

# MARXIST

Theoretical Quarterly of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

XXXVI, 1

January-March 2020

<i>Editor's Note</i>	3
PRABHAT PATNAIK Globalization and the Abridgement of Freedom	8
ARCHANA PRASAD Feminism and Class Consciousness: Reflections from the Early Years of the Communist Movements	25
ÁLVARO GARCÍA LINERA 'In Moments of Crisis, Behind Every Moderate Liberal, There's a Fascist': An interview with Álvaro García Linera by Elodie Descamps and Tarik Bouafia	42
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA Draft Platform of Action, 1930	58

# MARXIST

Theoretical Quarterly of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

## EDITORIAL BOARD

SITARAM YECHURY (EDITOR)

PRAKASH KARAT

B.V. RAGHAVULU

ASHOK DHAWALE

## CONTRIBUTORS

PRABHAT PATNAIK is Emeritus Professor, Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

ARCHANA PRASAD is Professor at Centre for Informal Sector and Labour Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

For subscription and other queries, contact

The Manager, Marxist, A.K. Gopalan Bhavan, 27-29 Bhai Veer Singh Marg, New Delhi 110001

Phone: (91-11) 2334 8725. Email: pdpbln@gmail.com

Printed by Sitaram Yechury at

Progressive Printers, A 21, Jhilmil Industrial Area, Shahdara, Delhi 110095,

and published by him on behalf of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) from

A.K.Gopalan Bhavan, 27-29 Bhai Veer Singh Marg, New Delhi 110001

## Editor's Note

*We apologize to our readers for the delay—for reasons beyond our control—in the publication of this issue. This January–March 2020 issue of Marxist was ready to go to the press when the national lockdown was declared due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is only after June 1 that some relaxation of restrictions began; as a result of which the printing press has now started functioning. I am sure that readers will understand the circumstances and condone this delay.*

**T**his issue begins with a discussion by Professor Prabhat Patnaik on 'Globalization and the Abridgement of Freedom'. Amongst the many dimensions of globalization and among the many ways in which freedom is abridged, the focus here is on the economic dimension of such abridgements of freedom. Professor Patnaik argues that 'democracy implies, in principle, the sovereignty of the people; what globalization of finance does is to institute the sovereignty of finance capital, which necessarily displaces the sovereignty of the people, and hence entails an abrogation of democracy and freedom. Even if people willy-nilly accept such a displacement of their sovereignty, that makes no difference to the issue; the abrogation of democracy is not thereby altered an iota.'

The pundits of neoliberalism often argue that globalization is a force that acts in favour of democracy and human rights, rather than of fascist movements and the snuffing out of human rights. Professor Patnaik proceeds to demolish this argument. 'As long as the governments of individual nation-States backed by these corporate-financial oligarchies remain a part of this

global arrangement, any human rights violations by them, though arousing global criticism, would continue to be tolerated without bringing them much discomfort?

Further, he points out that globalization inevitably increases income and wealth inequalities which *per se* undermines democracy everywhere and proceeds to show that this is not a transient vanishing phenomenon but an enduring one in the current phase of globalization.

The institution of authorization and fascistic political regimes, which launch an assault on individual rights and democratic institutions, portrays the abridgement of economic freedom, carrying it to even higher levels. He concludes by stating that ‘with neoliberal globalization having reached a dead end, emancipatory struggles will once again come on to the agenda.’

Professor Archana Prasad discusses the interface between feminism and class consciousness with specific focus on the early years of the communist movements. She explores the proposition that the formation of the communist party was a significant moment in the struggle for women’s emancipation. While all movements for women’s rights may not be anti-capitalist; rather they may have limited goals of achieving women’s social and political rights within the capitalist system, the transformative aspect, depends on its ideological moorings and in properly understanding the relations between capitalism and patriarchy.

She deals with three important areas that are central to resolving the contrary theoretical and ideological dilemmas that arise out of the debates between Marxist feminists and the ‘autonomous’ women’s movements. The first is the examination in the context of the relationship between production and social reproduction in the process of capitalist accumulation. The second area is that of the role of women in the early years of the communist movement. The third discusses the relationship between class-based movements and the building of an anti-patriarchal consciousness.

She concludes that Marxist theorists need to use the tools of contemporary Marxist theory to explore the dialectical interaction between vertical hierarchies (like class) and horizontally arranged factors (like patriarchy and caste) within the capitalist structure. Such a development of theoretical analysis will lay the basis for correct tactics to be employed for strengthening joint struggles for deepening the struggle against capitalism.

**A**s a document, we are carrying an interview published in the international magazine *Jacobin*, of November 20, 2019, with Álvaro García Linera, the ousted Vice President of Bolivia. This interview was conducted on November 16 in Mexico where he was in exile. The military coup took place on November 10. Linera was the key architect of the social policies promoted by Evo Morales. These policies had an unparalleled success in transforming one of Latin America's poorest countries. Under the government of President Morales, in 13 years, a quarter of the population was lifted out of extreme poverty; the indigenous majority came to the heart of public life; and Bolivia enjoyed the region's most consistently high GDP growth. Land reforms, more equitable distribution of wealth and industrialization processes transformed the country.

Naturally, these were unacceptable to the vested interests that mercilessly exploited and lorded over the country for many generations. This was particularly exceptional for US imperialism that had always treated Bolivia along with most of Latin America as its backyard.

A more compelling reason for USA's active involvement in the ouster of Morales is the fact that Bolivia has a huge reserve of lithium, the essential ingredient for power generated through batteries. Four days before the coup, Morales had nationalized lithium mining. With the current growing concern on the impact of climate change, there is a global urge to move towards greener technologies for power generation and battery-operated power is seen as the future. The monopoly over lithium by Bolivia,

under Morales, would have adversely impacted the potential of massive profit generation for multinational corporations and US imperialism.

The interview is also illustrative of the manner in which the reactionary forces operated to oust the democratically elected government. This interview is followed by a short article written by Linera.

**A**s part of our commitment to reproduce material on the centenary observance of the formation of the Communist Party of India being conducted by the CPI(M), we are reproducing extracts from the Draft Platform of Action published by the CPI in 1930 when the trial of the Meerut Conspiracy Case was going on.

As is well known, the British government, right from the formation of the CPI in 1920, unleashed brutal repression in the name of curbing the spread of Bolshevism in India. Various conspiracy cases were launched by the British against the Communists in India—the Peshawar Conspiracy Case (1922–24); the Kanpur Conspiracy Case (1924); Meerut Conspiracy Case (1929). The Communist Party of India was declared illegal by the British. It is only when the Meerut Conspiracy Case prisoners were released in 1934 that the CPI could function in a proper centralized manner with its headquarters in Bombay.

At that time various trends emerged in the Left movement in India along with intense discussions about the relationship with the freedom movement that was being led by the National Congress. In order to clarify the Party's understanding and unify the Party ranks during a period when open activities were severely curtailed, the Party came out with a Draft Platform of Action in 1930. This was published in the organ of the Communist International, *Imprecor*. Basing itself on Marxism-Leninism, it broke with the policy of the bourgeois-feudal outlook and linked the success of the anti-imperialist struggle with the agrarian revolution and the abolition of all inequalities imposed by the old socio-religious

system. This document was the first to address the problems of all sections of the Indian people, as well as the immediate needs of the revolutionary struggle to overthrow the British rule.