

Draft Political Resolution for 23rd Congress

*(Adopted at the Central Committee Meeting held on
January 07-09, 2022 at Hyderabad)*

0.1 The period since the 22nd Congress has seen the further consolidation of the BJP, which being in government is aggressively pursuing the Hindutva agenda of the fascistic RSS. It has mounted a multi-pronged attack through the pursuit of rabid neo-liberal reforms strengthening the communal-corporate nexus, looting of national assets, promoting crony capitalism, legalising political corruption and imposing full-fledged authoritarianism.

0.2 Post-2019 elections saw BJP return to form the government with more seats and higher percentage of votes by scripting a communal nationalist jingoistic narrative. Since then, sharpening rabid communal polarisation and undermining the foundations of our secular democratic Constitution it embarked on dissolving the state of Jammu & Kashmir and abrogating Articles 370 and 35A of the Constitution; legislated the anti-Constitutional Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA); began the construction of the temple at Ayodhya and mercilessly attacked people's democratic rights and civil liberties through the gross misuse of the draconian preventive detention laws. There are constant efforts to change the character of the Indian Constitutional Republic.

0.3 This period also saw growing resistance to the policies of the Modi government from different sections of the working people. The working class protested against the new labour codes and the privatisation drive through general and sectoral strikes. The anti-CAA movement developed as a mass protest against the subversion of the Constitution and citizenship. The biggest and most prolonged struggle of the farmers ended in a historic victory with the repeal of the three farm laws.

0.4 During these four years, the BJP government has completely surrendered to US strategic, political and security designs, emerging as a steadfast subordinate ally of US imperialism. This is having serious consequences for relations with our neighbours and India's international standing. This is taking place in the background of important global developments that have a direct bearing on the Indian situation today.

International Situation

1.1 Following are the main features of the international situation since the 22nd Party Congress:

- i) The outbreak of the disastrous Covid-19 pandemic and its continuing impact with the emergence of new variants.
- ii) The contrast between the manner in which Capitalist and Socialist countries have tackled the pandemic and the associated issues.
- iii) Deepening global economic recession.
- iv) The bankruptcy of neo-liberalism to provide any solution to the economic recession. On the contrary, stimulus packages designed to revive the economy further strengthen the neo-liberal trajectory of maximisation of profits.

- v) The grip of Finance Capital over the global economy has further strengthened.
- vi) Disastrous impact on people's lives and livelihoods with growing global hunger; poverty levels; unemployment; and educational deprivation.
- vii) Rising influence of China as a global power.
- viii) US imperialism's efforts to contain and isolate China.
- ix) The continuation of the global political rightward shift and the growing resistance against this.
- x) Growing resistance in Latin America against US imperialist aggressiveness. Popular people's struggles have led to electoral victories of Left, progressive forces in Chile, Venezuela, Bolivia, Peru and Honduras.
- xi) A major development in this period is the unfolding situation in Afghanistan with the Taliban takeover following the withdrawal of the US-NATO forces.
- xii) Growing isolation of India in our neighbourhood. Deterioration of relations with most neighbouring countries.
- xiii) The serious dangers posed by global warming and the urgent need for decisive action on climate change.

Disastrous Covid Pandemic

1.2 The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in December 2019 remains a major issue globally and continues to play havoc. The Corona virus is mutating in a fast manner and new variants are emerging. The latest is *Omicron* whose rate of infection is higher globally. Since the Covid pandemic began, close to **300** million people have been infected and nearly **5.5** million have lost their lives already.

1.3 Global Vaccine Inequality: Unless the vaccination drive intensifies through a universal global programme, the pandemic will continue to wreak havoc. Until all are safe no one is safe. The high level of global vaccine inequality is preventing this from happening. This vaccine inequality also permits the emergence of new variants through mutations. Hoarding and high consumption of vaccines by the richer developed countries, more than what their population needs, is one factor. Nearly 70 per cent of the population in high income countries is fully vaccinated whereas only 2.5 per cent of people in low income countries are similarly vaccinated. Vaccine doses of around 150 per cent of population are administered in high income countries contrasted with 7 per cent in low income countries. Less than 10 per cent of adults in the entire African continent are fully vaccinated. The other factor for this vaccine inequality is the refusal by some high income countries to remove the intellectual property regime and patent rights over vaccines. This refusal, primarily to protect the big pharma companies, is leading to high prices that inhibit poorer countries to purchase and also prohibit domestic production.

