

Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Review of Assembly Election Results (Adopted at Central Committee Meeting; July 11-13, 2026)

1. A preliminary review of the Assembly elections held in Assam, Keralam, Puducherry, Tamilnadu, and West Bengal in April 2026 was conducted in the Central Committee held on 22-24 May 2026. The CC noted two major features of the election results: ‘the serious setback to the Left Democratic Front (LDF) in Keralam and the victory of the BJP in West Bengal’. We have also noted that the ‘ascendancy of right-wing communal forces led by the BJP’, in West Bengal and Assam are ‘a matter of deep concern for all secular, progressive and democratic forces’.
2. The other features of these election results noted by the May CC meeting are – the defeat of the DMK-led alliance in Tamilnadu, where the TVK led by Vijay emerged as the single largest party and formed the government; the re-election of the BJP government in Assam with an increased vote share and majority; and BJP’s victory in Puducherry, along with the NR Congress, which is the major partner.
3. The SIR process conducted by the ECI had a big influence on the voter turnout in these elections. All the states witnessed huge voter turnouts. The fear that voters might lose their right to vote if they did not cast their ballots in these elections, also contributed to the high voter turnout, among various other reasons.
4. The CC decided that the Party must undertake an “in-depth analysis of the reasons behind the continued growth of the BJP and how it is utilising the State machinery to achieve its objectives. Only such an analysis will help us devise correct tactics to confront and stop the rise of RSS-BJP-led Hindutva communal forces”.
5. The CC also decided to undertake a detailed review after all the states conclude their reviews and on that basis, identify the reasons for our defeat, our weaknesses and initiate a rectification process from the top to bottom to overcome them. For doing this the CC decided to advance the time of the CC meeting. The four concerned state committees conducted a review of the elections after the CC met by eliciting opinions from our committees down to the local and area committees.
6. **Keralam:** In Keralam, the overall voting saw a marginal increase in 2026 and was 78.03 percent. The LDF was defeated in Keralam after ten years of continuous rule. The LDF secured 37.44 percent in 2026, as against 44.44 percent in 2021. The UDF vote share increased from 38.88 percent in 2021 to 46.55 percent in

2026. The LDF won only 35 seats in 2026, as against 99 in 2021. The UDF increased its seat tally from 40 in 2021 to 102 in 2026. The BJP was able to win three seats, while it had none in 2021. In six seats, it was second.

7. Our Party's vote share fell from 25.38 percent in 2021 to 21.77 percent in 2026, while the Congress vote share increased from 25.12 percent to 28.79 percent in the same period. Our vote share fell to its lowest in the past forty years, which is a matter of serious concern. Our Party won only 26 seats, which is a drastic reduction from the 64+3 seats (+ independents) we had won in 2021. These numbers show the gravity of the defeat suffered by the Party and the LDF.

8. The Party fought these elections in an extremely hostile situation, where the BJP-led Union government used all the agencies in its hands to discriminate, intimidate and starve the LDF government of funds. Hence despite our best efforts, the government was unable to implement certain schemes intended for the benefit of the poor and needy. Even within these limitations, the government was able to eliminate extreme poverty and implement various pro-people initiatives, which is a commendable achievement.

9. The Congress-led UDF campaigned by spreading lies targeting the Chief Minister and the Party. They were able to unite all the right-wing forces against our Party and LDF in these elections. Reactionary and sectarian forces like the Jamaat-e-Islami and their Welfare Party openly campaigned for the UDF and helped to mobilise minorities against the LDF. The corporate media played a partisan role by largely blacking out our government's achievements and the activities of our Party. This was done deliberately to benefit the pro-corporate Congress, the UDF and the BJP.

10. During the elections, the top-most leaders of the Congress, including the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, made malicious comments questioning the political integrity of our Party. They alleged that we had entered into a deal with the BJP, whereas in reality, there were instances of both the BJP and the Congress helping each other to defeat the LDF. The conduct of the Congress, making baseless allegations and spreading canards against our Party, along with its soft approach towards communal forces, contributed to the improved performance of the BJP.

11. The BJP was able to win three seats, with NDA securing 14.20 percent of the votes in these elections (11.42 percent is the BJP's share), which is very significant. This is a reflection of the growing communal influence in the state. The BJP successfully utilised the RSS presence in various temple committees and its extensive sakha network to achieve this result. The rising influence of the BJP poses a serious threat to the great secular traditions of Keralam.

12. In this difficult situation, the Party fought hard in these elections to win a third consecutive term for the LDF. However, the results were not according to our expectations. For the first time after 1977, there is not a single state in which our Party is in government. In the background of the increasing ascendancy of the BJP, this electoral defeat is a debacle.

