significant rise in the political rightward shift globally.

Resistance

This political rightward shift is being resisted, at the same time, in many countries.

In the European Union elections held in May 2019, the Greens had gained.

France: In 2014, Melenchon's party and the Communist Party of France (PCF) had contested the elections together as Left Front and won 6.3 percent votes. In these elections, they contested the elections separately, but together they had polled around 9 percent. (6.31 percent for Melenchon and PCF won 2.49 percent). Clearly the impact of gillet jaunes (yellow vests) protests.

The major development in **Greece** is the setback of the far-right Golden Dawn. It's vote share was cut by nearly half, from 9.3 to 4.8. In the subsequent elections held to national parliament, the Golden Dawn failed to

even secure the minimum threshold of 3 percent of votes required to ensure it has a representation in the parliament. In the earlier parliament it had 18 seats, losing all of them now.

On the other hand, in **Germany**, the AfD, the far right party that was increasing its strength in the recent period, failed to put up an impressive performance, and got only 11 percent votes, which is 1.6 percent less than the votes it had secured in the federal elections.

In **Belgium**, elections to the national parliament and regional assemblies were held simultaneously with the EU elections. The Workers' Party of Belgium (PTB), which had no representatives in the EU and a marginal representation in its country, gained big. It has won 12 seats in the federal parliament, one in the European Parliament, 11 in the Brussels Parliament, 4 in the right-wing dominated Flemish Parliament and 10 in the Left dominated Walloon Parliament. In addition, the PTB has 4 senators. The number of PTB parliamentarians saw an increase from 8 to 42. At the national level, the PTB has become the 5th largest party, among the 12 parties with elected representatives.

In **Austria**, the far-right Freedom Party lost substantial votes both in the European Union elections and also in the elections to the national parliament. In the parliamentary elections, they had lost 10 percent votes, while the Greens who had failed to gain entry into parliament in 2017, won 14 percent votes this time. The Freedom Party is now no longer in the government in Austria, which is governed by the Conservatives.

In the recently concluded parliamentary elections in **Portugal**, the social democrats were able to emerge as the largest party. The PCP led coalition, CDU lost 1.8 percentage of votes and 5 seats.

The defeat of ruling party's candidate in the mayoral election in Istanbul, **Turkey** is a severe setback to Erdogan. He had forced the election commission to call for a second election, after a tight race in the first election and the victory of the opposition candidate. The ruling AKP of Erdogan thought of intimidating opposition parties and voters and win the second election, but it had failed as this time around the voters decisively voted for the opposition candidate.

The success achieved by the Left and Left of centre forces in pushing back this right wing offensive, on the basis of the strength of popular struggle, will shape the future struggles for Socialism.

Hongkong Protests

For over hundred days Hongkong has been witnessing huge protests. These protests initially started demanding amendments to extradition laws. This got extended later demanding its complete withdrawal. The Hongkong

administrative authority had recently agreed to the complete withdrawal of this law. However, these protests took a violent turn with protesters assaulting police with bricks, petrol bombs and other instruments. A section of the protesters tore Chinese flags, desecrated Chinese emblems, held British and US flags, openly displaying where their sympathies were. USA is openly backing the violent and radical forces as well as the separatists. The party that unleashed these protests, *Demosisto*, is financed by the US National Endowment for Democracy, a front that seeks "regime change" across the world. China has condemned this interference and said that no one has the right or freedom to carry out separatist activities or a 'colour' revolution. It has warned that it shall not tolerate any activity that undermines the current authority in Hongkong. To resolve this month long protest the first community dialogue was held on September 26 and is slated to continue.

Britain

The move by the Conservative Prime Minister Boris Johnson for a 'no deal Brexit' by suspending parliament in order to avoid any opposition was struck down as unconstitutional in an unprecedented manner by the apex British judiciary. This has now created greater political uncertainty in Britain and over Brexit. International finance capital and the European Union continue efforts to destabilise the British economy hoping to force them to abandon Brexit. Large sections of the British working class who were suffering from the policies of EU and voted for Brexit are demanding an immediate resolution of the issue. Utilizing these sentiments the rightwing nationalist forces are growing spreading fears of immigration, racism and Muslim radicalism. Austerity measures, cuts in health care, education, social welfare, privatization are all growing with the ruling class taking advantage of this crisis and confusion. Growing struggles that are taking place and an effective assertion by the people which Jeremy Corbyn is trying to put in place has to succeed to prevent the right-wing forces gaining strength.