1.4 Inadequate Public Health Care: The pandemic starkly exposed the woefully inadequate public health care system under capitalism. This was particularly stark in the developing countries. Neo-liberal policies of profit maximisation have led to large scale privatisation of health facilities and even where limited health care facilities are available they are through the health insurance route favouring insurance companies and are not State-funded. The inability to afford private health care has worsened the chances of survival of lakhs of people as well as for the containment of the pandemic. Along with vaccine inequality, this continues to have a disastrous impact on people's lives, especially in poor and developing countries.

1.5 Socialist Countries: In sharp contrast is the manner

in which socialist countries dealt with the pandemic given their people-centric policies and public health care systems. They were able to meet the pandemic challenge much more efficiently than capitalism and once again demonstrated the superiority of socialism. **China** was severely tested by the pandemic but has been able to contain it leading to the revival of its economy and the re-energising of its economic activities. It supplied vaccines to more than a hundred countries. **Cuba**, despite the severe economic hardships due to the cruel US blockade, unable to access medicines and equipment from abroad, has developed its own domestic vaccines and sent medical missions including supply of vaccines to over 50 countries in the world. **Vietnam**, likewise, could effectively control the spread of the pandemic in the first wave and has since been tackling the subsequent Delta wave.

Global Capitalist Crisis

1.6 Following the 2008 global financial meltdown generated systemic economic crisis, global capitalism has not been able to recover to the earlier levels. According to the IMF, global GDP growth continuously declined from 5.4 per cent in 2009 to 2.8 per cent in 2019 before the pandemic struck. The pandemic associated lockdowns and production closures saw the global economy contracting by **minus** 4.4 per cent in 2020. While both the IMF and World Bank project a healthier growth trajectory for the coming years they also caution about very strong headwinds like persisting global vaccine inequality preventing any major recovery. The World Bank maintains that 2022 output would be 2 per cent below pre-pandemic global output projections.

1.7 US, EU Stimulus Packages: The optimistic global output projections by international agencies are to a large extent based on expectations of recovery generated by new stimulus packages announced in USA and EU. USA has announced a \$1.9 trillion package while EU parliament agreed on a Euro 1.8 trillion

(\$2.2 trillion) package directly financed by its budget. These packages provide very limited direct benefit to the working people and the middle classes while it is the big business and finance capital that got a bonanza, furthering neo-liberalism's profit maximisation agenda. The IMF estimates that global fiscal stimulus from all sources since the onset of the pandemic was to the tune of \$16.9 trillion. Nearly 86 per cent of this global spending was cornered by the advanced countries. Much of this stimulus is earmarked for advances and loans from the financial system with very little going as direct benefit to the people. The main route for raising the resources for these packages was through government bonds and other instruments traded mainly in the stock markets. This inflated the stock market leading to unprecedented booms.

1.8 Rising Inequalities: The very nature of financing the stimulus packages triggering stock market booms has contributed to rising inequalities in an obscene manner. The total wealth of the world's billionaires reached a new peak of \$10.2 trillion in July 2020. The wealth of the 10 richest people increased by \$413 billion in the last year - enough to cover the entire UN humanitarian appeal for 2021 by more than 11 times. Nine new global billionaires were created by big pharma monopolies producing Covid vaccines. Such obscene levels of wealth concentration are in the very character of capitalist exploitation and accumulation. The Global Minimum Tax of 15 per cent for companies has been agreed to by 136 countries but there are serious doubts whether it will be effective and stop the big corporates and the super-rich from evading paying due taxes.

1.9 Global Finance: International finance capital led neo-liberalism has consolidated the process of widening income and wealth inequalities. This is an indicator of the consolidation of neo-liberalism's objective of maximisation of profits. As noted

by the 22nd Congress, neo-liberalism has proven its bankruptcy in providing any solution for the economic crisis, that its policies and prescriptions caused in the first place. On the contrary, its singular focus on profit maximization is only further exacerbating the crisis. However, utilizing the situation created by the global pandemic, it is seeking its further consolidation. The stimulus packages it has designed continue to enrich the rich, creating conditions for strengthening the grip of global finance capital not only over the economy but also in shaping the political dispensations in many countries that favour aggressive neo-liberal policies.