13. **Reasons for the Debacle:** The Keralam state secretariat and committee met twice and discussed in depth the reasons for our dismal electoral performance. All the state committee members attended the area committees and heard the criticism and opinions expressed by them. Party committee members at all levels were asked to speak freely and frankly, while the leaders from the higher committee heard their opinions without commenting. The state secretariat prepared a report based on these discussions, which was adopted in the state committee with modifications. Four members from the PB, including the General Secretary, participated in the state secretariat and committee held from 5-8 June 2026, apart from the three PBMs from Keralam.

14. **Political Factors:** The Review adopted by the state committee notes that there are political, administrative and organisational issues that have contributed to our defeat. It notes the impact of SIR on these elections, but this aspect needs to be further studied. Our campaign rightly decided to highlight the achievements of the LDF government. However, in the process, we have not sufficiently campaigned among the people the discriminatory attitude of the BJP-led Union government and its attack on federal rights. Most importantly, we failed to properly explain the limitations under which the LDF government functioned in the present State structure. Our campaign generated a hope that our government could resolve all the issues of the people, which led to certain illusions too.

15. The focus of our campaign on development and welfare without putting politics to the fore, was not effective. We should never forget that unless we integrate development and welfare policies with a political campaign against neoliberal, and corporate-communal policies, we cannot expect the people to support us. This aspect was not given the necessary importance. The state review report too acknowledges the importance of exposing the Right and propagating our perspective (3.25).

16. A narrative was prevalent that the entire campaign revolved around one person. The reference was to the chief minister and Polit Bureau member, who undoubtedly led the government with efficiency. By personalising the campaign and centering it around Com. Pinarayi Vijayan, we unwittingly gave an opportunity to the UDF to conduct a targeted campaign against him. Consequently, we have lost the political initiative to expose the reactionary, ruling class bias of the Congress party and the UDF.

17. Without a strong political campaign, we could not effectively counter the systematic campaign conducted by the Congress that alleged that our Party had a secret deal with the BJP. Similarly, the Jamaat-e-Islami and Muslim League accused our Party and the LDF, of having a deal with the BJP and peddling disinformation about the SIR, etc. Some sections among the Christian minorities were also influenced and misled into joining the reactionary gang-up against the LDF. This had an adverse impact among minority voters and led to a section of them being weaned away from the LDF.

18. The state review report notes that we could have avoided reading the message of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh in the Global Ayyappa Sangamam. Reading out the message of the UP Chief Minister, an avowed Hindutva fanatic, by a minister who is also a member of the state secretariat was a major embarrassment to the Party's secular image and had an adverse impact on our election campaign. Even if the programme was organised by the Devaswom Board, it was perplexing how a message was solicited from the UP CM and how a Party minister agreed to read it out. Such an act sent a wrong message to the people and conveyed an impression that we are soft towards Hindutva communal forces.

19. Similarly, though the state secretariat issued a statement condemning the anti-Muslim utterances of Vellappally Natesan, the review self-critically notes that it was not a strong response. The statements made by some of our leaders about this controversy also contributed towards further alienation from the people. All these mistakes taken together were used to create a wrong impression that our Party is compromising in its fight against communalism.

20. Another factor that contributed to the impression was the way the entire issue of PM-SHRI was addressed. The review report notes: "Just before the declaration of elections, CPI brought up the controversy related to PM-SHRI. This was helpful to the UDF's propaganda campaign that an undercurrent exists with the BJP. Lapses in deciding matters by conducting proper discussion on this issue also led to the formation of a problem of this nature". It is very important to take all our LDF partners into confidence on such matters.

21. It was through the active intervention of the all India centre and the state leadership that the issue with the CPI could be resolved. However, the entire episode was utilised by the UDF to spread canards that our Party had a deal with the BJP. Such unwanted controversies could have been avoided by ensuring that the Party properly monitored the government and its functioning.

22. When we were leading the governments earlier, the Party constituted sub-committees to monitor the implementation of various schemes by the government departments. There is also a Party cabinet fraction committee that discussed issues and guided the work of our ministers. Regular functioning of such mechanisms

ensured that there is a proper coordination between the Party and the government and all political issues are discussed in detail. This largely helped in preventing our government from committing mistakes and also ensure that neither our allies nor our opponents got an opportunity to question our politics.

23. Some of our leaders are not careful in speaking before the public in meetings or while interacting with the media. We often tend to forget that whatever we are saying in public is being recorded and circulated. Our actions and words both spoken and written can be used /misused/distorted to tarnish the image of the Party. Certain avoidable responses of leading comrades on a few occasions provided the opportunity for the anti-Left media and their political masters to carry out a negative campaign.