Sanctions on Cuba: For the first time since 1996, the US has invoked the Title III of the Helms Burton Act to strengthen the economic embargo on Cuba. The sixty years of blockade caused the Cuban economy over \$134 billion of loss. USA has threatened law suits against international companies doing business with Cuba. Cuba is bracing to meet the challenges posed by these sanctions. The renewed imperialist offensive against Cuba is part of the rightwing offensive unleashed by Donald Trump particularly targeting left forces and Socialism.

Sanctions on Venezuela: In early August, USA approved new restrictions ordering seizing of all Venezuelan assets in the USA and banning commercial and financial transactions. It has imposed a sweeping economic embargo against Venezuela. It is expanding the black list of companies doing business with Venezuela apart from sanctions on oil, mining and banking sector. US is thus shifting its position from imposing sanctions to an

open economic embargo. US ally **Columbia** had moved the Organisation of American States to declare Venezuela as a threat to the security of the region. Venezuela has decided to mobilize public opinion against US policies. Starting from August 10, 13 million signatures were collected on the slogan "no more Trump". This was submitted to the UN in the recent General Assembly session. All efforts by US imperialism to ensure a regime change in Venezuela have not succeeded till now. The US has clearly stated that there cannot be any talks with the Maduro government. Controlling Venezuela is key for USA to reassert its complete hegemony over the continent. The people of Venezuela are resisting these US pressures and the Venezuelan military continues to remain loyal to the elected government.

Tensions in West Asia: Saudi Arabia, backed by the US, is continuing with its bombardment of Yemen, killing thousands of citizens. Hundreds of thousands of people are suffering from lack of food and other basic amenities. They are denied of even basic health services and as a result hundreds more are dying every day. Houthis of Yemen are leading the fight against Saudi Arabian occupying forces and are even using latest drone technology in their struggle. They have claimed attacks on Saudi oil facilities using drones that had crippled oil production for few days.

Israel had carried out drone attacks on **Lebanon** and **Syria**. It had fired missiles into these countries claiming territories and also accusing them of supporting the **Palestinian** cause. Palestinians peoples' protests against Israeli occupation and demanding their right to return to their homeland is being brutally suppressed by the Israeli forces.

US withdrawal from the agreement reached with **Iran** and re-imposition of sanctions has once again led to tensions in the region. US is threatening countries buying oil from Iran and forcing them to stop all their trade dealings with that country. Accusing Iran of carrying out drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities, US is threatening Iran with retaliation, meaning a declaration of war on Iran. These moves of the US had pushed the region on the verge of another major regional war, which will be detrimental to the peace and stability of the entire world. Russia and China are the two major countries that have stood in support of Iran and trying to defuse the situation.

Elections in Israel: The failure of any political party to form a government in Israel after the elections in April, led to another election in September. No decisive mandate was delivered even in these elections, though the setback suffered by the current Prime Minister Netanyahu is a positive development. A positive development of these elections is the emergence of the pro-Arab, Joint List, an alliance consisting of the Communist Party of Israel as the third biggest group. Neither of the two leading parties, Blue and White with 33 seats and the Likud with 31, can form a coalition government with their natural allies. A national unity government in which Blue and White and the Likud (with or even without Netanyahu as the latter's head) does not bode well for the Arab-Palestinian minority within Israel, even less so for the

Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. President of Israel has invited Netanyahu to once again form the government and prove his majority, which might prove to be difficult once again.

