



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

## **Central Committee**

A.K. Gopalan Bhawan, 27-29, Bhai Vir Singh Marg New Delhi 110 001

Website: <http://www.cpim.org> email: [cc@cpim.org](mailto:cc@cpim.org)

## **Political Resolution**

**Adopted at the 24<sup>th</sup> Congress at Madurai, Tamilnadu**

**April 02-06, 2025**

### **Introduction**

0.1 The period since the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress was marked by a growing conflict between the forces of the Hindutva-corporate regime, represented by the Modi government and the secular-democratic forces who were opposed to it. The push to impose a reactionary Hindutva agenda and the authoritarian drive to suppress the opposition and democracy displays neo-fascist characteristics. The CPI(M) and the Left parties consistently opposed the communal-corporate policies of the Central government. Workers, peasants and other sections of the working people waged united struggles to defend their livelihoods and economic rights.

0.2 The Lok Sabha election of May 2024 resulted in a setback for the BJP; it lost its majority in the Lok Sabha and faces a strengthened opposition in Parliament. However, the third term of the Modi government is seeing a continuation of the Hindutva neo-liberal agenda of the BJP-RSS. The results have opened up space for wider resistance to the pro-corporate Hindutva policies of the Modi government, both outside and inside the Parliament.

0.3 In the past three years, the Modi government has reinforced its strategic ties with the United States. Foundational agreements for military collaboration have been completed and it is increasingly aligned with US geopolitical interests in the Asia-Pacific region, as seen in its participation in the QUAD and its shameful support for Israel's genocidal war on Gaza. All these developments must be seen in the context of global developments and geopolitical relations, which have a direct bearing on our national situation.

### **International Situation**

1.1 The main trends in the international situation since the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress are:

- (i) US imperialism is involved in two major conflicts that took place in the world since the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress. It is actively supporting Israel in its aggression against Gaza, which has led to the deaths of tens of

thousands of people, and lethally armed Ukraine in the war with Russia;

- (ii) As a consequence of the systemic crisis, the global economy is witnessing sluggish growth, with inequalities, poverty, unemployment, hunger and malnourishment on the rise;
- (iii) Working-class struggles in defence of their rights and against economic hardships are taking place in many countries, including developed countries; however,
- (iv) The political rightward shift, noted earlier, continues, with many countries witnessing the election of far-right political parties to seats of power. However, during this period, the Left made gains in Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay and Sri Lanka;
- (v) The conflict between the US and China is intensifying;
- (vi) Socialist countries are effectively resisting imperialist attacks;
- (vii) Protests against imperialism, war and aggression are taking place everywhere;
- (viii) The failure of governments to act on promises to tackle climate change is leading to drastic changes and causing severe losses to the people, particularly in the Global South;
- (ix) Our neighbourhood witnessed intense popular protests that led to the fall of elected governments;
- (x) India's isolation in the neighbourhood continues.

### **Israeli Genocide in Palestine**

1.2 Israel carried on its genocidal onslaught on Gaza for fifteen months after the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023. After a brief ceasefire, it has once again restarted its attack. More than 50,000 Palestinians were killed and a hundred thousand injured in the brutal Israeli aggression. Nearly 60 per cent of those killed are women and children. Israel violated all international laws with impunity by attacking schools, hospitals, UN aid trucks, refugee shelters and unarmed civilians. With a complicit US administration Israel intends to occupy the West Bank.

1.3 Israel is able to carry out its destruction of Palestine and attack many countries in West Asia due to the support it is receiving from the US. The US has increased its arms exports to Israel since 2023. The monetary aid extended by the US also saw a five-fold increase, from \$3.6 billion to \$17.9 billion. The US vetoed all resolutions demanding an immediate ceasefire moved in the UN. Together, they ignored the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which ruled Israel's actions as leading to genocide. It is in the interests of the US to ensure

that a strong Israel emerges from this conflict, as that would ensure its hegemony is retained in West Asia.

- 1.4 Israel expanded the area of conflict by attacking Lebanon, where more than 3,700 people died before a ceasefire was declared. It has bombed Syria, Yemen, Iran and Iraq. The US and UK have also joined in attacking Yemen and supported Israel's attack on Iran. Top Iranian generals were killed inside Iran and Syria.
- 1.5 Israel was never committed to the ceasefire agreement reached with the Hamas. Immediately after six weeks of the first phase of the ceasefire, it re-started its attacks on Gaza. It blocked the entry of food, water, aid and all other supplies to Gaza, pushing them towards starvation. The Trump administration is complicit in these attacks. Trump's proposal to vacate Gaza and convert it into a Riviera is in line with the Israel government's plan to cleanse Gaza and ultimately annex it as a part of its objective of establishing a 'Greater Israel'.

### **Syria: Fall of Assad**

- 1.6 The fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria will have major repercussions. The end of the last remaining secular state in West Asia is going to destabilize the region and increase sectarian strife. The Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which led the armed attack against Assad, has formed the government. Though it promised to protect the interests of various religious minorities, the reality is different, with reported attacks on minorities. Many of them are migrating from Syria, fearing further attacks. HTS, Israel and Turkey are in the process of carving Syria into their respective spheres of influence. Israel crossed the buffer zone in the Golan Heights and stationed its troops. Turkey wants to control the border regions and ensure that the Kurds are suppressed. On the other hand, the US and its allies, which were supporting the Kurds, are trying to normalise relations with HTS to serve their imperialist interests. Given the US history of promoting religious fundamentalist and extremist forces that are threats to secular States, this is not unexpected.

### **War in Ukraine**

- 1.7 The Russia-Ukraine war saw an escalation of attacks on both sides, with the US permitting Ukraine to use long-range missiles inside the territory of Russia. Russia declared that it considers such attacks a direct attack from NATO countries and threatened to use nuclear weapons. Despite all the support given by the United States and NATO in terms of weaponry and finances, Ukraine is unable to push back the Russians from eastern Ukraine or even hold its frontline positions. Russia has increased its territorial grip in the Donbas and is advancing steadily into the eastern regions of Ukraine. The US is using Ukraine to advance its goal of weakening and containing Russia.

- 1.8 All the economic sanctions that were imposed on Russia by the US and its allies failed to cripple the Russian economy. Russia was able to escape from the net of sanctions because of its close relations and trade with many developing countries, particularly China and India. Trading in local currencies and supplying cheap fuel also enabled Russia to retain its market share and overcome the impact of sanctions. All these factors exposed the failure of sanctions as a weapon to confront a major economy like Russia. On the other hand, the ban on the purchase of fuel from Russia has badly affected European countries. The rise in the price of gas and food grains added to the burdens of the people.
- 1.9 The US has initiated peace talks between Ukraine and Russia because, the Trump administration's views on the war do not align with that of the European Union. Putting an end to the war, the US intends to capture Ukraine's critical and rare earth minerals. Such measures will not help in the long-term realisation of peace in the region. Establishment of a real peace will only be possible when the Russian fears of expansion of NATO to its borders and arming its neighbours are addressed.

### **Asia-Pacific Region – Increasing Tensions**

- 1.10 The US moves in the Asia-Pacific region are creating tensions due to the increased presence of its navy and military exercises as part of its efforts to contain and isolate China. The United States is trying to strengthen its military alliances (defence pacts) with the countries in the region. It began deploying a new, offensive intermediate-range land-based missile system in the region. The US is blatantly interfering in China's internal affairs by arming Taiwan and extending open support to the forces of secession.
- 1.11 **Korean Peninsula:** The situation on the Korean Peninsula, provoked by the United States, continues to be tense, seriously affecting the security of the region. The US, Japan and South Korea have strengthened trilateral military cooperation and are conducting intense joint military exercises. North Korea (DPRK) has changed its policy on relations with South Korea and declared that North and South Korea are no longer people of the same nation but are enemies and warring parties. The relations between the two sides have dropped to a historic low.
- 1.12 The main targets for the US in this region are clearly China, North Korea and Russia, which are officially designated by the US as a 'Revisionist Power' (China), a 'Malign State' (Russia) and a 'Rogue State' (DPRK).
- 1.13 The US is trying to impose its hegemony over the entire world despite the weakening of its economy. Its involvement in Ukraine and West Asia has shown the limitations of its military prowess. On the other hand, the strong partnership between Russia and China and the rallying of many developing

countries behind them have further exposed the weaknesses in the US armour. The US is trying to counter the growing assertion of Russia and China by strengthening its alliances like the G-7 and NATO and also by trying to form many new alliances. The world is gradually being pushed into two conflicting groupings, raising the curtains for another Cold War.

- 1.14 In the 23rd Congress, we noted that differences remain among imperialist countries despite the efforts made by the US administration to rally its allies against Russia and China. During this period, using NATO and the G-7, the US was able to rally its allies against Russia and China and moved towards resolving these differences. Both NATO and the G-7 declared that China and Russia are countries of concern that need to be contained. With Trump assuming the US presidency, strains are developing once again between the imperialist countries due to his policies on Ukraine, climate change, European alliance and NATO. This will have an impact on how the inter-imperialist contradictions express themselves in the coming days.

### **Growing Military Expenditure**

- 1.15 Global military spending in 2023 grew for the ninth straight year to stand at \$2.44 trillion. The US continues to be the largest spender on defence and together with its NATO allies, constitutes more than half of global military spending. The US is reluctant to re-sign the expired nuclear deterrence treaties. The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), the last of the nuclear arms control treaties between the US and Russia, is under suspension since the war in Ukraine. The expiry of various arms control treaties and the increased expenditure on developing new weapons of mass destruction put the entire world in danger.
- 1.16 Military coups and internal conflicts, leading to the displacement of a large number of people, have increased on the African continent. Since 2022, there were eight coups in Africa, of which three were successful. More than 45 million people are displaced due to conflicts and social unrest. 15 countries, forming the contiguous areas of the Sahel region, Great Lakes and Horn of Africa are mainly affected by these conflicts. Sudan is the worst hit country among them, with a raging civil war. The US continues to intervene in the internal affairs of many countries in Africa through the AFRICOM, its military command centre. In the last three years, France was forced to withdraw its troops from its erstwhile colonies like Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Senegal and Ivory Coast. People are protesting demanding the withdrawal of foreign troops stationed in their lands. Many countries in Africa want to diversify their relations, which is resented by imperialist countries.
- 1.17 **Role of the UN:** The UN has failed to put an end to the most violent conflicts that we face in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, Congo, etc. It is becoming increasingly clear that real power lies in the hands of those who wield political, military, financial and veto power. Countries like the US and Israel are doing

whatever they want, including refusing to pay their share of UN budgets and outlawing the very UN organisations that have been commissioned to uphold international law. The failure of the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security is an expression of the unequal power among its members. This calls for an urgent democratisation of the UN and its various institutions.

- 1.18 **Move towards Multi-Polarity:** BRICS was expanded by including five new members from different regions of the world. The newly emerged BRICS Plus represents more than half of the global population and 37 per cent of the global GDP. These countries have decided to encourage trade in their own national currencies and thus cut dependence on the dollar for carrying out their trade. This would be a blow to US imperialism and its dollar hegemony. Many countries are showing interest in joining this grouping and have applied to become members. As a step towards further enlarging this group, some such countries are allowed to associate as 'Partner States.' BRICS is not an anti-imperialist platform but can well emerge as a multilateral forum that can challenge the US-led uni-polarity and work towards strengthening multi-polarity.