24. Our style of organising public meetings also deserves a lot of modifications. They are our important tools for politicizing the people. However, long-winding speeches, absence of focus and lack of political sharpness to identify and criticise the opponents on issues are major shortcomings. A reflection of this shortcoming is the fact that conduct of sympathizers' general body were weak. The disciplined manner of organising meetings hence needs attention. The duration and style of communication too is to be properly balanced.

25. A section of our basic classes – workers, agricultural workers and poor peasants – did not vote for us in these elections. This was visible in the decrease of vote share from our traditional sectors and strongholds, as was noted in the state review report. On top of it, due to the constraints imposed by the BJP-led Union government, our efforts to attract middle-classes through the slogan of development could not be realised. The growing influence of identity politics and communal campaign added to this alienation.

26. The LDF government was the only government in India to not only oppose the enactment of the four Labour Codes but also out rightly refused to implement them. It constituted a committee headed by Justice Gopala Gowda, which submitted recommendations specifically designed to protect the rights of the working class. However, we could not adequately highlight these pro-worker interventions in our campaign.

27. The state review notes that dissatisfaction persisted in certain sections of people. “The non-resolution of certain problems like the issues of KSRTC pensioners, construction worker pension arrears, problems in the traditional sector, building fee hikes, issues in the cooperative sector, agricultural workers arrears, laterite-granite-sand mining, and the wild elephant menace has led to dissatisfaction among these sections” (Para 7.17). This anti-incumbency also contributed to our defeat.

28. When we are confronted with an adverse situation and are fighting the reactionary ruling classes who have ganged up against us, both the leadership and cadre should be politically very sharp. But as the state review report notes: “A major organizational weakness is the decline in the number of comrades capable of presenting our political perspectives to the people and the lack of adequate politicization taking place within class and mass organizations...Even though we have conducted many classes against communalism, we have been unable to convert it into a public consciousness”. To meet the challenges posed by the current situation and to overcome our weakness, the EMS Academy and the AKG Centre for Research in Thiruvananthapuram and similar institutions functioning in almost all the districts in Keralam need to undertake programmes to train our cadres. It is necessary to train a team of young cadre to enable their effective participation in various forms of discussion, including electronic media debates. A time-bound programme needs to be prepared immediately.

29. In order to counter the spread of the RSS and BJP, the last state conference had decided to intervene through the temple committees and counter the communal hatred spread by them. The state review report notes: “The style of functioning (of the RSS) centering around temples has become widespread. Utilizing that, interventions to organize women and convert them into political supporters of the Sangh Parivar are active. There must be special intervention to resist the activities of the Sangh Parivar among women. A situation can also be seen where young women are identified and deployed into the field, and special rallies of women themselves are organized”. However, despite recognising the danger we could not sufficiently implement the directions of the state conference. It is imperative that we work out ways and means to stop the takeover of various places of worship by communal elements who are converting these places into their citadels to spread hatred and divide the society. The Party needs to pay immediate attention to this.

30. **Administrative Factors:** The report adopted by the Keralam state committee notes that there was a feeling among our cadre and people against the high-handedness of the police and other sections of the bureaucracy. Similarly, the report also notes the inaccessibility of some of our ministers and an over-dependence on officials. A large section of our Party cadre felt that since everything revolves around the government machinery, there is no need for their active involvement and working for the resolution of people’s grievances. As part of improving our governance, online services and digitisation are necessary. This however does not mean that due to the introduction of such measures the Party loses an opportunity to articulate people’s grievances. Digitisation might prevent our intervention in transfers and other such services, which is rightly not needed. Despite this, there still exist many avenues for the Party to be with the people and address their problems.

31. Instead of actively working among the people by identifying their problems and working for their resolution, our mass and class organisations left it to the officials. As a result, the Party lost its sharpness as a defender of the interests of our basic classes, a fundamental identity of our Party.

32. Even when we are leading a government, we should not stop our mass organisations from taking up peoples' issues and rallying them. We need to self-critically accept that this practice was largely neglected during the last ten years of the LDF government due to which sections of people drifted away from our Party. The state review report accepts this drawback and identifies this as the reason for the weakening of our class and mass organisations (3.12). This is clearly visible in the election results. Only by diligently adhering to the mass line, being among the people, and conducting sustained struggles, can we retain the fighting character of our Party and mass organisations.

33. **Organisational Factors:** The Keralam state committee report identifies various organisational weaknesses that impacted the election results. It mentions about certain wrong tendencies that have entered our Party. Instances of arrogance, corruption, nepotism and affluent lifestyle were noticed among a section of Party leaders and cadre, but as no immediate corrective steps were taken, people lost faith in us. The media and opposition used this to exaggerate and generalise it to tarnish the image of the entire Party.