Growing People's Miseries

1.10 The combined effect of the pandemic and the global economic recession is having a disastrous impact on the vast majority of the people with intensified capitalist economic exploitation; growing levels of global hunger; rising poverty levels; galloping unemployment; and intense educational deprivation for the vast majority of the world's children.

1.11 Growing Hunger: The Oxfam estimates that 11 people are now dying of hunger each minute. The UNICEF estimates that a tenth of global population, around 811 million, are undernourished, 150 million children were stunted; and 45 million wasted in 2020. With around 180 million more facing chronic hunger last year, it is estimated that 30 per cent of the global population, 2.37 billion, lacked adequate access to food in 2020 – increase of 320 million in one year.

1.12 Poverty: People living in extreme poverty are projected to reach 745 million by the end of 2021, an increase of 100 million. Loss of employment among women around the world cost at least \$ 800 billion in lost income in 2020. An additional 47 million more women worldwide are expected to fall into extreme poverty

in 2021.

1.13 Unemployment: Global unemployment is expected to reach 205 million in 2022, leaping from 187 million in 2019. ILO projects the global crisis induced jobs gap to reach 75 million in 2020. Global working hours declined by 8.8 per cent in 2020, equivalent to loss of 255 million full time jobs. Women employment declined by 5 per cent in 2020 compared to 3.9 per cent in 2019. Globally, youth employment fell 8.7 per cent in 2020 compared to 3.7 per cent for adults. This drastic fall in employment and in working hours comes on top of persistently high pre-Covid levels of unemployment, under-employment and poor working conditions.

1.14 Intensified Exploitation: Neo-liberalism's prescriptions for profit maximisation create conditions for a protracted capitalist crisis as they focus on intensifying the economic exploitation of the working people which, in turn, depresses domestic demand negatively impacting growth. A continuing crisis and slowdown since 2008 saw real wages declining in developed countries like UK, Italy, Japan etc. Labour productivity (21.8 per cent) increased more rapidly than real wages (14.3 per cent) in the first two decades of this century due to the austerity measures implemented post 2008. Nearly 70 per cent or 4 billion people, in terms of social security, are either not protected at all, or at best, partially protected. Between 2019 and 2020 with growing job losses there was a 10.7 per cent decline in global labour income, equivalent to \$3.5 trillion. This further worsened in 2021. Such intensified exploitation is in the very character of capitalism and its predatory nature.

1.15 Educational Deprivation: According to UNESCO, an estimated 90 per cent of the world's children have had their education disrupted during the pandemic. As of May 2021, schools in 26 countries were totally closed and in 55 others are partially

opened. Children have begun working, grown disillusioned with education, edged out of free or subsidised education as per their country's laws, thus ensuring that for millions of students this is not a temporary interference or a disruption in their education but an abrupt end to it. During the pandemic, online education further exposed the 'digital divide' in education.

Rightward Political Shift

1.16 Since the 21st Party Congress, we noted the rise of reactionary forces and movements globally. In the 22nd Party Congress, we noted a further political rightward shift, globally. In today's conditions of further deepening economic crisis under the impact of the pandemic and associated health emergencies, this trend of rightward shift continues.

1.17 The 22nd Party Congress political resolution noted: "In times of intense global economic crisis, a political battle over who would marshal the rising popular discontent surfaces. The political right-wing advances by rallying popular discontent and in ensuring that the Left and progressive forces do not emerge as a major alternative political force." (Para 1.14)

1.18 Right-wing forces seek to disrupt the strengthening of organised united protests of the working people by whipping up emotional passions, fostering divisive appeals and promoting racism, xenophobia, religious sectarianism, fundamentalism, parochialism etc. in order to disrupt and divide people's unity against intensifying exploitation.

1.19 **Countervailing Trends:** However, countervailing trends to combat this rightward political shift are also growing. This can clearly be seen in Latin American countries, like **Bolivia, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Peru and Chile**. 'The Black Lives Matter' protest also contributed to Trump's defeat in the US. After 1959 all governments in the five Scandinavian countries today

are either Social Democratic or Centre-Left.