Elections in Russia: Regional and local body elections took place in Russia against the backdrop of a difficult socio-economic situation as well as substantial changes in general mood among the citizens. Public anger over more than five years of falling incomes and an unpopular hike in the pension age along with other reforms stubbornly executed by the government caused severe discontent, which had resulted in the decrease of the ruling United Russia (UR) party's support. In order to prevent a repeat of last year's protest vote (where citizens in several regions voted against the government's official candidates), the ruling UR party resorted to many unethical moves like preventing potential competitors from contesting. As many of these measures have failed, after the election, the UR hastened to declare itself as the winner. The CPRF has significantly increased its presence in parliaments of all levels and its total number of seats in municipal parliaments of thirteen regions were more than that won by Liberal Democrats and Just Russia party. It has put up a good show even in the capital city Moscow.

US Hegemonic Drive

The efforts by the US imperialism to strengthen its global hegemony are expressing itself in various ways. The threat of an arms race is once again on the horizon with the US announcing its withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) signed in 1987. In August US officially withdrew from the treaty, significant setback to the only disarmament agreement over the elimination of a whole category of nuclear weapons. The US has also declared its intention not to renew the new START treaty that limits long range nuclear weapons set to expire in 2021 while Russia has expressed its readiness to extend the treaty. This revival the arms race with the now new developed technology based on artificial intelligence is likely to create greater global tensions which the USA seeks to use for strengthening its global hegemony.

Our Party must strengthen the anti-imperialist movements in the country. At the global level, the Party should cooperate with other Communist Left democratic and progressive forces that are resisting US imperialist drive to strengthen its global hegemony.

National

The last Central Committee meeting had noted that the manner in which the election results came in favour of the BJP, by itself, defined the imminent challenges before the country and the people. The CC noted four such challenges:

"a) The BJP has won this decisive victory on the basis of unprecedented money power and full support of the international and domestic corporates. The trajectory of anti-people economic reforms favouring the big business and the rich are bound to intensify by imposing greater miseries on the vast majority of the people. The Party will take the lead in rallying the maximum sections of the people in struggles against such economic assaults.

"b) The consolidation of the Hindutva communal polarization will lead to greater attacks on the rights of the religious and linguistic minorities, worsening their security concerns and livelihood. The safeguarding and strengthening of secularism, as enshrined in our Constitution, will be taken up by the Party drawing in the broadest sections in these struggles.

"c) The penetration of the RSS in all Constitutional authorities that happened during the last five years is bound to further intensify. This will lead to undermining such Constitutional authorities in order to facilitate the transformation of the Constitutional Republic into the ideological project of the RSS, "Hindutva Rashtra". The defence and strengthening of all Constitutional authorities will be championed by the CPI(M) along with all other forces willing to join these struggles.

"d) The focus of the BJP's victory was based on the need to establish a 'security' state in India, the infringement upon the rights of individuals specifically the right to dissent will sharpen. Already ominous indications are evident. The assaults by private armies under one pretext or the other against Dalits and religious minorities will intensify. The rights of working people and religious, linguistic minorities will come under attack leading up to witch-hunting. The CPI(M) will take the lead in mobilizing the broadest segment of our people who cherish democratic rights and civil liberties to meet these challenges squarely."

On all these fronts, attacks are being mounted with great vigour. There is a multi-pronged attack to undermine the Constitutional order of the Indian Republic.

Jammu & Kashmir

It is nearly two months now since Jammu & Kashmir was deprived of its special status and statehood, the consequent implications constitute a serious attack on India's Constitutional guarantees. The isolation of the state, prohibition of all communication avenues, no public transport

functioning, shops and schools remaining closed, is causing a great deal of hardships and disrupted normal life, particularly in the Kashmir valley. Despite declaring that there is normalcy, the ground realities are completely contradictory as reported by international and sections of the domestic media.

A detailed booklet on the Jammu & Kashmir betrayal was issued from the Party Centre that contains all the arguments that we have put forward stating our opposition to this move which is a serious assault on federalism, secularism, democracy and Constitutional order. These are not being repeated here.

“One Nation, One Language, One Culture”

The BJP is aggressively working to establish a unitary State structure in India. This is required for them to advance the RSS’s fascistic agenda of converting the secular democratic Republic into its ideological political project of ‘Hindu Rashtra’ (This should appropriately be read as “Hindutva Rashtra”).