34. The state report notes the repercussions of our failure to react on time to address these perceptions. "In the gold smuggling case, the police arrested A. Padmakumar, our Pathanamthitta District Committee member and the former Devaswom Board President. Because he was in jail, a limitation existed in taking action after seeking an explanation; however, not taking action considering the emergency situation is a lapse from our part" (7.7).

35. Immediately after the arrest of Padmakumar, the Party all India centre communicated with the Keralam state centre to consider taking disciplinary action against him. Timely disciplinary actions could have minimised some of the damage.

36. The state review report notes: "Irregularities that have occurred even in cooperative banks have created such a state of affairs. The fact that some individuals adopt an affluent lifestyle, beyond living according to income, has also created disrepute among the people. Such shortcomings have also influenced the people" (Para 4.12). Such instances might be few, but still the image of our Party as a consistent fighter against corruption and free from all such vices received a setback and alienated us from the masses.

37. Once this gap developed between the people and the Party, and the lower level cadres and the Party leadership, people were not even ready to share their true feelings with our cadre. We naturally failed to assess the ground situation correctly. This contributed to several wrong assessments, including our failure to anticipate the electoral setback.

38. This election saw the abnormal feature of three senior cadres of the Party revolting against the Party decision and contesting against the LDF candidates, backed by the UDF. Three former MLAs also deserted the Party and fought against the Party's candidates. Of these, the three defectors, who contested from Taliparamba, Payyannur and Ambalapuzzha, won defeating our candidates in our strongholds. Proper lessons must be drawn from this episode. Firstly, parliamentary opportunism has emerged as a trend within the Party. Secondly, the defeat of Party candidates in the three traditional bases of the Party shows the gap that has developed between the leadership and the rank and file of the Party and the resultant erosion in our mass base. It is necessary to fight against parliamentary deviation within the Party and to take urgent steps to bridge the gap between the leadership at various levels and the Party membership and rectify our style of functioning.

39. A worrying feature noticed in these elections is the apathy of a large section of our Party members and cadre. Most people get actively involved in politics during elections. Yet, it was precisely during the elections that a section of our members failed to intervene and campaign. Many of the tasks decided by the state committee, like conducting house-to-house visits were not implemented, as the state review notes. The district and state leadership could not identify these shortcomings in time and intervene to rectify.

40. The Party has to carry out an in-depth and serious study to understand the reasons for this feature and initiate measures for rectifying the situation.

41. The review report of the state committee correctly notes the importance of democratic centralism: "Democratic centralism and inner-party democracy are the fundamental stances of our party organization. We must be able to apply this fundamental organizational principle in the correct manner. Only through this, a party organization that functions democratically can be built up by avoiding anarchic tendencies. All units must take care to implement this effectively" (Para 4.17). We need to self-critically introspect if we have failed to correctly implement the principles of democratic centralism and address their violation wherever they occurred.

42. The state review report accepts the lapses that occurred in the selection of candidates, particularly in Kannur district. This failure sent a negative message to the entire state, where our fairness in the selection process was questioned.

Allegations of nepotism and bias were raised and we could not counter them successfully.

43. The review report notes that permission was granted for all those who performed excellently as MLAs to contest in these elections, as ‘winning was the sole criterion’. “In this manner, 54 MLAs entered the contest arena in the election” (Para 4.16). Most of them contested from the same seats they had contested earlier. In this background our opponents organised widespread campaigns centering around the change of Com. Shailaja’s constituency. Whatever organisational justifications we gave, the public perception was not in favour.

44. Similarly, the selection of candidates in Taliparamba and Payyannur was not decided taking sufficient care, which was admitted by the state committee. “The lapses in candidate selection in Payyannur and Taliparamba was accepted self-critically in the Kannur District Committee review report. When approving the names of candidates recommended by the District Committee, the State Secretariat and the State Committee also committed lapses” (Para 7.3).

45. It is to be noted that the Party had two candidates from the Muslim minority in the last assembly elections from the Kannur district. This was not the case in these elections.

46. The state report notes the failure to field sufficient number of women as candidates. “The criticism that adequate importance could not be given to women in the candidate list has arisen from many units. The Kozhikode and Kollam District Committees committed lapses in fielding women candidates. Along with that, it was possible to make more women candidates in Malappuram and Ernakulam districts due to the intervention of the Party Centre” (Para 7.2).

47. The top leadership of the state committee who were involved in these decisions failed to assess the adverse impact of such decisions and react immediately to address these issues. So, the main responsibility relating to the choice of candidates in certain constituencies and the issue of not having enough number of women, minorities or youth, cannot be put on the district committees alone. The state leadership should own up to this responsibility.