## **Global Economy**

- 1.19 A new normal characterised by sluggish growth has set in for the global economy. According to the IMF, global economic growth is projected to remain steady at 3.2 per cent in 2024 and 2025. These rates are below those registered in the years prior to the pandemic for both developed and developing economies and are insufficient to address economic, social, developmental and environmental challenges. This is particularly concerning for the 46 least developed countries and falls woefully short of the targeted 7 per cent needed to realise the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 1.20 **Rising Prices and Eroding Purchasing Power:** Inflation continues to be a major concern for people around the world. Consumer prices have risen by 4.3 per cent globally in 2024. The rising consumer prices have eroded purchasing power in both advanced and developing countries. In 2023, food commodity prices remained high and it was only in December 2023 that the UNCTAD food index declined below its February 2022 level. Even that is about 20 per cent above its pre-pandemic level. The prices of agricultural commodities, such as oilseeds and oils, experienced similar fluctuations, while the price of rice has not fallen below its February 2022 level. Prices of fertilisers also rose above pre-pandemic levels.
- 1.21 The rise in inflation is due to a combination of factors, including regional conflicts like in Ukraine, surging commodity prices, heightened market concentration and the pricing behaviour of large corporations, most notably agri-food and energy corporations. There will be no relief from higher commodity prices unless concerted actions to rein in anti-competitive practices, abuse of dominant market positions and corporate concentration in

key sectors, along with steps to curb financial speculation in agricultural commodities, are undertaken.

1.22 **Attacks on the Working Class:** The effects of rising commodity prices are severely felt by the working class, as their real wages did not increase. A total of 791 million workers have seen their wages fail to keep up with inflation and, as a result, have lost \$1.5 trillion over the last two years, equivalent to nearly a month (25 days) of lost wages for each worker. The fall in wages is also visible in the declining labour income share, which had fallen globally by 0.6 percentage points from 52.9 per cent in 2019 to 52.3 per cent in 2022 and has since remained flat. While the decrease appears modest in terms of percentage points, in 2024, it represents an annual shortfall in labour income of \$2.4 trillion (in constant PPP) compared to what workers would have earned had the labour income share remained stable since 2004. Due to the gender disparity in wages, women workers are facing even more hardships, as, for every dollar that a man earns, women are earning only 51.8 cents.

1.23 The fall in the labour share across both developed and developing economies, together with the increasing concentration of income at the higher end of the pyramid, points to the fact that those at the lower end are bearing the brunt of the reduction in the labour share. This is one of the main reason for rising inequalities and is also leading to the intensification of the contradiction between capital and labour.

1.24 **Rising Unemployment:** The global unemployment rate is around 5 per cent in recent years, with an extra two million workers losing their jobs in 2024. The global youth unemployment rate in 2023 is 13 per cent, or 64.9 million. Nearly four-fifths of the youth who find a job are under-employed, in insecure, casual employment, which is not well-paid. Even among the one-fifth, many are employed in contractual positions. The global incidence of youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) remains at 20.4 per cent in 2024. There are 27.6 million people performing forced labour in the world and the capitalists are earning \$236 billion as profits every year from forced labour. 86 per cent of forced labour is in the private sector. It becomes clear that capital wants labour at exploitative wages and employs workers in those forms of labour from which it can squeeze all their labour power.

1.25 **Gross Inequalities:** As of 2023, around 46 per cent of the world's population, or over three billion people, are living under the global poverty line of \$6.85 (2017 purchasing power parity) per day. The gap between the Global North and the Global South has grown for the first time in 25 years. Nearly 700 million people worldwide live in extreme poverty, surviving on less than \$2.15 per person per day. In 2023, 10.7 per cent of the world population (864.1 million people) was affected by severe food insecurity. Nearly 60 per cent of the people who go hungry are women and girls. The climate breakdown is also contributing to an increase in global inequality.

- 1.26 **Concentration of Wealth in Monopolies:** On the other hand, concentration of wealth is taking place at an alarming pace. The world's richest 1 per cent own more wealth than 95 per cent of humanity. Since 2020, the richest 1 per cent have captured almost two-thirds of all new wealth – nearly twice as much money as the bottom 99 per cent of the world's population. Billionaire fortunes are increasing by \$2.7 billion a day, even as inflation outpaces the wages of at least 1.7 billion workers.
- 1.27 The immense concentration of wealth is deeply intertwined with increasingly concentrated monopoly power. A small number of firms dominate key markets across the world, including pharmaceuticals, agriculture and technology. The top seven social media, tech and chip companies hold a market capitalisation of around \$12 trillion, while the other 493 companies are suffering from stagnation and decline. This increasing power of monopolies is used to influence government policies through lobbying, political donations, legal challenges, media control and threats of withholding investment to enact neoliberal policies. Governments are protecting corporate interests by lowering corporate taxes, weakening labour protections, privatising public services and imposing austerity measures. Neoliberal policies not only increase economic inequality but also erode democratic institutions, exposing the limitations of liberal democracy.
- 1.28 **Severe Debt Crisis:** As of 2024, 54 countries are in a debt crisis and net resource transfers from developing to developed countries have averaged \$700 billion a year. In the past three years alone, there have been 18 sovereign defaults in developing countries, including Sri Lanka – a greater number than that recorded in all of the previous two decades. An important factor in the sovereign debt distress faced by many countries is the increased prominence of private creditors. Over half of the external debt of low and middle-income countries is owed to private lenders such as banks and hedge funds. In 2022, developing countries paid their external private creditors nearly \$90 billion more than they received in disbursements.
- 1.29 Harmful loan conditionalities imposed by International Financial Institutions (IFIs) like the IMF and high rates of interest are some of the other factors leading to the debt crisis. These debts are a means for the transfer of resources from underdeveloped and developing countries to the rich and developed imperialist countries.
- 1.30 **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Artificial Intelligence tools demonstrate capabilities for tasks such as generating texts, images and videos. These tools/systems have attained the capability of automating a large number of tasks done by white-collar jobs, which were thought beyond the capability of machines. AI possesses neither near human-level intelligence nor shall attain it shortly. Unlike humans, AI relies on algorithms and statistical methods to produce content without understanding its meaning. AI systems are trained on large volumes of data, giving scope for biases based on the data it is trained on.



Working people in many sectors will have to fight threats to their jobs and the likely restructuring of the workplace. In this context, transparency in the algorithms and data becomes crucial for systems biases to be known and societal needs to be incorporated in any such automation. Deployment by governments and corporations raises concerns over opaque decision-making in critical services, necessitating robust regulation to prevent social biases. AI's militarisation (for example, target identification in Gaza) demands opposition to such automated warfare. Movements must address these digital-age challenges, must encourage and facilitate building people-centric AI with people's participation and must mirror efforts to protect rights in the physical world.

## **Escalating Protests**

1.31 Growing inequalities, unemployment and poverty have created widespread dissatisfaction and discontent. There have been waves of struggles since 2022, even in many developed countries like the US, the UK, France and Greece, as well as in Portugal, Argentina, Brazil, Kenya and South Africa. A cross-section of people joined these protests in many countries. In our neighbourhood, protests shook Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Workers and farmers in various countries have organized significant protests against governments' handling of economic crises, social inequality and political corruption. They demand fair wages, better working conditions and greater economic justice.

## **Growth of the Far-Right**

1.32 Exploiting genuine concerns about people's deteriorating living conditions, neo-fascist forces and far-right parties are gaining ground in some countries. They have benefited by rousing feelings of racism, xenophobia and fear of immigration. In the absence of a viable Left political alternative, people's discontent is being used by far-right forces to divide the unity visible during struggles. The anger against established political parties, both Social Democrats and Conservatives, for implementing neo-liberal policies, also led people to shift towards the extreme right, and this helped to ensure the electoral victories of far-right parties. These parties, once in power, not only pursue neo-liberal policies but also encourage the growth of divisive forces that threaten social unity. The political rightward shift noted in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress thus continues and has emerged as a serious threat.

1.33 Incumbent governments that presided over the post-pandemic period have been ousted in many countries. Indeed, it is the first time since the beginning of universal suffrage that all the incumbent parties in developed countries have lost their vote share. Overall, these elections reflect a growing fragmentation and polarisation, with social-democratic, centrist and green parties losing ground to right-wing forces.

- 1.34 Progressive forces were able to win elections in Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, Sri Lanka and Uruguay, where people voted against anti-people governments. Wherever the Left played an active role in popular protests and was able to differentiate itself from established political parties, they were able to win the confidence of the people and stop the advance of the far-right through their electoral victories.
- 1.35 However, in many other parts of the world, far-right forces were elected to government. In elections to the European Parliament, far-right parties advanced considerably in several countries. The election of Javier Milei in Argentina, Giorgia Meloni in Italy and Donald Trump in the US reflects the global trend of a rightward political shift. It ushers in a period of economic uncertainties, diplomatic challenges and environmental policy contradictions.
- 1.36 Immediately after Donald Trump took office, he made his aggressive and annexationist intentions clear by announcing that his administration would take back the Panama canal from Panama and once again placed Cuba in the list of State sponsors of terrorism. (Existing sentence retained) His statements on taking over Greenland, making Canada as the 51st state of the US demonstrate his expansionist agenda. He announced tariffs hikes on almost all countries, including India, to reignite trade wars that will adversely impact the world economy. Trump's presidency will not end wars, as he totally supports Israel and is also against the rise of any country that could challenge US economic power. Trump announced the withdrawal of the US from Paris Climate Accords, UN Human Rights Council and also the World Health Organisation (WHO), showing his contempt for international treaties and institutions. He also issued various executive orders for the implementation of his far-right domestic agenda, which are resulting in large scale closure of various federal departments and dismissing thousands of federal workers. The US is also deporting a large number of undocumented immigrants.

## **Climate Change**

- 1.37 Many of the far-right parties in developed countries that were elected to government are also climate-change deniers, which will negatively affect action to meet the climate challenge. The period from January to September 2024 has been the first almost year-long period in which the global average temperature stayed 1.5° Celsius or more above the pre-industrial average, threatening to breach the desired lower limit set in the Paris Agreement of 2015 for restricting global warming. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the top 1 per cent exceed those of the poorest two-thirds of the world, or five billion people. On the other hand, it is the poor and vulnerable of the Global South who are, and will be, the worst affected.
- 1.38 The rich, developed countries are not ready to own up to their responsibilities in contributing to the fight against climate change and for the protection of the environment. Developed countries are persisting with the use

of fossil fuels, reducing them slowly, while pushing developing countries to adopt expensive renewable energy sources and attempting to restrict their industrial growth and the provision of equitable energy access to their populations. At COP29, which concluded in Baku in 2024, the developed countries offered only \$300 billion to be fully available by 2035, as climate finance for developing countries. This so-called 'deal' is a pittance that poorer countries have been forced to accept and is a disaster for our planet and communities who are being threatened by flooding, starvation and displacement due to global warming. Instead of providing adequate finance, the developed countries wish to commodify nature further, putting the burden of reducing emissions on the shoulders of small farmers and rural populations. Even the modest gains in global food security are threatened by the push towards a shift to crop production for bio-fuels and energy, which will displace production for food and nutrition.

- 1.39 Wealthy countries responsible for over 75 per cent of global accumulated emissions since the start of industrialisation have a responsibility to support developing countries and pay them for climate adaptation, the loss and damage caused by the impacts of climate disasters and for a path of development, moving away in a just and equitable manner from fossil fuel dependence to societies based on renewable energy and climate resilience. Rich and developed countries owe trillions of dollars in climate debt annually as reparations to the developing countries. Left and progressive forces should join hands to pressurise advanced capitalist countries to commit to deeper emission cuts and honour their commitments on climate finance and technology transfer.
- 1.40 The growing debt burden of developing countries, rising inequalities and the refusal to take responsibility for global warming and ensure climate justice are intensifying the contradiction between the rich, advanced capitalist countries and the people of the developing countries.