Apart from slogans like ‘One nation, One election’, ‘One nation, One leader’, further attacks on all aspects of India’s diversity are mounting. The Union Home Minister continues to make statements that violate the fundamental features of our Constitution. His comments on one nation, one language, one culture have created widespread opposition, forcing him to retract the statement. All languages listed in the 8th schedule of the Constitution are National languages. Home Minister is now questioning the need for a multi-party system in India. Thus, the attacks on democracy, secularism, federalism, human rights and civil liberties continue to mount.

NRC Process and Connected Issues

The Chief Ministers of various BJP-ruled states have demanded a National Register of Citizens (NRC) in their states. The NRC was part of the Assam Accord and was specific to the state of Assam. It was under the direction of the Supreme Court that this process was conducted. Nearly 20 lakh people have been left out of the NRC in Assam. No genuine Indian citizen can be excluded. All the appeals by those excluded must be considered and adjudged by a judicial authority without any discrimination. The detention centres where those declared foreigners by the Foreigners Tribunal are housed lack basic amenities and the conditions are abysmal, violative of elementary human rights. These must be closed down and people allowed to stay as they did so far till their appeals are adjudicated.

This government has revived the preparation of the National Population Register (NPR). A gazette notification has announced that a house-to-house enumeration will be done from April 2020 to September 30, 2020. The NPR was initiated during the time of the Vajpayee government, 2003, by

amending the Citizenship Act and Rules. This was proceeded even after a change in the government. But when the issue of Aadhaar came up and its implementation began, the NPR was abandoned since it was a duplication. Strangely, it has now been revived. This is being done in preparation for an all India NRC on the basis of this NPR. BJP Central Government has asked some states to start constructing buildings to be used as detention centres.

Simultaneously, the Election Commission has announced Elector Verification Process (EVP) by asking voters to register online. This would be impossible in many parts of rural and interior India and will lead to a process of exclusion. There is already a photo identity electoral rolls along with EPIC card issued to all voters. This exercise of the EVP appears once again motivated for specific targeting.

Concurrently, the Home Minister announced that the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) will be passed by the next session of parliament. He thus assures the non-Muslims who do not figure in the NRC list that they would be granted citizenship while denying the Muslims even if they are genuine citizens born and living in our country for generations.

All these four processes put together is clearly an indication that it is meant to sharpen polarisation by targeting certain sections of the people. Granting citizenship on the basis of religion violates the fundamental foundations of the Indian Constitution which guarantees not only citizenship but also fundamental rights "irrespective of caste, creed or sex".

All these exercises are unnecessary as the Aadhaar cards have been universalized in the country. The EPIC with the photo identity electoral rolls has the list of all voters of the country, which is routinely revised every year. When all these already exist, the simultaneous talk of extending the NRC beyond Assam, enumeration of the NPR, duplication the electoral rolls by the EVP and the assurance of passing the CAB all indicate the efforts to sharpen polarization in the country in order to consolidate the RSS's communal vote bank.

As the existing mechanisms of Aadhaar, EPIC etc. are already in place, these new processes initiated by this government are unnecessary duplication costing thousands of crores of expenditures which the country can ill-afford at a time of economic recession. These must be halted.

Increasing Economic Burdens on the People

The unprecedented economic slowdown in India, bordering on recession with large-scale unemployment, lakhs of workers being retrenched, the continuing agrarian distress are all imposing greater miseries on the people.

Creeping Recession: Even according to the GDP data from the controversial 2011-12 base year series, the rate of growth of GDP has fallen successively over the last five quarters from 8.1 per cent in Q4 of 2017-18 to 5 per cent in Q1 of 2019-20.

2019-20 Q1 growth of agriculture was just 2 per cent as compared to 5.1 per cent in the same quarter last year. Growth in the 8 core sectors slumped to its lowest levels since April 2015, registering (-) 0.5% in August, 2019. Manufacturing growth rate was just 0.6 per cent – down from 12.1 per cent in the previous year. Construction reduced from 9.6 per cent in the previous year to 5.7 per cent this year; Trade, Hotels, Transport, Communication, etc. from 7.8 to 7.1 and Finance, Real Estate and Professional Services from 6.5 to 5.9 per cent. In other words, there is significant slowdown in GDP growth that is spread across the agriculture, industry and service sectors. On the expenditure side, the growth of both consumption expenditure and investment (Gross fixed capital formation) show sharp falls in 1 of this year compared to the same period last year – the former has dropped to just 3.1 per cent against 7.3 per cent last year and the latter to 4 per cent compared to over 13.3 per cent last year.