48. The review report adopted by the Keralam state committee identifies many such organisational weaknesses within the Party. It has decided to conduct an extended meeting of the state committee in September which will address the political and organisational issues pointed out in the review and take necessary corrective measures. Rectifying the mistakes and unitedly moving forward to meet the challenges is the priority. All of us should realise that the defeat suffered by the Party and the LDF is incomparable with any of our earlier defeats. The

emergence of the fascistic RSS controlled BJP as a force to reckon with is a disturbing and challenging feature.

49. The Party in Keralam has been steeled through struggles and has become a mass force. We are sure that our state unit has the necessary strength and resolve to overcome the present situation. This can be achieved by strengthening our strong points, and frankly accepting our mistakes and rectifying them. It is only by taking up the livelihood problems of the people and leading the struggles on the attacks launched by the UDF and BJP governments on the toiling masses, that we can regain the trust of the basic classes and win back people's support.

50. **West Bengal:** The voting in West Bengal saw a steep increase from 82.32 percent in 2021 to 92.47 percent in 2026, which in absolute terms is an increase of more than 34 lakh votes. The Left Front contested these elections along with the CPI(ML) Liberation and the ISF. The Congress contested these elections alone.

51. In 2021, the TMC won 215 seats with a vote share of 48.59 percent. In 2026 elections, it could win only 81 seats, securing 41.18 percent of the votes. The BJP won 77 seats in 2021 with a vote share of 37.97 percent, while it won 206 seats with a vote share of 45.84 percent in 2026. Even though the vote share of the Congress fell marginally from 3.03 percent (2021) to 2.97 percent (2026), it succeeded in winning two seats, while it had none earlier. The Left Front secured 5.66 percent of the votes in 2021, which fell to 4.99 percent in 2026.

52. Our Party contested 139 seats in 2021 and secured 4.71 percent of the votes. In these elections, we contested 195 seats and secured 4.45 percent of the votes. We were able to win one seat, Domkal, in these elections and thus ensure our presence in the legislative assembly. The decrease in vote share despite contesting more seats shows that we are yet to regain the confidence of the people. It also points to the need for our Party to intensify its interventions in taking up peoples' issues, particularly among the urban and rural poor.

53. The Party state committee collected opinions from all the units which met and reviewed the electoral performance. Certain weaknesses and loopholes in our campaign were identified.

54. As the preliminary report of the CC held on 22-24 May noted: "The victory of the BJP in West Bengal is a major blow and has been achieved on the basis of a communal, divisive and vitriolic hate campaign, the huge amount of money they spent, and the gross misuse of central agencies, including the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the SIR exercise".

55. The Review report adopted by the state committee notes that the BJP benefited from the strong anti-incumbency against the corrupt and authoritarian TMC

government. It also points out that there are both political and organisational reasons behind our failure to perform better in these elections.

56. The CC report noted: “Our Party was able to campaign in many areas in which we were earlier forcibly prevented from campaigning. Many of our cadre, particularly youngsters, actively participated in the campaign. The various activities and campaigns conducted by all our class and mass organisations also helped in our election campaign. Despite all our efforts, we were unable to convert all the goodwill generated by the campaign into votes, as people are not confident that we are sufficiently strong enough to defeat the corrupt-authoritarian TMC”.

57. The state review of the Bengal committee self-critically analysing the reasons, points out: “A section of the people could not place their trust in our political position, our organisational capacity, or our acceptability as an alternative force. Behind this lay weaknesses of a political, organisational, social, and propaganda-related nature. We have remained weak in identifying the aspirations of various communities, castes, tribes, and other sections of the population, and in planning our movements accordingly”. The extensive media campaign projecting the TMC-BJP binary also contributed to these public perceptions. It also needs to be examined whether our opposition to BJP on political ideological grounds could be effectively articulated.

58. The review correctly points to the lacunae of our own cadre. “....the political and ideological firmness expected of communist cadres was absent in a section” of our campaigners. This is a serious political weakness among our cadre as a section of them still consider the TMC to be a major danger than the BJP. As a result of such a wrong understanding, many of them were not alarmed by the victory of the BJP, rather, they were happy that the TMC was defeated. It is for this reason that even a section of our traditional voters did not vote for us, instead voting against the Party line, as the state review report notes. This was true with many non-party, Left and secular intellectuals too.

59. The absence of sustained class struggles, despite increasing the activities of our class and mass organisations is another reason for the failure to win people’s confidence. The attitude of the Left Front alliance partners and their refusal to contest on the basis of the current existing realities, delay in concluding seat adjustments meant a failure to project the LF as a front capable of defeating both the TMC and BJP. For those who were firm in defeating the TMC, the huge difference in the vote share between the TMC and the LF, made them vote for the BJP. Similarly, those who wanted the BJP to be defeated thought it would be possible only by voting for the TMC. Both these factors did not consider the LF and in a highly polarised election, this impacted our electoral performance.