Growing Protests

1.20 The period since the 22nd Congress has seen the growth of resistance against the pre-pandemic economic crisis, the consequent austerity measures, the intensification of exploitation and against the miseries imposed during the pandemic, lockdowns and inadequate provisions for people's welfare. Despite the pandemic, strikes and protest demonstrations have occurred in many parts of the world. Such protests were more pronounced in **Latin America** where working people in many countries like **Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, and Uruguay** organised strike actions and big demonstrations.

1.21 In **Europe**, a cross section of industrial workers and those working in services sectors like doctors, nurses, health workers, teachers and others went on strike. Employees of the global giant Amazon struck work in various countries, despite the corporation banning any unions. These protests in varying degrees demanded better working conditions, wages and other social welfare measures that were adversely affected due to austerity measures and for adequate protection against the pandemic. **France** saw the protests against the labour law reform and militant actions by the Yellow Vests against increased tax burden. Workers in many other countries are protesting against the changes in labour laws, cuts in wages, pensions and long working hours. Workers' struggles forced countries like **Portugal** to legislate on 'work from home' conditions. **Greece** saw big strike actions. A significant feature is that these struggles by the working people were actively supported and joined by the farmers, women, green activists, students and youth. In many countries the strength of such protest actions impacted on elections favouring progressive and non-right wing forces.

China's Global Rise

1.22 China was effective in containing the pandemic and reviving its economy. It has consolidated its global position of being the second largest economic power house in the world. During the centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of China in July 2021, it was announced that it has reached one of its two centennial goals: that of establishing a moderately prosperous society by 2020 with a healthy GDP growth rate, improvement in people's income, education, health and living standards.

1.23 In February 2021, China officially announced the elimination of absolute poverty in the country. According to the World Bank's international poverty rankings China is responsible for reduction of over 70 per cent of global poverty. In the first three quarters of 2021, China witnessed 9.89 per cent of GDP growth while its annual target is 6 per cent. China has accounted for more than 30 per cent of the world's economic growth, on average, every year since 2006.

1.24 **US-China Conflict:** The US is alarmed by the growing Chinese global influence which it considers as threatening its global hegemony. The steady growth of China as an economic power and its effective combating of the pandemic and its reopening of its economy are being increasingly seen by US imperialism as a threat that challenges US global dominance. The US has initiated a series of measures in order to not merely contain but to isolate China, categorising China as a strategic rival. It has undertaken economic and trade measures to weaken China's economy; raising issues of democracy with reference to the Hong Kong protests; raising issues of violation of human rights in Xinjiang province; US is militarily arming Taiwan to foil the 'One China policy'; it is seeking unfettered access to the South China Sea and hurling allegations of cyber warfare by China.

1.25 Following the formation of the QUAD (USA, Japan, Australia and India) as a military and strategic alliance, the US has now initiated a new security partnership called AUKUS (Australia-UK-US) aimed at reducing China's influence and presence in the Indo-Pacific seas particularly in the Indian Ocean. With joint military presence of these countries, joint military exercises and a wide range of war games, US imperialism is seeking to isolate China.

1.26 The US, under the Biden administration, is continuing the sanctions imposed on China by the Trump administration. Consequently US goods imports from China and bilateral services trade have fallen between 2018 and 2020. However, in 2020, China was the largest US trading partner with trade worth \$ 659.5 billion. Given the intertwining of investments and debt, the US cannot do away with trade from China. In order to maintain its supremacy on scientific and technological innovations, the US is striving hard to limit China's expansion in this sector with steps like excluding China's involvement in 5G networks.

1.27 USA is mobilising its G7, EU and NATO allies in the global effort to isolate China. To counter China's Belt and Road Initiative, a major global infrastructural trade route in which more than 150 countries have joined, US initiated the G7 to declare a counter plan, 'Build Back Better World'. At the NATO summit, under US influence, a statement was issued mentioning China as a security threat. The EU, while acting in tandem with USA, Canada and Britain on the question of human rights in China and imposing sanctions on Chinese officials, is however not united to completely align with the USA on economic and commercial issues. Germany, France and Italy are not eager to 'decouple' with China. China's retaliation with sanctions against certain persons and institutions in EU in response to human rights sanctions imposed by EU alarmed the EU business council. At the US-

Russia summit meeting, US efforts to drive a wedge between Russia and China on their strategic partnership did not succeed.