The Index of Industrial Production also confirms the slowdown – the Manufacturing IIP growth for the April-July period of 2019-20 was just 2.8 per cent compared to 5.6 per cent for the same period last year. The overall IIP growth for April-July similarly showed a drop to 3.3 per cent this year from 5.4 per cent last year. Capital Goods production in fact has contracted by 4.3 per cent (negative growth) compared to a 7.1 per cent increase in the same period last year. Consumer durables too have seen a contraction in their production by 2.7 per cent.

Unprecedented Unemployment: As a consequence of this economic recession unemployment has risen to unprecedented levels. The CMIE estimates on the basis official figures, which are normally a gross underestimation, as of September 27, 2019, unemployment has reached 9.94 per cent - the highest in over half a century. By August end 4.5 crore people officially reported being unemployed. This is an increase of 1.1 crore from last August. Youth unemployment is estimated to be 28 per cent.

Automobile industry that employs nearly four crore people and contributes 7.5 per cent to the country's GDP and 49 per cent to the manufacturing GDP is in deep crisis. 10 of the 17 car companies have posted negative sales growth. The consequent cut in production is laying off workers and is likely to lead to large-scale loss of jobs in this sector. Already it is reported that over ten lakh people are being laid off in the auto ancillary industry.

Large-Scale Privatisation: Upon being re-elected, the Modi government has announced large-scale privatization across the board. 42 defence production units are to be privatized. The 42 ordinance factories, DRDO

units and all military engineering services employ more than four lakh workers currently. With privatization, their future is at stake. Apart from six airports privatized earlier with the contract going on to the Adanis, the government has announced the privatization of 20-25 more airports. Indian railways is being privatized step by step. This government has prepared a roadmap to lower its stake in all Central Public Sector Enterprises to 49 per cent in three years.

Dismantling Public Sector Banks: The government has merged public sector banks to create four banking entities reducing the number of public sector banks from 27 to 12. This BJP government tom-toms its claims of universalizing financial inclusion. This move will further exclude crores of Indians as a large number of branches of these banks, especially in rural India, would now be closed. This move will further push the small savings in rural India into the clutches of sleazy chit fund operators and financial mercenaries.

Weakening public sector banking is meant to facilitate the privatization of the nationalized banking sector.

Crony Capitalism: The loot of the country's wealth, through the loans taken from the nationalized banks, continues unabated despite the government claiming a decline in the level of the NPAs. In fact, the banks' own records show a rise of actual NPA amount by Rs. 2,30,811 crores in the current year. This is after Rs. 1.96 lakh crores has been written off in 2018-19.

Loot of RBI's Reserves: The government has forced the RBI to part with a whopping Rs. 1.76 lakh crores. During the past five years, the Modi Government has siphoned off Rs. 99.99 per cent of the RBI's net profits every year. On top of this comes the current transfer. The surplus transfer termed as "dividend" to the government is almost double the previous record of Rs. 65,896 crores.

Through its policies of demonetization and the faulty and hurried implementation of the GST, the previous Modi government had crippled the economy. The effects of these are now manifesting themselves in a cruel way.

The crisis in the Indian economy stems from a sharp contraction of domestic demand. This is because people have very little, or, no purchasing power in their hands. Unless demand grows, the industrial and manufacturing sector, which is now under recession, cannot revive. For domestic demand to grow, what is required is a large dose of public investments to build our much-needed infrastructure. This, in turn, will generate a significant rise in employment opportunities, putting purchasing power in the hands of the people. When these monies are spent, the country's manufacturing and industrial sector would begin reviving.

Instead of doing this, this BJP government is giving further concessions to the rich with whopping tax cuts and facilities to increase the investible funds by the corporates. Unless people have the purchasing power, no amount of making capital available to the corporates can succeed in reversing the economic slowdown.