60. Organisationally, though in many areas, we are able to open our Party offices after a long period, there is still inertia among a large section of our members. Many of them were not active even during the election campaign. The state review report correctly notes: “Owing to organizational weaknesses, booth-level organization could not be built in many areas. Even among the booths where booth committees had been formed, a large proportion remained inactive. In this election, a section of Party members remained inactive....Because of weaknesses in booth organization, shortcomings remained in conducting intensive campaigning that took into account the demographic character of each area. In short, ours was a failure to build the organisation in keeping with the demands of the present times”.

61. The failure to set up active booth committees and campaign by involving them meant that we could not effectively take our campaign among the people. The state review also points to the failure of the Party to ensure the independent functioning of the mass organisations.

62. The Party needs to contemplate why we still fail to consolidate all our contacts among the younger generations into our Party.

63. **Tamilnadu:** In Tamilnadu too we have witnessed a substantial increase in the voting percentage in these elections. In 2021, the voter turnout was 73.63 percent, which increased to 84.69 percent in 2026.

64. As noted in the preliminary review of the CC, “The ruling DMK alliance lost the elections to a new party, Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam TVK, which was formed by actor C. Joseph Vijay. The DMK won 133 seats in 2021 but could only win 59 in 2026. Its vote share too saw a fall from 46.45 percent in 2021 to 32.17 percent in these elections. The AIADMK-BJP alliance stood third in these elections. The BJP, which had 4 seats in 2021, was able to win only one seat in 2026, though its vote share saw a marginal increase (from 2.62 percent to 2.97 percent)”.

65. In 2021, our Party contested six seats as part of the DMK-led alliance and won two seats. This time, despite our insistence, the DMK was not ready to accept our demands to increase our seats. On the contrary, they pressurised us to accept their proposal to contest a seat less. As the CPI had already agreed and signed on such a proposal, we got no other option but to finally accede to the DMK’s proposal. Our state leadership tried their best to prevent the DMK’s move to reduce our seats, but in vain. We contested five seats and won two. The review of the state committee correctly points to the reasons for the DMK’s attitude: “Since DMK felt that Left would be a stumbling block for the neoliberal policies it was firm on containing our number”. This reaffirms the conclusion we have arrived at on the character of the regional parties in our 17th and 21st Party Congresses.

66. In Tamilnadu our vote share fell from 0.85 percent in 2021 to 0.6 percent in 2026. This is becoming a consistent phenomenon, even though we are able to win seats. It is a reflection of our failure to expand and consolidate our mass base despite our repeated efforts. We have to depend on our allies to win these seats, as noted in our earlier electoral reviews.

67. An extremely worrying factor is the bourgeois influences on our cadre and masses. As was noted in the 24th Congress organisational report, our Party members are not owning our candidatures in elections and participating in campaigns. This failure persists as noted in the state review report: “We could not involve our PMs even in constituencies we contested. It should be subjected to review in branches concerned. In some constituencies there were reports that our own party members voted for TVK. This is violation of our party line and decision”.

68. The state review reports notes the need for our cadre to be clearly aware of our Party’s understanding on the ‘Dravidian movement’. The state committee had adopted a document on our understanding with the help of the Party all India centre. However, this document was not discussed at the lower levels as accepted by the review. This needs to be urgently corrected by taking up a discussion at all levels of the Party. If necessary, the document can be updated involving the all India centre.

69. After nearly six decades, now there is no Dravidian party governing Tamilnadu, which is a major political development. The success of TVK was not foreseen by many political observers. As the Tamilnadu review report notes, TVK effectively used the anti-incumbency factor prevailing in the state against the DMK government. The numerous Vijay fans clubs, social media, cine influence also played a role in the victory of TVK. However, an important factor that should not be forgotten is the people’s yearning for change from both the DMK and AIADMK. As pointed in many of our previous reviews, recognising this factor, despite being in alliances, we should always try to protect and project the independent identity of our Party. Only then will we be able to effectively utilise the cracks opening up in the dominant bourgeois regional formations and emerge as the real alternative.

70. We have extensively reviewed the implementation of united front tactics and our electoral tactics to ensure the defeat of BJP and its allies. In order to implement these tactics, we need to enter into alliances with various regional bourgeois parties at different levels. This would invariably mean opening ourselves to alien class influences and various corrupt practices of these parties. We should consciously safeguard ourselves from falling prey to such practices and uphold the Party line. But as experience in Tamilnadu shows, we are not able to live up to such standards and calls for an urgent rectification.