## **Our Neighbourhood**

- 1.41 There are momentous developments in our neighbourhood, with many countries witnessing massive popular protests against their respective governments. Many of these protests are led by students and youth, who were joined by all sections of the people. The main demands common in most of these protests are the fight against corruption, rising costs of living, unemployment, economic crises and authoritarianism. Often, attempts are made to suppress these protests using brutal police and armed forces, but without success.
- 1.42 In Bangladesh, the authoritarian regime of Sheikh Hasina Wazed, who headed the Awami League, fell due to a popular movement led by students. These protests against corruption and quotas for descendants of freedom fighters soon spread and assumed a broader character. Jamaat-e-Islami utilised the popular discontent and joined these protests against the authoritarian rule of

the government. They were met with brutal repression, with hundreds killed in police firings. As the army refused to intervene in support of the government, Sheikh Hasina had to flee to India. An interim government was formed. Amidst the turmoil and chaos, Islamist fundamentalist forces have targeted and attacked minorities to create a communal divide. The secular opposition is also facing targeted attacks. Religious fundamentalist and extremist elements who were arrested and put in jail were released by the interim government. Attacks on the values of the 1971 liberation struggle and the constitution are giving rise to apprehensions about the proposed changes in the Constitution and the political system, questioning the very rationale of independent Bangladesh.

- 1.43 The United States and its western allies are trying to intervene and advance their interests. The strategic location of Bangladesh is an important reason for their interest in the country. The democratic forces have to ensure that the rights of minorities are protected. It is also upon them to ensure that the democracy and sovereignty of Bangladesh are safeguarded from all sorts of external influences and pressures. Only by addressing the genuine grievances of the people can they protect the country from falling prey to divisive and imperialist forces. As a country that shares history and a long land border with India, the developments in Bangladesh are bound to have an impact on our country too.
- 1.44 In the elections held in **Sri Lanka** for the presidency and subsequently for Parliament, people fed up with the corrupt elites represented by the two main ruling class parties voted decisively for change. A coalition led by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), the National People's Power (NPP), emerged victorious. Anura Kumara Dissanayake, JVP leader was elected the executive head of State in Sri Lanka in a historic verdict. In the parliamentary elections, the NPP recorded a resounding victory, where 70 per cent of elected MPs belong to this progressive, Left coalition. This is a very significant and positive development in our region. The Sri Lankan government should initiate measures for the devolution of powers to the North and East provinces.
- 1.45 In **Myanmar**, the rule of the military junta is being challenged by armed militias organised along ethnic lines. There is a virtual civil war raging in the country, with the military junta losing control over many parts. The toppling of a democratically elected government, brutal suppression of peaceful protests and the failure of the military administration to resolve growing economic hardships lie at the heart of the conflict between the military and the armed groups. The presence and support of imperialist agencies behind these clashes cannot be ruled out.
- 1.46 In **Pakistan**, a coalition government of the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was formed after the disqualification of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The army is playing a key role and intervening in the functioning of the government. The failure of the government to address the country's economic woes has once again led people

to take to the streets, protesting against the government's policies and attitude. Widespread protests were organised demanding the release of Imran Khan, who was imprisoned on various charges. Terrorist activities have increased posing a serious threat not only to Pakistan, but to the entire region.

- 1.47 The withdrawal of the US from **Afghanistan** led to the formation of the Taliban government, which is gradually being recognised by various countries. The Indian government has slowly established relations with the Taliban. The Taliban are continuing with their reactionary and regressive policies, particularly towards women.
- 1.48 The relations between the **Maldives** and India nosedived after the election of the new president of the Maldives. He was elected on an anti-India platform, campaigning against the enlarged presence of the Indian military in the Maldives, which was considered an affront to the sovereignty of that country. Efforts are now being made by the Maldives government to restore its relations with India.
- 1.49 In **Nepal**, the CPN(UML) is heading a coalition government formed along with the Nepali Congress. The formerly unified communist party has once again split into three different factions. The splits in the communist movement have distanced some people from these parties. The pro-monarchy forces are trying to utilise the popular discontent to once again gain acceptance among the people and emerge as an alternative political force. Pro-Hindutva, RSS elements are actively supporting these forces and are campaigning against the newly adopted secular constitution and the communist parties.

### **Socialist Countries**

- 1.50 **China:** The Political Resolution adopted in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress noted that the US has initiated a series of measures in order to not merely 'contain, but also to isolate China', categorising China as a 'strategic rival.' It was further noted: "US-China conflict will have an impact on the central contradiction between imperialism and socialism" (Para 1.29). In this period, the US has intensified its efforts to contain and isolate China, but without much success.
- 1.51 The United States is making every effort to block the access of Chinese high-tech enterprises to key technologies, core equipment and materials by erecting barriers. The US formed a 'Chip Four-Party Alliance' with South Korea, Japan and Taiwan in an attempt to exclude China from the global semiconductor supply chain. The Biden administration weaponised trade relations, raised tariffs to 'ultra-high' levels and declared a trade war. The US-led G-7 and NATO have openly declared that China is a major threat to their global dominance and vowed to strengthen alliances to contain, isolate and out-compete China.
- 1.52 In spite of all these attacks and withstanding them, China remains the biggest growth engine of the world economy, with its GDP expanding by 4.8

per cent year on year in the first three quarters of 2024 and on course to realise an annual growth target of around 5 per cent. Its GDP surpassed 126 trillion yuan in 2023, an increase of 5.2 per cent. The Chinese currency's share in global foreign exchange turnover has increased from less than 1 per cent 20 years ago to more than 7 per cent now, signifying its emergence as one of the trusted economic powerhouses. China has decided to strengthen the State-owned sector and ensure that State capital and State-Owned Enterprises get stronger, do better and grow bigger, with their core functions and core competitiveness enhanced. It also announced nearly \$900 billion in stimulus to further reinvigorate its economy.

1.53 More than 150 countries and more than 30 international organisations have joined the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China. The BRI is viewed as an important platform for international cooperation on an equal and mutually beneficial basis. There is also a marked change in China's approach to international relations. It is now actively involved in various developments and in the resolution of conflicts, such as proposing a plan for ending the war in Ukraine, helping Iran and Saudi Arabia restore relations and bringing together various factions and groups of Palestinian organisations fighting against Israel.

1.54 **Vietnam:** Vietnam is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, with its GDP growth projected at 6.8-7 per cent in 2024. Per capita GDP has reached \$4900 in 2024, up from \$200 three decades ago. Multidimensional poverty rate has come down to around 1 per cent, while unemployment rate is around 4 per cent. The Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) has decided to crack down on wastefulness and corruption and improve the operational efficiency of State-Owned Enterprises to lead the country on the path of progress.

1.55 **Cuba:** The Cuban economy is yet to overcome the economic setbacks suffered due to the Covid pandemic, on top of the tightened economic blockade. Remittances, which are an important source of income, are cut off and due to the US sanctions imposed on countries that supply fuel, fuel has become scarce. Cuba is in the process of overcoming all these crises, particularly the scarcity of food, fuel and electricity. It is resisting an intensified attack from US imperialism, which believes the time is ripe for enforcing a regime change and is trying to incite unrest by spreading lies.

1.56 **DPRK:** North Korea's economy grew sharply in 2023 after shrinking for three straight years as trade with China increased. Its GDP grew by 3.1 per cent, industrial output by 4.9 per cent (the fastest in seven years), the construction sector by 8.2 per cent (the biggest since 2002) and the agricultural sector grew by 1.0 per cent. The DPRK and Russia agreed to expand cooperation in trade, economy and investment as they signed a mutual defence pact, cementing their ties.

1.57 **Laos:** Laos' GDP is expected to grow by 4.6 per cent in 2024, surpassing its target, with a boost from the tourism, transport, logistics and energy sectors. Despite significant challenges over the past year, including inflation, exchange rate fluctuations, rising commodity prices, foreign debt burdens and severe floods, the government has managed to sustain economic growth. The Lao People's Revolutionary Party has prioritised the need to tackle public debt, inflation, exchange rates and rising living costs.

1.58 All through this period, imperialism has increased its attacks on China, Cuba and the DPRK. Imperialism has clearly declared its objective of ensuring a regime change. Communist parties, socialism and Marxism-Leninism are explicitly identified as threats to imperialism. All efforts are being made to demean communist ideology and destabilise these socialist countries, intensifying the central contradiction between imperialism and socialism.

### **International Communist Cooperation and Anti-Imperialist Solidarity**

1.59

- i) In the background of intensified imperialist aggression, capitalist exploitation and the growth of far-right forces, solidarity and cooperation between communist and workers' parties assume greater significance. Coordinated actions, solidarity movements and mobilising all the forces fighting against imperialism are a priority.
- ii) The CPI(M) will join hands with all those forces struggling against imperialism and neoliberalism and for the protection of the environment and climate justice.
- iii) The CPI(M) reiterates its solidarity with the people of Palestine. It stands for the establishment of the State of Palestine with pre-1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital.
- iv) The CPI(M) expresses its solidarity with all the socialist countries – China, Vietnam, Cuba, the DPRK and Laos. It firmly supports their efforts for socialist construction in their respective countries and in the fight against imperialism.
- v) The CPI(M) stands with the people of Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Colombia, Uruguay, Brazil and other Latin American countries who are resisting imperialist attempts to subjugate them and override their sovereignty.
- vi) The CPI(M) stands with all the people who are fighting against all forms of neo-fascism, terrorism, religious fanaticism, racism, patriarchy, ethnic chauvinism and all sorts of reactionary forces.

## **National Situation**

### **Main Features of the National Situation**

2.1 Three years after the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress, the main features of the national situation are as follows:

- i) The period has seen an aggressive continuation of the Hindutva drive of the BJP government through various State-sponsored activities, such as the inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya in January 2024, the adoption of a Uniform Civil Code by the Uttarakhand BJP state government and the passing of various laws in the BJP-ruled states targeting Muslim minorities, like the prohibition of interfaith marriages and the proposed Waqf (Amendment) Bill in Parliament. At the ground level, there are constant and recurrent instances of violence against Muslim minorities using all religious festival processions and through claims over mosques. This is aimed at creating a permanent communal divide and consolidating an overarching pan-Hindu identity.
- ii) The economic policies pursued by the BJP government have been primarily aimed at facilitating the transfer of resources and assets to big capitalists. A chosen group of big companies has reaped super profits through infrastructure and energy projects. These policies have led to sluggish growth, rising inequalities, unemployment and inflation.
- iii) The last three years witnessed a heightened attack on democracy and the democratic rights of citizens. The use of Central agencies to file cases and imprison opposition leaders became more brazen, utilising the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the stringent Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Independent media and journalists were also targeted. The curbs on the functioning of Parliament became more severe.
- iv) The unitary drive of the Centre intensified with further assaults on states' rights; denial of resources to opposition-ruled states; and the interference of Governors in the affairs of state governments becoming more blatant.
- v) The pro-US foreign policy and strategic ties with US imperialism were strengthened. However, the realities of a growing multi-polar world have compelled the Modi government to make India an active partner in BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
- vi) The period saw various struggles by the working class against privatisation, the imposition of labour codes, for minimum wages and the right to form unions. The united peasant movement continued its struggle for a legal basis for a minimum support price, comprehensive loan waiver and other demands. There were growing joint activities



between Central trade unions (CTU) and the united kisan platform (SKM).

- vii) The 2024 Lok Sabha election result was a setback for the BJP. It failed to get a majority in the Lok Sabha and has to depend on its NDA partners in the coalition government. However, the BJP seeks to overcome this weakness by pushing ahead with its Hindutva-corporate and authoritarian agenda.

## **Economic Slowdown**

2.2 The GDP growth figures being officially put out are suspect, given the fact that the calculation is based on an implicit inflation rate that is not even a fourth of that emerging from the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Despite such manipulated figures, the fact cannot be hidden that there is an economic slowdown. The advanced GDP estimates for 2024-25 have pegged India's real GDP growth at 6.4 per cent, as compared to 8.2 per cent growth in the previous year. A capitalist recovery from the Covid crisis, based on intensifying the burden on the working people, has, therefore, proved to be extremely short-lived and illusory.