However, this is precisely the direction of government's announcements declaring that these are meant for reviving the economy. This government has provided concession to the tune of Rs. 70,000 crores to the realty housing sector and for export promotion. People are not buying houses today simply because they just do not have the money. In a situation of global economic slowdown with volumes of world trade sharply falling, any hope for enlarging Indian exports is very bleak.

On top of this, the government has recently announced a slew of further concessions, including big tax cuts to the corporates and to foreign institutional investors (speculative hot money that flows into the stock markets). This is to the tune of Rs. 1,45,000 crores. Put together these over Rs. 2.15 lakh crores of rupees will only end up enriching the corporates and foreign capital without providing any relief for the people. On the contrary, the people's miseries are bound to increase further. The concessions to foreign speculative funds were provided on the eve of Modi's visit to USA.

This Modi government, therefore, is further enriching the rich (the finances of the ruling party) and impoverishing the vast majority of Indian people, the poor.

Working Class Protest Actions

Protesting against the large-scale privatization and the entry of foreign capital in the defence production sector, the ordinance factory workers went on a five-day strike. This successful strike forced the government to put on hold the proposals for privatization. This, however, is only temporary and soon the BJP government is bound to pursue such privatization vigorously. The coal workers unions, protesting against 100 per cent FDI in commercial mining of coal, went on a strike on September 24.

All Central Trade Unions, barring the BMS, have called for an all-India general strike on January 8, 2020 and protest against this large-scale privatization and the anti-labour laws proposed by this BJP government.

Assaults on Parliamentary Institutions

All independent Constitutional authorities are being undermined rapidly.

Parliamentary Procedures: This BJP government is pushing through important legislations in the very first Parliament session after the elections. Once the Parliament constitutes its Standing and House Committees, then all legislative business introduced in the Parliament is normally sent for scrutiny by the concerned committees. This practice has been done away with by this government. The committees were finally constituted after the Parliamentary session was over. Parliament session was extended to pass important legislations without a serious consideration of all the law-making ramifications.

The demands by the opposition parties to at least constitute select committees to scrutinize the Bills were rejected by the government. All these Bills have been cleared by the Parliament through the BJP exercising the 'tyranny of the majority'.

Undermining Federalism: An amendment to the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)** has been passed where the Home Ministry has now legal authority to declare any individual as a terrorist in any state and need not inform the concerned state government. The properties of such identified people can be confiscated. Individuals expressing dissent can now be declared as terrorists arbitrarily. The principle of jurisprudence has been turned upside down by placing the onus on the person on whom allegations are being made to prove his/her innocence. Instead of being innocent till guilt is proved, now the principle is of being guilty till you prove your innocence. This will lead to large-scale harassment, vindictiveness and gross injustice. The federal principle has been given the go-by with the state governments, under whose jurisdiction is the subject 'law and order', will be bypassed.

The **RTI Bill** has been amended virtually nullifying the right to information. Clearly, the government has a lot to hide and it does not want its internal workings and the huge benefits it provides to its cronies to be exposed in the public domain. This is completely violative of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

The **Triple Talaq Bill** has been passed which criminalises the breakdown of a civil contract of marriage. This also has the potential for gross misuse against the Muslim minorities.

With the opposition being in disarray in Parliament, only the CPI(M), CPI, DMK and RJD opposed these draconian measures.

Attacks on Federalism: In all these laws enacted, one feature that stands out is the growing encroachment of the rights of the states. As a part of this overall attack against federalism, the terms of reference of the Finance Commission were amended a mere two months before the expiry of its term. Expenditures for defence and internal security will now be taken from

the divisible tax pool. This directly reduces the quantum of money flowing to the states. This is a brazen attack on fiscal federalism.

The usage of the CBI to serve the political agenda of the BJP continues. Likewise, the Enforcement Department of the Finance Ministry is also being grossly misused. The threats issued by these agencies are often aimed at disarming the regional political parties, forcing them into submission and engineering defections.

Likewise, the Supreme Court and the judiciary, the Election Commission, the RBI, the CA&AG are all under similar pressure with varying degrees. All this is undermining the Constitutional order in the country.