71. **Assam:** In Assam, 85.38 percent polling was registered, which is an increase of 3.34 percent compared to 2021. The BJP was able to win the election with an increased majority and vote share. In 2021, it won 60 seats with a vote share of 33.21 percent. In 2026, it could win 82 seats with a vote share of 37.81 percent.

72. The main opposition party, Congress, once again failed to win the confidence of the people. While its vote share remained more or less the same, its seats have seen a fall. In 2021, it won 29 seats and a 29.67 percent vote share, while in 2026, it could win only 19 seats and 29.84 percent of the votes.

73. Our Party had seat adjustments with opposition parties, including the Congress. In 2021, we contested two seats and won one, securing 0.84 percent of the votes. In these elections, we contested two seats and failed to retain the seat. Our vote share too saw a fall and declined to 0.47 percent.

74. The Assam state committee reviewed the results and analysed the reasons for our defeat and the victory of the BJP. The rabid communal campaign of the RSS-BJP led to a polarisation on religious lines. The entire RSS machinery actively planned and ran the entire campaign. As the largest opposition party, the Congress failed to conclude the seat negotiations on time and this sent a negative impression to the people. The election commission carried out the delimitation of assembly constituencies in 2023, in a partisan manner to benefit the BJP. All these factors together contributed to the victory of the BJP with an increased majority.

75. Our Party could not retain the seat as after delimitation, some of our strong bases got divided. The non-cooperation of a section of the Congress leaders of the constituency also created confusion among the people. The limited organisational strength of the Party meant we could not form booth committees and plan our campaign in a systematic manner. The state review report identifies other important organisational weaknesses: “Almost 50 percent of the party members were not actively involved in the election campaign. Coordination between the Party organisation and the candidate was also inadequate. A sort of criticism about the functioning of the MLA was also evident among a section of the party members and the voters”.

76. As the Assam state committee correctly identifies, we need to plan our electoral interventions giving sufficient time for preparation. Our campaign should be effective in countering the dangers of Hindutva-communal-corporate policies and also project our alternatives.

77. **Puducherry:** The preliminary review of the last meeting noted the victory of the NDA alliance in Puducherry. Here the regional party, NR Congress (NRC) is

the main party, with which BJP had an alliance, and won. A feature to be noted is though the alliance was able to retain government, their vote share decreased.

78. The failure of both the DMK and Congress to come to an understanding and contest the elections together contributed to the victory of the NRC-BJP alliance. In this situation, the Left parties too were forced to contest separately.

79. A Party member who was put up as an independent candidate won from Mahe. In the last elections, we could not win any seat. Our vote share too saw a small increase.

80. This round of elections to legislative assemblies in four states and one union territory were held in a completely charged political situation. The RSS-BJP as noted in the Political Resolution of the 24th Congress have sharpened their electoral strategy in order to push forth their corporate-communal, Hindutva agenda. The Political Resolution adopted in the 24th Congress noted: “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”. (Para 2.72)

81. With the BJP in power continuously since 2014, it has strengthened its grip over the State and its agencies. There is a huge change in the functioning and attitude of the Election Commission (EC), which was supposed to be an impartial conductor of elections. The way elections are being conducted shows that it has become a thoroughly biased institution, carrying forward the RSS-BJP agenda. As we have noted in the 24th Congress “The Election Commission has seen a steady whittling down of its autonomous status....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”. (Para 2.13)

82. In the CC Report adopted in May, the further deterioration in the ECI’s conduct was noted: “Never in the history of independent India have electoral rolls been tampered with to ensure the interests of a particular political party”.

83. The entire SIR process, targeted deletion of voters from the electoral rolls and carrying out delimitation exercise to suit the interests of the BJP, as witnessed in Assam, all show the extent to which the EC is compromised and biased. In such a

situation, it becomes increasingly difficult for opposition parties to contest elections.

84. In this scenario, our election preparations should start well in advance and they should include studying the concrete conditions, formulating correct slogans accordingly and preparing our organisation right from the booth committees upwards. Even a small mistake committed by us would adversely affect our prospects. Hence the entire Party should be extremely careful and act with necessary caution. Only through our organisation can we meet the might of the ruling class parties and contest elections.

85. Elections are increasingly becoming an expensive affair and our Party cannot compete with the amount of money spent by different bourgeois parties, not to speak about the BJP. Many of them mobilise their finances from rich corporations without any hesitation. We are in principle against corporate funding and are the only national Party to not accept electoral bonds. This means that in order for us to contest elections we need to depend on the masses for our resources. Through emphasising on mass collections, we would be able to spread our political message to the general public, along with collecting money. These methods have to be followed in all the states.