2.3 The reason for this continuing economic crisis is a lack of demand in the economy – that means, the people do not have enough purchasing power in their hands. This is because the vast majority of the Indian people have to live on meagre earnings or wages. Recently released data of household consumer expenditure for 2023-24 shows that the average monthly spending of a four-member family would be only Rs 8,079 in rural areas and Rs 14,528 in urban areas. This is compounded by raging unemployment and inflation, especially of food items, both of which further erode earnings. If there is weak demand, production is kept below capacity and there is no interest in expanding productive capacities through fresh investment. The government's continued lowering of customs duties has led to increased imports, which destroy domestic industry and create an ever-growing trade deficit. Weakness in the economy also catalyses an erosion in the value of the rupee, which, in turn, further increases the cost of imports. There is thus an ever-widening crisis, which the Modi government is clueless about, except for shamelessly manipulating policies to benefit the corporate sector. Meanwhile, a sluggish economy, low incomes, rising costs and rampant joblessness continue to haunt the people, with no support from the government.

2.4 The government is earning more revenues from income tax than from taxing corporates. The percentage of revenue earned from income taxes has increased from 20.8 per cent in 2014-15 to 30.9 per cent in 2024-25. In 2017-18, corporate taxes accounted for almost 32 per cent of gross tax revenues, but they have fallen to 26.5 per cent in the 2024-25 budget. Every year, the government is losing nearly Rs. 1.45 lakh crore due to the cut in corporate

taxes. This shows the blatant bias of the government towards corporates, even at the cost of cutting down expenditures on the social sector. Despite many government incentives, like the cut in corporate tax, private capital is not ready to invest because there is no demand for the goods produced. The reason for the lack of demand is the stagnation in the real wages of workers and the falling purchasing power of people.

- 2.5 The Central government is spending less than 7 per cent of the GDP on the social sector, in contrast to 21 per cent spent by the OECD countries. As a share of the total budget expenditure, the social sector budget outlay for 2024-25 is less than that for 2020-21 by as much as 40 per cent and as a percentage of the GDP, it has exactly halved. As a result, monies allocated for MGNREGA, food subsidy, social welfare, education, health and fertiliser subsidy have all been cut. The lack of government support has added to the increasing costs of living, falling purchasing power and impoverishment.

### **Transfer of Resources and Corporate Loot**

- 2.6 The Modi government has framed a gamut of policies to restructure the overall economic management to hand over natural resources and public assets to the big capitalists. The National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) was launched in the 2021-22 budget to hand over the monopoly rights of the highly developed landed properties with corridors like national highways, railways, airports, pipelines, transmission lines, etc., to private capitalists and financial firms in the name of long-term leasing. Massive government investments are being made in infrastructure under the National Infrastructure Pipeline and the five largest corporates are minting a huge amount of money out of these projects. Another feature is the expropriatory routes to hand over the country's natural resources to foreign and domestic private players. The National Mineral Policy 2019 was adopted to auction mineral blocs to private parties to extract natural resources like iron ore, coal and bauxite. The latest move is the amendment to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, allowing the private sector to mine critical minerals like lithium and cobalt. Finally, through capital investment incentives, a modified special incentive package scheme and various sectoral production-linked incentives, mechanisms have been put in place to directly transfer funds to the corporate kitty. In addition, 16.61 lakh crores in bank loans mainly to big business have been written off since 2014. The main beneficiaries are a clutch of big business houses. Five big corporates – Ambani, Adani, Tata, Aditya Birla and Bharti Telecom – own more than 20 per cent of non-financial sector assets. This shows the degree of concentration of wealth and monopolisation taking place.

### **Intensified Inequality**

- 2.7 India has become one of the world's most unequal countries. According to the World Inequality Report, by 2022-23, the top 1 per cent of the population grabs 22.6 per cent of all income and owns 40.1 per cent of the country's wealth.

This is the highest share ever in the history of India, even more than the British Raj era. India's top 1 per cent income share is among the very highest in the world, higher than even South Africa, Brazil and the US. On the other hand, the bottom 50 per cent in India own only 3 per cent of the country's wealth.

- 2.8 The extreme concentration of wealth during the Modi years is illustrated by the fact that, according to the Forbes List of Billionaires, there were 100 billionaires in 2014, the year Modi became Prime Minister and that number has now doubled to 200 in 2024. Further, the 100 richest of them have a combined wealth which crossed a trillion dollars for the first time. This is the hallmark of ten years of the Modi government's rule.

### **Agrarian Distress**

- 2.9 Agriculture is the sector that is the worst hit by the neo-liberal and pro-corporate policies of the Modi-led BJP-NDA regime. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data shows that from 2014 (the first year of the Modi regime) to 2022 (the last year for which data is available), 1,00,474 farmers and agricultural workers in India were forced to commit suicide, mainly due to indebtedness. In the Global Hunger Index 2024, India is ranked 105<sup>th</sup> out of 127 countries. Some of the basic reasons for the underlying agrarian crisis, which have further aggravated during this period, are: (a) Spiralling costs of cultivation due to cuts in government subsidies and encouragement to corporates in the production of agricultural inputs; (b) No commensurate rise, and often even a fall, in the prices of crops due to the refusal of the central government to implement a remunerative MSP at one and a half times the comprehensive cost of production (C2+50 per cent); (c) Lack of adequate insurance cover to compensate for the huge crop losses due to natural calamities, which are intensifying due to climate change; and the Prime Minister Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) proving to be a farce for farmers and a bonanza for insurance companies, who are making an average gross profit to the tune of 25 per cent; (d) A skewed bank credit policy, which is heavily weighted in favour of corporates and against farmers is driving them into the clutches of rapacious private money-lenders and micro-financial institutions and hence into a debt trap.

- 2.10 Yet another fundamental reason for the worsening agrarian crisis and the serious plight of the peasantry is the constant slashing of public investment in agriculture and allied sectors. The total allocations for agriculture and allied sectors in the recent Union budget declined from 5.44 per cent in 2019 to 3.15 per cent in 2024. Fertiliser and food subsidies were slashed. The MNREGA allocation is Rs. 86,000 crore, less than what was spent in the previous year. Allocations for the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, the PM Fasal Bima Yojana and other schemes have all been cut. Funds for agricultural R&D and extension services have all dried up to help the MNCs.

- 2.11 The main focus of the central government is on the corporatisation of agriculture to benefit predatory agribusinesses, reflected in the introduction of the National Policy Framework on Agriculture Markets. Electricity is being privatised, as seen in the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, the smart meter installation drive, the growing clout of Adani Power, Reliance Power, Tata Power, etc., and the massive tariff hikes in power for both rural and urban consumers. The same holds true for the irrigation sector. In the name of digitalisation, the government has launched an all-out assault on the rights of the rural poor, evident in the plight of MNREGA workers. In the last two years, as many as 8 crore registered MNREGA workers were de-registered and denied their rightful work benefits, in clear violation of the law. Rural landlessness and inequality in ownership of agricultural land have increased sharply. According to the 5<sup>th</sup> National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted in 2019-21, 47.8 per cent of rural households did not own any agricultural land; the top 20 per cent of rural households owned 82 per cent of the agricultural land.
- 2.12 The conditions of the rural poor have worsened with the reverse flow of workers into agriculture. Real rural wages fell by minus 0.4 per cent and real agricultural wages hardly registered any increase with 0.2 per cent growth. The fall in real rural wages is an indication of the intensification of the exploitation of the rural workers by the rural rich nexus. Poor tenant farmers have also borne the brunt of the crisis. The rural distress has led to increasing suicides by agricultural workers. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 6,087 agricultural workers committed suicide in 2022, an increase from 5,563 suicides in 2021.

### **Intensified Exploitation of the Working Class**

- 2.13 This period has witnessed an all out assault on the hard-won rights of the working classes. The BJP government is aggressively trying to implement the four notorious labour codes which have been stalled by the strength of the united trade union movement. The Central government and many state governments have through their policies ensured exploitative changes in the methods of hiring labour. The process of contractorisation of labour, an essential component of neo-liberal policies, has intensified with the percentage of contract workers in the formal manufacturing workforce increasing from 36.38 per cent in 2018 to 40.72 per cent in 2023. This intensified exploitation of labour is reflected in the shocking figure that the growth of wages in the organised sector dropped to just 6 per cent between 2014-15 to 2020-21 compared to the previous six years of a 10.1 per cent growth. Given the high inflation rates, the real wages of workers have thus declined. Another way of looking at the exploitation in the industrial sector is the share of wages in the net value added. This declined by three percentage points from 18.9 per cent in 2020 to 15.9 per cent in 2023. In the

same period the share of profits rose to 51.9 per cent of the net value added from 38.7 per cent.

- 2.14 In most parts of the country minimum wages are not being paid. The number of hours of work is being arbitrarily increased upto 12 hours and more in some states. No overtime is paid. The right to unionise is also under attack, with governments siding with big companies in the name of ensuring ease of business. With decreased bargaining power and the dark shadow of unemployment looming, contract workers are vulnerable to being fired if they dare to organise.
- 2.15 The expansion of the retail sector with the gig economy services employs 77 lakh workers on contract or as temporary workers, and as freelancers by scores of digital platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Swiggy, Zomato, Uber and other companies. There are no mandatory and separate labour laws for this growing workforce leaving them in the most terrible conditions.
- 2.16 The Central government has set the framework for anti-labour practices in its treatment of its own employees such as scheme workers, a large majority of whom are women. It is shameful that the central government, exploiting women's desperate need to earn an income, refuses to recognise the lakhs of workers employed in services such as Anganwadis, Mid-Day Meal, ASHA, as workers and provide even minimum rights such as minimum wage, pensions, etc. The Modi government has proved to be the most anti-worker government.
- 2.17 The horrible plight of migrant workers in India was highlighted during the Covid period where an estimated 12 crore workers were severely affected. However, there is no reliable data on the numbers of migrant workers in India, with some official estimates claiming that there is a decrease in their numbers. In fact, given the extent of agrarian distress and the lack of agricultural work, as there is no alternative employment in rural India, the numbers of migrants both in short term circular migration or long term has more likely increased. Despite many promises made after the Covid experience, there is no mitigation of the plight of migrant workers dependent on contractors with little or no government support. Women migrant workers are the worst affected.

## Conditions of the People

- 2.18 **Burden of Price Rise:** Continuing rise in prices, especially of essential food items, has devastated household budgets which are already meagre due to the low earnings of working people. In the past three years, while the general price rise, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, was estimated at about 20 per cent, food prices increased by 26 per cent. Since most people

spend nearly half of their earnings on food, these increases have driven up the cost of living mercilessly. Apart from food, prices of several other essential commodities have been jacked up by the Modi government's own decisions. For example, prices of several medicines have been allowed to be increased by the government body that is supposed to control prices. The most egregious example of government-driven price rise is in petroleum products. Retail prices of petrol and diesel have been maintained at a high level because of high excise duty imposed by the Modi government, even though international prices of crude oil have fallen by 18 per cent in recent months. Hikes in fuel prices lead to an increase in transport costs, which in turn is borne by the people through higher prices of food items, among others. The cooking gas subsidy was also ended, leading to a huge increase in its price. Hike in electricity tariffs has become a common feature. Adding to these burdens is the imposition of GST on many essential commodities, increasing their prices. In short, the government has been squeezing common people through manipulating prices in order to transfer resources either to its own coffers or to big businesses and wholesale traders.

- 2.19 **Unemployment:** The crisis of jobs in the country has worsened in multiple ways in the past few years, with the much-heralded recovery after the pandemic failing to materialise. Government data (PLFS) on unemployment expectedly shows only about a 3 per cent overall unemployment rate in 2023-24, but other estimates, like those of the CMIE, peg it at nearly 8 per cent in September 2024, after remaining between 6-9 per cent for the past several months. Moreover, there are lakhs of vacancies in government and public sector enterprises which the government is refusing to fill. Even the government is forced to record that among youth (15-29 years), the overall unemployment rate is much higher at over 10 per cent, and even higher at nearly 15 per cent in urban areas. These numbers, however, do not capture the dire situation because most working-age people accept any work, at the most dismal wages and conditions, in order to survive and thus get counted as 'employed'. This is nothing but hidden or disguised unemployment. Another grim trend of recent years, which has gathered momentum post-pandemic, is the growth in the share of persons working in agriculture, while the manufacturing sector has seen a decline. Far from providing stable, well-paying and secure jobs, government policy has reversed earlier trends, pushing people back into an already saturated farming sector with its low returns and seasonal work.