Communal Polarisation

The sharpening of communal polarization is leading to the generation of an atmosphere of hate, intolerance and violence across the country. In almost all BJP-ruled states, Muslim minorities have been assaulted either on allegations of eating beef, or, by forcing them to chant '*Jai Shri Ram*'. Most of such incidents have occurred in the state of Uttar Pradesh. There are also reports of such incidents in Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Assam, Bihar, West Bengal and elsewhere.

Authoritarian Assaults: During these four months of this government, there has been an unprecedented rise in the attacks on democratic rights and civil liberties of people. A large number of people have been arrested in Uttar Pradesh for sharing 'objectionable content' against BJP Chief Minister. Similarly, various people have been arrested from other BJP-ruled states like Assam, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Goa etc. This is creating a sense of fear in the social media where authors, writers and individuals are being targeted under the draconian Section 66A of the IT Act despite the Supreme Court ruling against this section.

The spread of hatred and intolerance is also targeting social activists and human rights activists in the name of either 'urban naxals', or, 'tukde tukde gang' etc. The objective is to silence all expression of dissent against this government, the RSS, the BJP and their leaders.

Protecting Law Violators: In cases of lynching and murder of innocent people, this government and its agencies have been instrumental in getting the culprits off the hook. Those accused of violence against women including gang rapes are being protected. Atrocities against women are growing as are the attacks on Dalits and minorities in an unprecedented manner. Since 2016, the government has not released any data on the crimes against women.

We demanded that the guilty must be punished in accordance with law. This Modi government should be forced to stop patronizing such criminals.

Anti-Labour Law Reform

This government has declared that it will replace all the existing labour laws and, in its place, bring in 4 labour codes. Already attacks on democratic rights of the working class have been growing. This proposed codification is designed to undermine the rights of the working people that were achieved through decades of struggles. These hard-won rights cannot be allowed to be removed or diluted. Various protests by the working class are currently going on in many sectors. The Central Trade Unions are organizing all-India struggles.

Toppling State Governments

The open manner in which the BJP indulged in naked horse-trading to topple the Congress-JD(S) state government in Karnataka is a pointer towards its intention of creating an opposition-free India. Whatever may have been the problems with the coalition government in Karnataka, it is clear that the BJP, which tried to stop this government from assuming office soon after the Assembly elections, has continued with its efforts and succeeded in bringing down the coalition government. It is now targeting other opposition-ruled states.

Targeting Opposition Parties

This BJP government has embarked on an aggressive drive targeting opposition leaders with cases by the CBI/ED/IT, in order to decimate any opposition to the government in the Parliament and in the elections. Congress leaders like P. Chidambaram, D. K. Sivakumar and NCP leader Sharad Pawar and so on are being targeted and arrested.

The brazenness of such vindictive actions becomes clear when this BJP government protects its leaders with much graver charges. Some of the main leaders are B. S. Yediyurappa, current BJP Chief Minister of Karnataka, Reddy Brothers of Bellary, Himanta Biswa Sarma, BJP's leader in Assam, Sivaraj Chauhan, former BJP Chief Minister of MP, Ramesh Pokhriyal `Nishank`, current Human Resources Development Minister and Narayan Rane, former Chief Minister of Maharashtra who moved to the BJP for such protection.

The BJP has embarked on a large-scale engineered defections from opposition parties such as Congress, NCP and many others. Similar threats of intimidation and harassment is used to coopt the opposition parties to support the government, particularly in the Rajya Sabha. Some of the Samajwadi Party, Telugu Desam and Congress MPs have joined the BJP. This gives the BJP, which does not have a majority in the Rajya Sabha, an upper hand.

Houston Spectacle

With much fanfare and grandeur, Prime Minister Modi held a public event with NRIs in Houston, Texas in USA. In an unprecedented move, he campaigned for the re-election of Donald Trump holding his hand and gestured to the audience.

Regarding the Kashmir developments, which everybody in India agrees, is an internal matter of India, President Trump told Modi that he would 'get along well with Imran Khan', when they start talking. Clearly, the push is for an Indo-Pak dialogue with Trump volunteering to be the mediator, if asked by both the countries. Separately, US administration expressed concern over human rights restrictions in Jammu & Kashmir and called for the early return to normalcy.

