

Editor's Note

This double issue of *Marxist* is dedicated to India@75.

The current BJP central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is embarking on massive celebrations, an epic exercise in public relations propaganda and spin to distort history. Chastening 75 years of India's independence as '*Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav*' massive propaganda material has been released. Jawaharlal Nehru is absent on the posters, while Vinayak Damodar Savarkar is included. We discuss in the articles in this issue the mercy petitions Savarkar gave to the British authorities and succeeded in getting himself released from the Cellular Jail in the Andamans. He, as the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha, directed Sanghathanists to not participate in the calls given by the freedom struggle for Independence. He was the first to propound the two-nation theory, which laid the foundations for the partition of India.

The absence of Nehru and the presence of Savarkar clearly indicates the objective that is sought to be established in these celebrations. This is the RSS objective since its foundation in 1925 that India must only be a rabidly intolerant, fascistic '*Hindutva Rashtra*'. BJP is nothing but the political arm of the RSS. By controlling the central government, it seeks to project 2022 as heralding the metamorphosis of secular democratic India into the RSS political project.

The opening contribution in this issue discusses many of these aspects that are currently underway to enforce such a metamorphosis. Amongst these are the destruction of the Indian Constitution, its foundational pillars of secular democracy; social justice; federalism and economic sovereignty. For this metamorphosis to succeed, all the independent institutions under the Constitution, beginning with the Parliament and including the Judiciary, the Election Commission, the CBI, and all other independent authorities, are to be undermined and prevented from discharging their responsibilities to act as checks and balances in our system, for the implementation of the rights and guarantees given to the Indian People by our Constitution.

Such a metamorphosis also requires to distort the rich, syncretic history of India and rewrite Indian history to buttress the RSS fascistic project. Such re-writing includes the history of our freedom struggle and seven decades of independent India.

All Indian patriots will have to rise in unison to resist and defeat such efforts to transform our secular democratic Republic into a fascistic RSS project necessarily accompanied by authoritarian assaults on people's democratic rights and civil liberties.

To meet this challenge, it is necessary to put on record the role of the Communists and the Left in the freedom struggle and in the early decades of independent India. With this purpose, the opening contribution details the current assaults being mounted to achieve this objective. This is followed by Prof. Irfan Habib's amended and updated text of the P. Sundarayya memorial lecture on the role of the Left in India's National Movement.

This is followed by an article by a former CPI(M) General Secretary, late Com. E.M.S. Namboodiripad which discusses the Left in India's freedom movement and its role in the first three and half decades of independent India.

Com. B.T. Ranadive, the preeminent communist leader of the Indian working class, analyses the developments in the first four decades after India's independence and the

emerging challenges where he presciently notes the aggravating social contradictions in India and the rise of revivalism and fundamentalism.

To set at rest the canards spread by the RSS and its tentacles on the role of the Communists in the freedom struggle, this issue contains documents of the programme and manifesto for the National movement submitted by the Communist Party of India to the several AICC annual sessions. The Communist Party of India was formed in September 1920. MN Roy, the then General Secretary, submitted a manifesto to the 36th AICC session at Ahmedabad in 1921. It was at this session that on behalf of the CPI, Maulana Hazrat Mohani and Swami Kumarananda moved a resolution demanding complete independence for India from the British rule, for the first time in the Freedom movement.

These documents are being published not only for historical record but to place before the reader the analysis of the Communist Party in developing momentum of India's freedom struggle and what, according to the CPI, should be done.

Finally, we have left ourselves open to the criticism that much of the contents of this issue is already published material. While true, this is necessary because of the difficulty in accessing this material and, more importantly, for familiarising the present generations with the historic role and contributions of the Indian Communists in the struggle for our independence and in the decades after independence.