## **Pushing the Hindutva Agenda**

- 2.20 The events in the past three years provide ample proof and confirmation that the RSS agenda to make Hindutva the State ideology and transform the secular-democratic Republic into a Hindu Rashtra is being pursued systematically. Central to this project is targeting the Muslims as the 'other' to create an overarching pan-Hindu identity. The inauguration of the Ram

temple at Ayodhya in January 2024 became a State-sponsored event, with the Prime Minister himself conducting the religious rituals. The next step has been to target the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi and the Eidgah in Mathura to establish legal disputes on these two sites by claiming that there were Hindu temples existing there. This was the original VHP slogan that the three sites in Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura should be handed over to Hindus to build temples. Local courts have entertained suits and ordered surveys of the premises of the mosques to ascertain whether any temples existed before. This was facilitated by judicial connivance at the highest level when the then Chief Justice of India, D.Y. Chandrachud, allowed surveys to go on, stating that this does not violate the provisions of the Places of Worship Act, 1991. This has now led to a chain of legal cases – in Sambhal and Ajmer.

- 2.21 Taking out religious processions during festivals like Ram Navami, Hanuman Jayanti and Ganesh Puja, entering minority areas and causing provocations leading to clashes, have become a regular feature, particularly in BJP-ruled states. In all these incidents, it is the members of the minority community who face police repression. The use of bulldozers to demolish houses of Muslims, initiated in Uttar Pradesh, has spread to Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi, Assam etc. What is now evident is that such targeting of minorities during Hindu festivals is not a random occurrence but a regular feature to create polarisation and make the communal divide permanent. Hindutva extremist groups like gau rakshaks indulge in lynchings and in violence with impunity against minorities and they get State support, with the victims being penalised.
- 2.22 BJP-ruled states in this period have further enacted laws targeting the minorities and making some of the existing laws more stringent. In Uttar Pradesh, for instance, interfaith marriage called as ‘love jihad’ will now incur life imprisonment. New terms like ‘land jihad’ and ‘food jihad’ have been coined to facilitate Muslim baiting. The BJP government in Assam has gone farther than most other governments in this regard. Even in states with tiny Muslim populations like Uttarakhand, calls for Muslim shopkeepers to shut down shops and calls for boycotts of Muslim traders have taken place.
- 2.23 The Hindutva forces are targeting Christians also in their anti-minority campaign. In 2024, there were 834 incidents of violence against Christians, up from 734 incidents in 2023. Attacks on churches, prayer meetings, ostracisation and filing of criminal cases using stringent anti-conversion laws are some of the ways the Christians are harassed. RSS-affiliated organisations are conducting campaigns against Christian adivasis with the demand to de-schedule all adivasis who have converted, so that they cannot avail of the Scheduled Tribe status.

## **Authoritarianism Reinforced**

- 2.24 The 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress Political Resolution had noted the consolidation of authoritarianism by various anti-democratic measures. The last three years have seen an intensification of these trends. Further steps were taken to curtail Parliament, weaken the higher judiciary and erode the independent status of the Election Commission.
- 2.25 Parliament saw the virtual suspension of the opposition. Important issues of public concern were not allowed to be discussed, such as ethnic violence in Manipur. In an unprecedented step, 146 Members of Parliament of the opposition from both Houses were suspended during the winter session in 2023. Important Bills were not sent to the parliamentary committees for scrutiny and were railroaded through the passage. The new Parliament building was inaugurated by the Prime Minister with Brahmanical rituals and a 'Sengol' placed behind the Speaker's Chair.
- 2.26 Draconian laws like the UAPA and the PMLA were used against opposition leaders, either to make them defect to the BJP or to put them in jail. For the first time in our political history, two Chief Ministers of Jharkhand and Delhi were arrested and put in jail in the run-up to the Lok Sabha polls. Arrests and detention of journalists and targeting of independent media continued. The three criminal laws to replace the earlier criminal codes have come into force after having been passed in Parliament without discussion. These three laws have enhanced the powers of the police in terms of custodial remand and broadened stringent clauses like sedition without naming the offence as such. The Telecommunications Act has come into force, which strengthens the surveillance structure, infringing on the citizens' right to privacy.
- 2.27 Reinforcing the authoritarian architecture, the government has sought to tame the higher judiciary by refusing to implement the recommendations of the Supreme Court collegium in many cases concerning the appointment of High Court judges or Chief Justices of High Courts. More and more, the higher judiciary is acting like an 'executive judiciary'.

## **Election Commission Undermined**

- 2.28 The Election Commission has seen a steady whittling down of its autonomous status. The Act on the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners, passed by Parliament, is contrary to the direction of the Supreme Court, giving the executive a majority in the selection committee. The Election Commission has stopped intervening when it comes to communal campaigning by the BJP leadership. The EC is also becoming pliable to the executive's directions on the scheduling of elections. The conduct of elections has become non-transparent, with various unexplained outcomes such as a wide gap between



polled votes and votes counted; additions and deletions in the voter's list; and the functioning of EVMs.

- 2.29 The electoral bonds scheme, which institutionalised corrupt corporate funding to the ruling party, was struck down by the Supreme Court in 2024 as unconstitutional. This ruling vindicated the stand of the CPI(M), which had not only declared, at the outset, that it would not accept electoral bonds but also challenged the scheme in the Supreme Court. Notwithstanding the scrapping of electoral bonds, huge amounts of money are deployed during elections, at various levels, to influence voters and vitiate the polling process. The politician-business nexus is the source of these illegal funds. The question of electoral reforms has assumed urgency in such a situation where decisive measures are required to curb money power in the electoral system.

### **Dismantling Federalism**

- 2.30 The Modi government continued its drive to centralise all powers, dismantling the federal framework and delegitimising the federal principle. Through a combination of measures – political, economic and fiscal – the Modi government has redefined the power dynamics between the Central government and the states. The Centre, through measures such as reducing the divisible pool of taxes, denial of resources to the states and non-continuation of GST compensation, has created a fiscal crisis for many opposition-ruled states. The states' share of Central tax transfers has declined. This is reflected in the reduction of the allotment of funds for the states' share of the divisible pool in Central budgets over the years. While it stood at 41.1 per cent in 2016, it came down to 35.1 per cent in 2023. The Centre's increasing reliance on non-divisible cesses and surcharges has reduced the overall divisible pool of tax revenue shared with the states. With shrinking resources, the states are then faced with increasing restrictions on borrowing. This prevents them from raising resources for developmental activities and welfare measures.
- 2.31 After the advent of the Modi government for the second term, there was a steady increase in the intervention by Governors in opposition-ruled states. The Governors began encroaching on the powers of the state government and legislature. Arbitrary appointments of Vice-Chancellors, denial of approval for legislations passed by the assembly and efforts to bypass the state government by summoning senior officials have become common occurrences. Governors are being used to undermine the basic structure of Centre-State relations. Further, by insisting that a scheme with minimal Central assistance be branded as a Central scheme and threatening to cut off funds to other schemes, the Centre seeks to appropriate the developmental schemes of the states.

- 2.32 That the BJP will continue with its centralisation drive is evident from its pursuit of the ‘One Nation, One Election’ (ONOE) system. The government has introduced a Constitutional Amendment Bill and another Bill in Parliament for simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and all state assemblies. Such a system will seriously curtail the rights of the states and the Constitutional guarantee of a five-year term. The ONOE will lead to authoritarian centralisation.
- 2.33 It is the twin forces of Hindutva and big corporates that are fueling the centralisation drive. It is, therefore, important to make the defence of federalism and state rights a part of the anti-authoritarian, anti-Hindutva struggle. All non-BJP state governments should be mobilised to present a united front to defend the states’ rights.

### **Jammu and Kashmir: Symbol of Assault on Democracy and Federalism**

- 2.34 What has happened in Jammu and Kashmir is a symbol of the extreme anti-democratic, anti-federal approach of the BJP government. After the abrogation of Article 370 and the dismantling of the state of J&K in 2019, state repression and denial of the rights of citizens of the union territory became the norm. Measures to remove the domicile status of the permanent residents and their land rights were undertaken. Delimitation was done in a way to diminish the representation of the Valley in the new assembly. The Supreme Court, by dismissing the challenge to the abrogation of Article 370 and the dismantling of the state of J&K, struck a blow against federalism and the rights of elected state legislatures.
- 2.35 Finally, when elections were held for the assembly in September 2024, despite all the machinations of the BJP, the National Conference-led alliance won a clear majority and the Omar Abdullah government has taken over with very limited powers. However, the assurance of statehood by the Centre to the Supreme Court is yet to be fulfilled. Meanwhile, in Ladakh, there is a popular movement for acquiring Sixth Schedule status and autonomy. The aim of the secular-democratic forces is to achieve statehood immediately while continuing the struggle for the restoration of special status.

### **Manipur: Deepening Divide**

- 2.36 Almost two years after the eruption of ethnic violence in Manipur, the situation remains dire with new areas of conflict emerging. The Chief Minister Biren Singh, the main culprit backed all along by the RSS-BJP, was forced to resign because his partisan role was being examined by a court. The consequent imposition of President’s Rule was imposed not in the interests of the state but to settle the internal conflicts within the ruling coalition. Even after the imposition of direct Central rule, the Central government has not taken any measures to heal the deep divisions created

among the people. The conflict has left more than 250 people dead and displaced thousands of families, 60,000 people still live in relief camps in terrible conditions. Heinous acts such as rape, kidnapping, arson, murder were committed and in most cases, justice is still awaited. The Prime Minister's callous refusal to visit the state even once symbolises the utter bankruptcy of the double engine government.

- 2.37 The Centre seems oblivious to the dangerous consequences of its inaction and its dependence on security forces, instead of political intervention, which could escalate the conflict in Manipur and threaten peace across the entire North-Eastern region. The Centre must immediately intervene to initiate a dialogue with representatives of the people, political parties and various ethnic groups. This is essential to ensure that the rights of all communities are safeguarded and peace and normalcy are restored while protecting the democratic rights of the people in the state, including the holding of elections within a timeframe.

#### North-East

- 2.38 The North-East region consisting of eight states continues to suffer from the problems of economic and infrastructural backwardness, exacerbated by the scrapping of special fund to the North-East reflected in the reduction of allocations to the North-East by as much as 13,000 crores rupees in this year's budget. This discrimination and neglect by the Modi government is combined with the undemocratic and communal approach of the RSS-BJP on the question of ethnic diversity and beliefs.
- 2.39 In Assam, a virulent communal campaign against minorities is being led by the Chief Minister while the promise to include six communities in the SC/ST scheduled list has not been fulfilled. Such policies have created a fertile ground for communal and ethnic tensions in the entire North-East region.

#### **Foreign Policy and Strategic Ties with the US**

- 2.40 Close coordination with the US marked the foreign policy of the Modi government in its second term and that is bound to continue with Trump assuming the Presidency. With the exception of the Ukraine-Russia conflict, where India has sought to take a neutral position, India's foreign policy has been broadly aligned with the geopolitical designs of the US. India's stand on Ukraine got grudging acceptance from the United States because it gives greater importance to India's role in the anti-China alliance in the Asia-Pacific region. The QUAD was upgraded to the level of leadership summits and the Modi government acquiesced in the US efforts to convert the QUAD into a security and strategic alliance. India became a critical part of the US' defence and security orbit with the signing of the Critical and

Emerging Technology (2022) and the Security of Supply Arrangements and Reciprocal Defence Procurement Arrangement (2023) pacts. Over the past seven years, India has bought arms worth \$15 billion from the US.