However, on most of the other crucial issues like trade, attracting US investments and persuading USA to not contest India's export subsidies in the WTO dispute mechanism, the result was in the negative for Modi.

In May this year, USA had revoked the trade benefits given to India under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). This programme was started in 1974 and never taken away from India before. The continuation of the revocation of the GSP is adversely impacting on the Indian economy, particularly when it is undergoing an extreme slowdown. Under the GSP programme, India got benefit of around \$6.4 billion annually which is now gone. India was hoping that Modi-Trump bonhomie would result in the revocation of the GSP programme. This did not happen.

Modi was not even able to restore a reversal of the US high duties on Indian shipments of steel and aluminum. Since 2017, the USA had not held the annual dialogue on trade – India-US Trade Policy Forum.

At the same time, in the WTO disputes related to India's export subsidies, the USA has an upper hand that will have a further negative impact on India's exports.

Another target of Modi's visit was to attract US FDI to India. A round table was organized under the banner of 'Invest India'. During this week-long trip, Modi met 17 American corporates from oil and gas sectors and 40 American multinationals from other sectors. None of them have committed to any investment in India.

Only one MoU was signed between India's Petronet and American oil gas maker, Tellurian Inc. The contract will be concluded only by March 31 next year. Modi's promise of \$60 billion trade and 50,000 jobs as a result of his visit are, thus, as with everything else, mere *jumlas*.

During his bilateral meeting with Modi, President Trump has reportedly said that Iran is, for the USA, a bigger concern for terrorism than Pakistan.

Negating the FRA

Adivasis across the country have expressed their deep concern at the utter failure of the Modi government to defend the Forest Rights Act in the ongoing petition against the Act before the Supreme Court. The threat of eviction hangs over 23 lakh adivasi families who have been denied pattas. Unequivocal defence of the FRA by the Central government is essential to ensure that there are no evictions. At the same time, instead of scrapping the colonial Forest Act 1927 which was an instrument to deny tribal communities their rights over the forests and forest produce, the Modi government has drafted amendments which make it even more draconian. The CC extends full support to the struggles of adivasis for justice against these assaults by the Central government.

Increase Foodgrain Allocation at Subsidised Rates

The stock of food grains in government godowns, according to reports on August 19, 2019 stood at a record high of 713 lakh tonnes. All reports indicate a fall in real incomes and growing malnutrition, when India ranks at 103 amongst 119 countries in the Global Hunger Index 2018. It is clear that a large number of people are going hungry.

Food grain allocation at subsidized prices for at least a minimum of 35 kgs per family must be announced by the government.

Left Parties Convention

The Left parties – CPI(M), CPI, CPI(ML)-Liberation, RSP and AIFB – held a national convention on '*All India Protest against Deepening Economic Crisis & Growing People's Miseries*' on September 20, 2019, at New Delhi. The convention adopted a resolution which is being circulated as an information document.

Central Committee Call

The Central Committee calls upon all our Party units to organize protest actions all across the country between October 10 and 16, 2019, as decided by the Left Parties convention. On October 16 culmination, some militant actions like rasta roko, rail roko etc must be planned by the respective state committees.

We must make all efforts to appeal to other democratic forces who are prepared to join us on the demands to participate in this people's protest

movement. The Central Committee calls for all-India protest on the following issues raised by the Left Parties convention:

- Increased public investment to generate employment. Until then the central government must provide unemployment allowance to the youth.
- Ensure a minimum wage of Rs. 21,000 per month.
- The government must ensure the provision of monthly living wages for the large number of workers who have been terminated.
- Stop privatization of the Public Sector. Withdraw 100% FDI in defence and coal sectors. Halt the large scale privatization of BSNL, ordnance factories, Indian Railways, Air India etc.
- Allocations for MGNREGA must be enhanced to ensure the payment of past dues and for providing a minimum of 200 days of work at the designated minimum wage.
- A one-time loan waiver to the farmers to meet agrarian distress, stem growing farmers suicides and announcement and implementation of the minimum support price one and half times higher than the input costs.
- Raise minimum monthly old age/widow pension to Rs. 3000.