86. It is extremely necessary in the current situation to conduct an extensive political campaign by mobilising various political forces and sections of the society demanding impartial conduct of elections and also thorough electoral reforms.

87. As noted in the Political Resolution adopted in the 24th Congress, in order to achieve our objective of isolating and defeating the RSS/BJP, “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”. (Para 2.82)

88. The Congress gave six directions to the Party and mass organisations in order to achieve these tasks:

“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". (Para 2.83)

89. Urgently reorienting our work to implement these tasks should be the priority for the entire Party. Unless we prioritise this task, we would not be able to march forward on our path towards Peoples' Democratic Revolution. Increasing the independent strength of the Party is of paramount importance. The 24th Congress underlined the urgent necessity to expand the independent strength of the Party and gave seven directions:

- 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. “**Keralam** 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”. (Para 2.84)

90. With the electoral debacle in Keralam and the victory of the BJP in West Bengal, the task upon has become even more onerous. It is only through a correct review of these elections based on criticism and self-criticism from the top to bottom, would we be able to overcome our weaknesses and meet the challenges we are confronted with.

Conclusions

- In all the states, we note a concerted effort from the RSS and BJP to expand and consolidate their influence in all these states where elections were held. The

victory of the BJP in West Bengal is a major blow and a matter of deep concern for all secular, progressive and democratic forces.

- The defeat of the LDF in Keralam is a serious setback to the Party.
- In all these states, as the state reviews note, our Party is not sufficiently equipped to counter the RSS-BJP Hindutva-communal-corporate propaganda. This is a major weakness that needs to be immediately addressed. Efforts should be initiated to improve the political and ideological consciousness of our cadre and make them internalise the threat of RSS-BJP.
- Many of our cadre and Party members were not active during the election campaign. This is a major weakness that needs to be immediately rectified. Without active cadre and membership our objective of confronting the Hindutva offensive or building the independent strength of the Party cannot be achieved.
- In Keralam, the failure to prioritise our political campaign by sharply attacking both the neoliberal and communal policies of the BJP and also the Congress blunted our electoral campaign.
- As our Party Programme states, when in government we need to remember the limitations under which we are running the government and campaign against these limitations. The discriminatory attitude of the BJP-led Union government should be one of the major points of attack.
- Our concept of using government as a weapon of struggles has to be pursued rigorously. Similarly we need to continue to organise struggles on peoples' issues even while leading state governments. We need to fight the reformist understanding that while in government we need not conduct struggles.
- Correct implementation of the principles of democratic centralism, where the opinions of the lower committees are respected and everyone is given a free and frank opportunity to express their opinions, should be strictly adhered to. Criticism, self-criticism, collective functioning and individual responsibility are all part of democratic centralism and should be enforced at all levels as it prevents stagnation and bureaucratic drift, while ensuring that we learn from our mistakes.
- The Party should be vigilant and unwavering in the fight against parliamentarism, bureaucratism, corruption, nepotism, dilution of communist values and such other alien class influences on our cadre and leaders at all levels. Unless these tendencies are fought, we cannot rejuvenate the entire rank and file and win the confidence of the people, who have high expectations on the Party. The Party PB and the CC will pay sufficient attention to intervene and help Party

state committees in their efforts to reorient the Party to face the challenges in the coming days.

- It is only by owning up the mistakes and indulging in genuine self-criticism can we rectify ourselves and emerge strongly. It is pertinent here to recollect what Lenin stated addressing the 11th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1922. “All the revolutionary parties that have perished so far, perished because they grew conceited, failed to see where their strength lay, and feared to speak of their weaknesses. But we shall not perish, for we do not fear to speak of their weaknesses and shall learn to overcome them”.

- Ho Chi Minh criticised the functioning of the Communist Party when he found out leaders who did not participate in self-criticism and also that criticism from the lower levels of the Party was also lacking (1956). Our own P. Krishna Pillai in his dying statement wrote: “there is lot of criticism, but not enough self-criticism”. We should learn from the teachings of all such revolutionary legends and strive hard to correct ourselves and bring back the Party on its revolutionary track.

91. In the final analysis, it is always our politics that mobilise people around us. We need to sharpen our political struggle against corporate-communal Hindutva forces by gearing up the entire Party rank and file. This is a struggle that should not be confined to few months before the elections. It should be sustained struggle that needs to be carried out by mobilising the largest number of Left, democratic, anti-communal, secular, and patriotic forces.

92. The task of building a Left Democratic Front on the basis of class and mass struggles, with workers, peasants and agricultural workers as the core cannot be postponed any longer. We have passed through many trials and tribulations in our history and successfully overcome them through our uncompromising struggles. This is the only way forward for us even in these testing times.