- 2.41 The USA-India-Israel axis has resulted in the shameful support for Israel in its genocidal war against Gaza. India has abstained on resolutions supporting the Palestinian cause in the UN General Assembly. Moreover, India is exporting arms and ammunition to Israel, which is used for the conduct of its war in Gaza. The I2U2 (India, Israel, US and UAE) and IMEC (India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor) are two pro-US groupings that are floated with an aim to align Indian foreign policy with that of the US, particularly in West Asia. India's membership in BRICS and the SCO is a recognition of the growing multi-polarity in the world. But its strategic ties with the United States are detrimental to India utilising all the opportunities that the growing multi-polarity provides.

### **Shrinking Educational Access**

- 2.42 Education has suffered the severest assault during the last three years. The most defining feature of this attack has been the severe erosion of access to education. Thousands of government schools have been closed down in the name of 'viability', in complete contravention of the Right to Education Act, which mandates schools in the neighbourhood. With notable exceptions like Kerala, the privatisation drive is leading to an exodus of pupils from government schools to private schools. The same principle has been applied to undergraduate institutions, resulting in a sharp increase in college dropout rates. The government's overall drive to reduce allocation and expenditure for the social sector, through defunding and underfunding, has been a key factor in this adverse development. This new policy thrust has been facilitated by the large-scale and protracted lockdown of educational institutions in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.43 Another aspect of this attack is the broader assault on science, scientific temperament and rational thinking. Belief-based content has been promoted, a hallmark of moves towards authoritarian and fascistic principles. This direction not only fosters communal and identity-based hate-mongering but also redefines the democratic and secular identity of the republic and its citizens along Hindutva-oriented lines. This shift has been particularly evident in the appointment and capture of specialised policy bodies and institutions, extending up to universities and other higher education establishments.
- 2.44 The large-scale resource gap caused by the withdrawal of government funding is now being filled by extensive corporate investment for profit. This has resulted in the substitution of teacher-student-driven physical interaction with digital instruction, leaving the educational process entirely at the mercy of digital platforms promoted by education corporates.

2.45 The implementation of the National Education Policy 2020 has been accompanied by the extreme centralisation of the sector's management, decisively undermining federal principles. In the name of three-language formula, Hindi is sought to be imposed. A key element of this centralisation has been the misuse of the post of Chancellor, with Governors acting as instruments to push the agenda of the central government, in clear contravention of the constitutional scheme. The UGC Draft Guidelines seek to vest the Chancellor with the selection of the Vice-Chancellors of state universities. Further, in many states, student unions are not allowed in colleges and universities.

### **Privatising Healthcare**

2.46 India has been facing several adversities related to public health in recent times. The already lowest public share in health financing of all major economies has been further lowered and the out-of-pocket burden has increased. Corporatisation and profiteering of health care and medical education have grown to unbelievable levels. Publicly paid private care has become the norm through insurance schemes like PMJAY, institutionalising corruption, while public health care infrastructure and services have got weaker. The public sector pharma and health technology sector have been systematically weakened, whereas poorly regulated corporate chains are gaining a monopoly. Even R&D has been handed over to private sector cronies, including for vaccines. Occupational health challenges are mounting, including in the gig economy. Digitisation and related techno-centric reforms are further marginalising already deprived populations. People's health outcomes, especially for the poor, are worsening, even as the public health system is sharply deteriorating. All this is happening despite the disastrous experience that India had during the Covid pandemic, which thoroughly exposed the bankruptcy of the public health system in the country.

2.47 Despite health being a state subject, hurdles are being created for those states trying to strengthen public health systems by undermining fiscal federalism. The BJP government is unleashing false claims and propaganda on health status and health care while shutting down avenues for seeking accountability. The much-needed periodic health surveys have been maligned and compromised. In the pharmaceutical sector, the government continues with policies that promote super-profits for corporates by allowing huge increases in the prices of essential non-patented medicines and not challenging the exorbitant prices that MNCs charge for patented drugs. The struggle for people's right to health and for universal access to publicly funded healthcare must be carried forward as part of alternative policies.

### **Onslaught on Culture**

2.48 The RSS has increased its hold on cultural and research institutions by infiltrating them with its elements. They seek to rewrite Indian history from a communal standpoint, and to project mythology as real history. The role and contributions of non-Hindus to Indian history and culture are undermined and negated. The secular and progressive legacy of social reform and the National Movement is being tarnished. A false sense of pride is promoted using fake narratives. The Hindutva communal agenda cannot succeed until it becomes part of the ‘common sense’ of the people at large. For this, propagation via popular culture is crucial. Thus their unrelenting efforts to infiltrate and control the film industry, television channels and OTT platforms, popular music, and even, of late, high art. The projection of what were regional or local religious festivals on an all-India scale is also part of this effort to create a homogenous ‘Hindu’ identity. The attacks on reason and undermining of rationality have continued apace. Obscurantism, superstition, feudal values, patriarchy, misogyny, and ideas of caste ‘purity’ and ‘pollution’ are the soil in which Hindutva communal ideology grows and thrives. Irrational and unscientific theories and discourses are today getting state backing and are promoted via cultural and intellectual institutions. Countering the Hindutva agenda in the cultural sphere requires a sustained and coordinated effort of all secular and progressive cultural groups and institutions.

### **Media Captured**

2.49 The mainstream media, with a few exceptions, have been brought under control of the ruling party and the Central government. The owners of the corporate media have lined up with the government and their TV channels spew out communal propaganda. Independent media and digital media platforms are being intimidated. The targeting of *NewsClick* by the police and Central agencies was meant to serve as a warning. There are constant efforts to regulate and censor the media as seen by the IT Rules Amendment 2023, of which certain provisions have been stayed by the Bombay High Court. India now ranks 159 out of 180 nations in the Press Freedom Index of 2024.

### **Women: Difficult Plight under BJP Rule**

2.50 The Modi government betrayed the women of India by creating a drama of adopting the Women’s Reservation Bill in Parliament but delaying its implementation indefinitely. This was done by wrongly and unnecessarily linking it to the much-delayed census and the long-drawn-out delimitation process. As a result, the numbers of women in assemblies and parliament in India continue to be among the lowest in the region.

2.51 In this period, several state governments have tried to build a female support base through a money transfer scheme of 1000 to 2500 rupees into

the bank accounts of women. Such is the acute economic distress of the average woman that even such small amounts make a considerable difference in the lives of women and have a political impact on voting patterns. Our interventions must be sensitive to the positive response to such schemes among the mass of women. The approach of the BJP is to turn women from the holders of constitutional equal citizenship rights to mere ‘beneficiaries’ dependent on such schemes. Even while helping women to access such schemes, it is necessary to strengthen the struggle for women’s rights, including the recognition of their work which is critical for family survival.

- 2.52 In fact, the cruel reality is the huge unpaid work done by the women of India in both domestic work and in unpaid agricultural work on family-held land or small enterprises. According to a recent Ecowrap report from the State Bank of India, the total contribution “of unpaid domestic work by women in GDP would be 22.7 lakh crore rupees, which is 7.5 per cent of India’s GDP.” Rising prices, high rates of female unemployment and the reduction of funds for MNREGA, leading to the reduction of workdays, have had a disastrous impact on women, causing them to take loans at high rates of interest and forcing them into a debt trap often at the mercy of rapacious MFIs.
- 2.53 In the decade of Modi government rule, crimes against women have increased by 28 per cent. The NCRB reports that in 2022, on average, every hour there were 50 crimes committed against women and every day 88 women were raped. Of them, 11 were dalit women. The conviction rates are dismal, with 75 accused in every 100 cases of rape going free. In so many prominent cases, such as in the Bilkis Bano case, female wrestlers' case, the BJP governments have openly defended the accused. India under the BJP is one of the most unsafe countries for women.
- 2.54 Twelve ‘double-engine’ state governments have adopted laws that eliminate a woman’s right to choose her partner if the partner happens to be of another religious community. The UCC adopted in Uttarakhand and presented as a model by the BJP criminalises consensual sexual relationships, as in live-in relationships and goes against the basic and fundamental right of an adult woman to decide the way she will live her life. The BJP keeps on stressing that tribal communities will be kept out of the ambit, thus proving that the UCC is not for women’s rights but to target the Muslim community. The BJP has proved to be a strong opponent of women’s rights in both its ideological approach and its practice, both of which promote patriarchy and Manuvadi approach towards women.

### **Youth: Unfulfilled Hopes**

- 2.55 With youth comprising 65 per cent of the total population, how their needs and aspirations are catered to will determine the future direction of the

country. A vast mass of youth, who are minimally educated, find their future prospects blighted by the lack of employment opportunities and quality jobs which can fulfill their aspirations for a better life. The recent years have seen mass protests by educated youth regarding the holding of defective civil service examinations and leakage of question papers. The Agniveer scheme also saw tens of thousands coming out in protest against the denial of regular service in the armed forces. The concentration on getting government and public sector jobs of the lower categories is because of the bleak prospects of employment elsewhere. Much of the jobs are in the informal sector with no income or social security. The type of education that is available to the bulk of the youth is also mediocre and does not equip anyone to pursue a worthwhile career or vocation.

- 2.56 There is a vacuum in the social and cultural life of the younger generation. Instead of absorbing healthy and progressive social and cultural values, they are fed with crass commercial-consumerist and egoistic values. Under the Hindutva regime, there is a constant injection of virulent communalism and divisiveness. It is essential to provide the youth with an alternative programme, which meets the needs for a sound education, quality employment and a fulfilling social and cultural life. While projecting such a political platform, the Left must set out the socialist ideal before the youth, which alone can effect a basic transformation in society.

### **Dalits: Deteriorating Conditions**

- 2.57 The RSS-BJP-Hindutva forces are systematically promoting Manuvadi ideologies in the garb of sanatan dharma. They seek to draw dalits and marginalised castes into the Hindutva framework through manipulation of caste identities even while retaining caste hierarchies. They cynically exploit sub-caste identities to divide oppressed castes and increase their influence. An intrinsic part of their strategy have been attempts to use oppressed caste communities against minorities on a communal basis. Countering these tactics requires large scale mobilisation against the caste system, caste based oppression, for social justice and prevention of the reversal of social reform.
- 2.58 Caste-based atrocities have risen in the Manuvadi environment created by the BJP and Hindutva forces. NCRB data shows that crimes against Scheduled Castes (SCs) increased by 13 per cent between 2021 and 2022. Uttar Pradesh leads with 26 per cent of cases, followed by Rajasthan (15 per cent) and Madhya Pradesh (14 per cent).
- 2.59 Acceleration of privatisation under the Modi government, lack of reservations in the private sector and informalisation of employment have weakened the Constitutional mandate for reservations. As of 2022, SC unemployment rate was 8.4 per cent and 84 per cent of SCs were in informal employment – the highest among all groups. The Modi



government abandoned Special Component Plans, allocating only 10.6 per cent of Central scheme funds to SCs between 2019 and 2024, far below the mandated 15 per cent. Of this, only 3.3 per cent went to targeted schemes, with just 80 per cent utilisation. Overall, in this period, the socio-economic conditions of the dalits have deteriorated further.

### **Assault on Adivasis**

2.60 The BJP government has used its majority in Parliament to push through amendments to various laws and rules which hit hard at even the inadequate protections afforded to adivasis, including, most importantly, the right to self-governance. These include amendments to the Forest Conservation Act and its rules, which have eliminated the very word ‘gram sabha’; amendments to the rules of the Forest Rights Act and the Mining and Minerals Development laws, which have done away with the mandatory requirement of free and informed consent of adivasis for projects in the areas inhabited by them; amendments which give permission to mining companies in the name of mining exploration without the consent of the gram sabha; dilution and violation of the land for land policy for acquisition of land occupied by adivasis, to name a few. This is apart from the blatant violation of existing laws and provisions like the Fifth and the Sixth Schedules of the Constitution and PESA, which protect adivasi land. Thus, the basic and fundamental right of adivasis for jal, jangal, zameen is under severe attack. Large numbers of adivasis are facing displacement because of these policies. Since much of the country’s natural wealth is in areas inhabited by adivasis, any provisions in laws which guarantee adivasi rights in these areas adversely affect the interests of corporates. In this sense, it is corporates vs adivasis and the government has sided clearly with the corporates.

2.61 Because of privatisation in many critical and strategic sectors such as defence, mining, power, irrigation and so on, it is powerful, unscrupulous, unregulated private companies which are coming into adivasi areas with various projects. In many adivasi areas, governments are promoting tourism resorts on land taken over illegally by private promoters. Privatisation policies have converted the very concept of public purpose to justify land acquisition to an open corporate purpose policy. Further, the policy of privatisation is accompanied by deregulation, which also has a direct bearing on jobs, as private companies do not guarantee provision of jobs to project-affected families as was done earlier. Thus, in areas of new mining and other projects by private companies, the terms and conditions of the so-called compensation packages for loss of tribal land and forest are being determined and implemented by these companies. For mining activities alone, 18,922 hectares of forest land have been diverted between 2019 and March 2024.

2.62 Because of the policies of privatisation, reservation in education and government employment has been severely affected. This is in addition to the growing backlog in vacancies. Recent data shows a fall in ST employees in Central government departments and undertakings. In the public sector, 25,000 jobs reserved for STs have been eliminated; in school education, there are 35,000 fewer ST teachers than there were in 2018. The Central government has refused to extend reservations to all contract or outsourced jobs. In many states, recognised adivasi communities are being denied ST certificates, while fake certificates are being given to non-adivasis.

### **Disabled Continue to Suffer**

2.63 Neo-liberal policies have had a deleterious effect on the already pitiable living conditions of India's disabled population. Budgetary allocations for the nodal department as also for Mental Health have not only remained more or less stagnant over the last many years but have also witnessed an underutilisation of even the allocated funds. This has severely impeded the implementation of rights based legislations and policies.

### **Heading to Environmental Disaster**

2.64 Under successive BJP-led governments, India's environment and related people's rights and well-being are under assault as never before. Crony capitalists and large corporations, including MNCs, are expanding mining, exploration and extractive industries, infrastructure and commercial activities in ecologically sensitive areas, including coastal areas, inside forests and wildlife habitats, damaging ecosystems as well as the lives, habitats and livelihoods of tribals, forest dwellers and others dependent on natural resources. Human-animal conflicts are growing due to the shrinkage of habitats for wildlife. Steps to mitigate such conflicts are not being done in a planned and holistic manner. The BJP's pursuit of the 'ease of doing business' has meant the dismantling of environmental regulations, permitting projects in hitherto protected areas and weakening regulatory agencies and mechanisms. Quality forests are being lost on a large scale, which the government is hiding through falsified and misrepresented data. Massive infrastructure, hydro-power and road projects in the fragile western and eastern Himalayan regions in the name of development and tourism have exacerbated climate impacts such as extreme rainfall and have rendered these regions highly vulnerable to landslides, subsidence of towns and recurrent floods, leading to much loss of life and livelihoods every year. Unplanned urbanisation is adding to the environmental problems.

2.65 Climate change impacts are causing enormous harm all over the country to people and infrastructure, resulting in damage to health and recurrent large-scale economic losses. India is experiencing more intense and longer-duration heat waves. Construction and other outdoor workers, street vendors, farm labour, domestic help, gig workers and those living in

informal settlements are the worst affected. Public health systems in most parts of the country are not geared to provide necessary assistance and longer-term measures have not been thought of. Urban areas are worse affected due to the heat-trapping effects of concretised urban infrastructure. Urban flooding caused by extreme rainfall, exacerbated by mismatched drainage systems and haphazard urbanisation, now occurs almost every year even in metro cities, causing enormous losses to the tune of tens of thousands of crores. State governments and urban local bodies are starved of funds to deal with these problems due to fiscal over-centralisation by the Union government.

## **Struggles and Resistance**

- 2.66 An important initiative in the period after the Kannur Congress was the nationwide worker-peasant convention in Delhi on August 24, 2023, organised jointly by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) and the Central Trade Unions (CTU). A joint charter of demands of the workers and peasants of India was adopted. Lakhs of workers and peasants all over the country took part in its struggle call of Mahapadavs in all state capitals for three days from November 26 to 28, 2023. On February 16, 2024, the CTU gave a call for a nationwide industrial/sectoral strike, which was supported by the SKM with a rural hartal. On March 14, 2024, the SKM held a nationwide farmers' rally in Delhi. Again, on November 26, 2024, large actions at the district level were held across the country by the SKM and the CTU.
- 2.67 Along with this broad joint worker-peasant initiative, the trade union, kisan and agricultural workers' fronts have been coordinating well for several joint actions. In and after 2022, they held large joint nationwide actions of several thousand people. These included a joint national convention at Delhi on September 5, 2022, a Delhi rally on April 5, 2023 and state-level Mahapadavs and other actions from August 9-14, 2023. All the above joint actions helped to promote the objective of worker-peasant unity in action.
- 2.68 Several trade union struggles took place during this period. The 37-day strike by Samsung workers in Tamil Nadu for the right to form a union and get it recognised resulted in victory. Strikes of electricity workers and employees against privatisation of electricity distribution took place in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Jammu & Kashmir, Chandigarh and Puducherry and they were partially successful. Prolonged strikes and large rallies of scheme workers like Anganwadi, ASHA, Mid-day Meal took place in several states and many of them achieved partial success. Strikes and struggles also took place in the bank, insurance, central and state government, postal, coal and telecom sectors and also among medical representatives.

- 2.69 The kisan organisation took up crop-based struggles, struggles for procurement centres, crop insurance, land rights, forest rights and against the wild animal menace. It has taken up the political and legal battle against the tyre-cartel in support of the rubber farmers. The agricultural workers' front led several struggles on issues like MNREGA, wages, land, housing and caste discrimination. On October 11, 2023, lakhs of agricultural workers took part in the All India Protest Day against the policy attacks on MNREGA by the BJP Central government. The women's front led several struggles on issues of price rise, strengthening of the public distribution system (PDS) and against increasing crimes and violence against women. On October 5, 2023, a nationwide rally of thousands of women was held at Delhi. The student's front has been in the forefront of protests against the National Education Policy (NEP), commercialisation of education, fee hikes and closure of schools. A joint platform called United Students of India was formed and it held large rallies in Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata. The youth front has been active on the issue of unemployment, the Agniveer scheme and other issues.
- 2.70 Some of the major and sustained struggles during this period, which mobilised thousands of people, include the struggle against the rape and murder of a doctor in the R G Kar Hospital in West Bengal; local struggles for house sites in Telangana; land struggles in Bihar; against the privatisation of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant and for rehabilitation of the Polavaram project-affected people in Andhra Pradesh; for crop insurance in Rajasthan; against displacement in Jharkhand; for vesting forest lands in the names of adivasis in Maharashtra; and pattas for house sites in Tamil Nadu.

### **Position of Political Parties**

- 2.71 **BJP:** The BJP, which is the political front of the fascistic RSS, has emerged as the dominant political party in the past one decade. It has become the main representative of the big bourgeois-landlord classes and it has consolidated its support, particularly of the big corporates. The BJP has brought about a right consolidation using the influence of Hindutva ideology, an alliance with big business and the use of unprecedented money and media power. Under its rule, corruption has flourished.
- 2.72 Overall, the BJP has been adopting a four-pronged strategy to fight elections: (i) Aggressive use of Hindutva issues like religious nationalism to create polarisation and consolidate pan-Hindu identity, (ii) Engineering caste and sub-caste alliances for electoral gains, (iii) Misuse of Central agencies against opposition parties and (iv) Use of State-funded direct cash transfer schemes to cultivate beneficiaries. In the state assembly elections held in the past three years, the BJP was able to regain Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, ousting the incumbent Congress governments. It also retained the Madhya Pradesh government after winning the assembly elections

decisively. The BJP lost the Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh assembly elections, where it had governments. It was also defeated in the Jammu and Kashmir and Jharkhand assembly elections after the Lok Sabha election.

- 2.73 The BJP suffered a reverse in the Lok Sabha election by getting only 240 seats. However, this loss must be seen in perspective. The BJP got only 1.1 per cent less vote share than in the 2019 election. The BJP also made new gains, like in Odisha, where it swept the Lok Sabha polls (winning 20 out of 21 seats) and winning the state assembly election for the first time and forming a government there. The party made gains in the southern states mainly by increasing its voting percentages. The victory of the BJP in Haryana, Delhi and the BJP-led alliance in Maharashtra in the post-Lok Sabha election period shows that the BJP is still able to regroup and recoup the losses it had suffered in these two states during the Parliament election.
- 2.74 The RSS provides the underpinning for the BJP as a political party and the coordination and joint work of the parent organisation and its political front have been strengthened in this period. The supremacy of the Modi-Shah duo continues, with all power in the party organisation being concentrated in their hands.
- 2.75 **Congress:** The Congress was able to improve its strength in the Lok Sabha from 44 to 100, benefitting by having allies in the INDIA bloc. It has been able to gain Muslim minority support in a substantial manner all over the country. The Congress base has not expanded significantly. It has been defeated in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana and Delhi in the Assembly elections in the North. In states like Punjab, Odisha and Assam, it has been considerably weakened. It is in the South that the Congress has made gains, with victories in the Karnataka and Telangana assembly polls and forming governments there.
- 2.76 The Congress has not changed its economic policy direction. It talks against crony capitalism, but adheres to the very same neo-liberal policies which spawn such cronies. There are still vacillations and a tendency to compromise when faced with the aggressive offensive of the BJP and its Hindutva allies. The Congress party represents the same class interests as the BJP. However, being the main secular opposition party, it has a role to play in the struggle against the BJP and in the broader unity to be forged of the secular forces. The attitude of the CPI(M) to the Congress, despite its weaknesses in taking a forthright position against Hindutva agenda, is determined by this need for broader unity of the secular forces. However, the Party cannot have a political alliance with the Congress.
- 2.77 **Regional Parties:** The regional parties can be divided broadly into three categories. The first are those parties which are opposed to the BJP. They are parties like the DMK, SP, RJD, NCP (Sharad Pawar), AAP, National Conference and JMM. Secondly, there are parties which are allied with the

BJP and are in the NDA, like the JD(U), TDP, JD(S), NPP, AGP, Jana Sena and some smaller parties. The BSP, though formally is not in the NDA, tends to support the BJP on many issues. The third category of parties are those which have not opposed the BJP or the Central government when they were in power in the states, like the BJD, AIADMK and YSRCP. The BRS has been vacillating in its attitude to the BJP and Central government. It is to be noted that all these three parties have lost their governments after the recent assembly elections.

- 2.78 The Trinamool Congress in West Bengal is an autocratic party based on a criminal-corrupt-political nexus which is virulently anti-Communist. It is electorally opposed to the BJP and seeks to maintain the binary of the TMC versus BJP to marginalise the CPI(M) and the Left.
- 2.79 The regional parties, which are opposed to the BJP, had an important role to play in the broader opposition unity that has been forged and are expected to continue to play that role in the coming days.
- 2.80 Muslim fundamentalist and extremist organisations like the Jamaat-e-Islami and the SDPI (political wing of the Popular Front of India) are working to expand their influence among the Muslim masses. They seek to utilise the alienation and fears among the minority community, who are subject to constant attacks by the Hindutva forces. In Kerala, they target the CPI(M) to curb the latter's influence among the minorities. Though minority communalism cannot be equated with the Hindutva communal forces who are in power, it must be understood that extremist minority activities only strengthen the forces of majority communalism. The growing ties between IUML and such forces in Kerala is dangerous. The MIM is using its religious sectarian approach to expand its reach to many other states outside Telangana, where it is based. In Punjab, the increase in the activities of pro-Khalistani elements is a matter of concern. The Left and democratic forces should firmly defend the rights of the minorities and rally them to the secular platform while countering the fundamentalist forces.
- 2.81 The Maoists, who call themselves CPI(Maoist), have been getting further isolated and are in decline due to their sectarian-anarchist violence. Their main base of operations has shrunk to around the Bastar region in Chhattisgarh. In the recent period, the intensified drive by the Central paramilitary and state police forces have led to the elimination of many of their armed squads and cadres through encounters. The Central government's stepped up offensive against the Maoists has resulted in the killings of many innocent adivasis and grave violation of human rights. Such excesses must be stopped immediately. There is need for an urgent negotiated settlement to end the Maoist insurgency and bring peace to the affected region in Chhattisgarh and its bordering areas.

## **Counter Hindutva**

2.82 The Party must be geared up to conduct sustained activities in the political, ideological, cultural, economic and social spheres to counter the activities and influence of Hindutva and the various RSS outfits. It must be reiterated that the BJP-RSS cannot be isolated and defeated only through electoral battles. Given the fact that in the past one decade the Hindutva forces have created a substantial support base, based on their ideological influence, it is necessary to have a comprehensive programme to counter Hindutva.

2.83 For this, the Party and the mass organisations should:

- i) Mobilise all intellectual resources and prepare material, which can be used for the campaign including multimedia to expose the pernicious propaganda and the activities of the Hindutva forces.
- ii) Integrate the anti-Hindutva campaigns and struggles with the campaigns and struggles against economic policies and people's issues.
- iii) Pay special attention to organise anti-communal work through social and cultural activities among the working class and in the working class residential areas by the Party, trade unions and other mass organisations and platforms.
- iv) Counter efforts to rewrite history and introduce communal content in the educational system.
- v) Reach out to believers to explain the difference between religious faith and misuse of religion for political aims. Intervene in festivals and social gatherings to prevent their use for communalization; encourage and strengthen inter-faith, inter-caste syncretic initiatives present in such popular local festivals and events.
- vi) Involve in social service activities, popular science movements, promote secular and scientific thinking and broad-based cultural activities to counter Manuvadi and obscurantist values, and take the initiative for social reform.

### **Increase the Strength of CPI(M)**

2.84 The 18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha election review has underlined the urgent necessity to expand the independent strength of the Party, as the election results show that the Party's mass base and influence have not grown. To achieve this, the following steps have to be taken:

1. The Party's work among the basic classes should be given priority. The weakness of struggles of the rural poor against the exploitation by the rural-rich nexus must be overcome. There should be concrete studies on the issues on which such struggles can be conducted. The Party has to expand its influence among the workers in the organised sector in the manufacturing and strategic industries. It has to give importance to organising the contractual and non-regular workers in the organised

sector and increase its work among urban poor. The Party should pay attention to fostering worker-peasant unity and united actions. Focussed efforts to undertake the anti-Hindutva campaign among the basic classes and to politicise those rallying behind struggles should be undertaken.

2. The Party should pay more attention to the independent political campaign and mass mobilisations around the political platform of the Party. There should be no blurring of our independent identity or diminishing our independent activities in the name of electoral understanding or alliances. Special attention should be paid to the ideological work and campaign to counter the ideology and activities of the RSS-Hindutva forces.
3. The importance of taking up mass and class issues for local struggles on a sustained basis should be underlined. The lag in this regard should be overcome. Higher committees should orient the local units and branches towards this. Innovative and imaginative forms of struggles and movements should be worked out instead of stereotyped forms of protest.
4. The Party should directly campaign and conduct struggles on issues of social and caste oppression and gender discrimination. The struggles against social oppression should be linked with the struggles against class exploitation.
5. The Party's political platform and demands should address the issues relevant to the youth and the campaign that 'Socialism is the Alternative' should be specifically addressed to them.
6. A significant increase in the strength of the Party requires the rebuilding and expansion of the Party and the Left in West Bengal and Tripura. In West Bengal, while conducting mass struggles and movements, special attention should be paid to work among the rural and urban poor and organising them. The Party has to focus more on the political and ideological fight against the BJP while opposing both the TMC and the BJP. In Tripura, the Party should strengthen the grassroots organisation and take up a programme which will unite the working people while addressing the special needs and issues of the tribal people.
7. **Kerala** is the biggest unit of the Party with a powerful mass base. The LDF government, in its second successive term, has been working against heavy odds due to the Centre's hostile attitude and the concerted campaign of all anti-Communist forces led by the UDF and BJP in the state. The Lok Sabha election results have shown some weaknesses in our political and ideological work to counter the BJP. These should be overcome. The government is committed to eliminate extreme poverty and to provide housing for all. Even though the state is facing a financial crisis due to the discriminatory approach of the Central government, the



government is prioritising its expenditure for the welfare measures oriented towards the poor and the working people.

## **Left Unity**

2.85 Because of the preoccupation with forging broader unity for the Lok Sabha elections, there was a lull in united Left actions in this period. The Left parties gave a joint call twice to protest against the Israeli war of aggression in Gaza. There has to be a renewed thrust for Left unity and united actions to project the Left's alternative policies. The Left's increased intervention in national politics will strengthen the united struggles against the divisive and harmful policies of the Modi government.

## **Left and Democratic Alternative**

2.86 After over three decades of neo-liberal and pro-big bourgeois-landlord policies pursued by successive governments at the Centre and the dangerous corporate-communal-authoritarian rightward shift of the last one decade, it has become even clearer that the only real alternative to the present bourgeois-landlord order is the Left and Democratic Alternative. The CPI(M) will endeavour to build a Left and Democratic Front which can meet the aspirations and defend the interests of the working class, peasantry, artisans, small shopkeepers, middle class and intelligentsia. The priority must be for a strong Left and Democratic Front forged through sustained mass and class struggles for alternative policies.

2.87 The Left and Democratic Programme should have the following components:

1. Measures to strengthen democracy, secularism and federalism in the Constitutional set-up. For this:
  - Separation of religion and State to be embedded in the Constitution.
  - Removal of all laws and provisions which curb democratic rights and civil liberties.
  - Restructure Centre-State relations and effective democratic decentralisation.
2. For a self-reliant and pro-people path of development:
  - Strict regulation of international finance flows; nationalise mining and natural oil resources; planned development and balanced growth.
  - Reduction of economic and social inequalities; check on monopolies and promotion of the public sector; fiscal and taxation measures for redistribution of wealth.
  - Thoroughgoing land reforms and democratic transformation of agrarian relations; legalise payment of a remunerative MSP for all crops; liberation of the peasantry from debt; Central legislation for agricultural workers on

wages and social security; develop agriculture based on collective intervention such as cooperative farming, production and marketing.

### 3. Rights of Working People:

- Right to livelihood, gainful employment, guaranteed minimum and fair wages, housing and social security; recognition of trade unions through secret ballot; representation of workers in management, repeal of the four labour codes.
- Universalise and expand the public distribution system for food and all essential commodities.
- Universal old age pension, special measures for youth to ensure their access to sports and cultural facilities and other social security schemes.

### 4. Education and Culture:

- Ensure right to education, allocate 6 per cent of GDP for education; expand and strengthen public education system and regulate private education; universalise ICDS.
- Develop universal public health care system with State funding; reduce prices of essential drugs.
- Promotion of a secular and democratic culture and equality of all languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

### 5. Social Justice:

- Abolish the caste system and all forms of caste oppression; protection of rights of dalits, adivasis and minorities; reservations to be extended to the private sector.
- Equal rights for women in all spheres; equal wage for equal work and stringent measures on crimes against women and children.
- Guarantee children's all round development as a fundamental right.
- Assure rights of persons with disabilities and protect the rights of sexual minorities and transgenders.

### 6. Electoral Reforms and Environment:

- Firm measures to curb high-level corruption; electoral reforms, introduction of proportional representation with partial list system.
- Protection of the environment, reducing emission of toxic gases; promotion of renewable energy; ensure energy equality for all.

### 7. Foreign Policy:

- An independent foreign policy based on opposition to imperialist hegemony; reversing all strategic and defence agreements with the United States.

## **Political Line**

- 2.88 The nearly eleven years of the Modi government's rule have resulted in the consolidation of the rightwing, communal, authoritarian forces with neo-fascist characteristics. The Modi government represents the alliance of Hindutva forces and the big bourgeoisie. Hence, the prime task is to fight and defeat the BJP-RSS and the Hindutva-corporate nexus underpinning it.
- 2.89 Isolating and defeating the BJP and the Hindutva forces requires a continuous struggle against the Hindutva ideology and the activities of the communal forces. The Party must strive for the broadest mobilisation of all secular forces against Hindutva communalism.
- 2.90 The success of the struggles against the Hindutva neo-liberal regime requires the growth of the independent strength of the CPI(M) and the Left forces. It also requires the integration of the struggle against Hindutva communalism and the struggle against neo-liberal policies.
- 2.91 The fight against the Modi government and the BJP must be carried out by conducting class and mass struggles against the pro-corporate, neo-liberal policies which have intensified the exploitation of the working people and adversely affect their livelihoods and living conditions. The Party should be at the forefront in opposing crony capitalism, the loot of national assets and large-scale privatisation.
- 2.92 The Party will cooperate with INDIA bloc parties in Parliament and, on agreed issues outside Parliament. The Party will join hands with all secular democratic forces on issues of authoritarian onslaughts against democracy, the use of draconian laws to suppress dissent and the opposition to efforts to subvert the Constitution and the institutions of the State.
- 2.93 The Party will cooperate with those regional parties which are firmly opposing the BJP. Where such regional parties head state governments, the Party will support any policy which benefits the people, but will oppose and mobilise people against policies that adversely affect the working people.
- 2.94 The Party will support united platforms and united actions of the class and mass organisations. It should make all efforts to draw in the masses following the bourgeois parties for united actions.
- 2.95 While prioritising the development of the independent strength of the Party, there should also be efforts to revive and strengthen Left unity. United Left campaigns and struggles must highlight the alternative policies of the Left. The Party should work to rally all Left and democratic forces, including

mass organisations, social movements, and progressive intellectuals to constitute a Left and democratic platform and programme.

2.96 Appropriate electoral tactics can be adopted as per the above political line to maximise the pooling of anti-BJP votes.

## **Tasks**

2.97 (1) The Party should step up its campaigns and struggles against the neo-liberal economic policies, Hindutva communalism and authoritarian attacks on democracy.

(2) The Party should develop and intensify struggles of the rural poor, working class and urban poor on livelihood issues, land, food, wages, house sites, social security benefits and employment opportunities.

(3) The Party should strive for the broadest unity of all secular-democratic forces against Hindutva communalism.

(4) The Party should consistently stand for the protection of democracy, democratic rights and civil liberties. It should cooperate to forge wider unity against authoritarian attacks to suppress dissent and opposition, misuse of Central agencies and subversion of Constitutional bodies.

(5) The Party should actively take up the fight against all forms of caste oppression and discrimination. The Party should champion the rights of women, dalits, adivasis and religious minorities. The Party should pay special attention to work in tribal areas.

(6) The Party should work to raise the anti-imperialist consciousness of the Indian people and mobilise popular opinion against the Modi government's pro-US foreign policy and strategic alliance with the US.

(7) The Party should rally forces for the defence of the rights of states and for federalism. It must take up the defence of the LDF government in Kerala and support its efforts to implement pro-people policies.

(8) The Party should work for building a Left and Democratic Front and project a Left Democratic Programme as an alternative. This must also be linked to the campaign for Socialism as the Alternative – a socialism in tune with Indian conditions.

## **Rise up to Meet the Challenges**

2.98 To fulfill the above tasks, it is absolutely essential to greatly enhance the independent strength of the Party.

- The Party has to take on the BJP-RSS politically, ideologically, culturally and organisationally.
- The Party has to resolutely wage the struggle of the workers, peasants, rural labour and all other sections of the working people against exploitation under the neo-liberal order.

- The Party has to rally all the Left and Democratic forces to present the real alternative before the people.

2.99 Let the entire Party take the political and ideological message of this Resolution to the people of India! Let us march forward to build a strong all-India party with an organisation that has deep roots among the people! Based on the glorious traditions of the Communist movement, we are confident that we shall rise up to meet the challenges before us!

\*\*\*