1.28 This US-China conflict will have an impact on the central contradiction between imperialism and socialism.

China-Russia Partnership

1.29 The strategic partnership between China and Russia has deepened and strengthened in the recent years. The Xi Jinping-Putin virtual meeting in December 2021 came in the wake of the increased tensions between the US-NATO and Russia over Ukraine and the US thrust in the Asia-Pacific region to isolate China. In November 2021, the Defence Ministers of Russia and China signed a roadmap for closer military cooperation for the period 2021-25. The strengthening of the strategic ties between China and Russia will serve as a strategic counter-weight to the US-led hegemonic alliance.

Conflict in Ukraine

1.30 Ukraine has become a flashpoint between Russia and the western alliance, NATO. The west has been pushing for the eastward expansion of NATO since the fall of the Soviet Union. All the East European states are now part of the EU and NATO. Russia is strongly opposed to Ukraine, a former republic of the Soviet Union, being brought into the NATO orbit. The annexation of Crimea and the conflict in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine was an outcome of this tussle. The moving of Russian troops on the border with Ukraine is a result of the renewed efforts to strengthen NATO ties with Ukraine. The G-7 and the European Union are threatening severe sanctions against Russia if it seeks to militarily move against Ukraine, while Russia has put out 'red lines' on the attempt to incorporate Ukraine into the western alliance.

Major World Social Contradictions

1.31 The growing China-US conflict and the continuing aggressive posture of US imperialism towards Cuba and the DPRK have a bearing on the sharpening of the central contradiction between imperialism and socialism.

1.32 In the sphere of inter-imperialist contradictions, we had noted in the 22nd Congress that the cohesion of the imperialist alliance was adversely affected mainly due to the Trump administration's policies. Though concerted efforts to rally all the European and NATO allies against Russia and China are being made by the Biden administration, differences remain.

1.33 The contradiction between imperialism and developing countries is also growing with US imperialism's aggressive intrusion in Latin America, West Asia and Africa. The developing countries debt burden has become unsustainable and the rich countries are refusing to take the historical responsibility for global warming and are refusing to finance climate adaptation measures.

1.34 The basic contradiction of capitalism between **Labour and Capital** is intensifying with greater assaults on the rights of the working class and the working people accompanied by intensified exploitation through austerity measures, job losses and replacement of labour with new technologies. The working class resistance to these onslaughts has also grown.

US Imperialism's Aggressiveness

1.35 In various parts of the world, US imperialism continues to aggressively intervene in order to maintain its global hegemony. In 2020, US military expenditure reached an estimated \$778 billion which is an increase of 4.4 per cent over 2019; this was the third consecutive year of growth of US military expenditure. But, in many parts, the resistance against imperialist-backed

governments is also growing and US imperialism's hegemony is being challenged.

Latin America

1.36 Latin America witnessed a rightwing counter-offensive in the period after the 22nd Congress. In **Brazil**, Jair Bolsonaro, a far-right candidate won the Presidential election in 2018 and proceeded to institute a rightwing authoritarian regime. In **Bolivia**, a US-backed coup took place after the elections in 2019, which was won by Evo Morales of the MAS. Morales had to leave the country. In **Honduras**, the US intervened to see that the incumbent President was reinstated despite large-scale charges of rigging. The US-backed rightwing forces have been making serious attempts to topple the government of Nicolas Maduro in **Venezuela**.

1.37 As against this, the popular and Left forces have been in relentless struggle against authoritarianism and the rightwing economic policies. This has led to the Left regaining ground and making advances. In **Argentina**, the rightwing incumbent President was defeated by a Peronist candidate in 2019. The most significant fight back was in **Bolivia**, where in October 2020, the MAS candidate won the Presidential election with a landslide victory and the new government has rolled back the reactionary policies of the putschist regime. Since then, the Left and Centre-Left candidates have won in **Peru** and **Honduras** (both countries which have a history of authoritarian regimes and coups).

1.38 In December 2021, the victory of the Left alliance candidate, Gabriel Boric, in **Chile's** Presidential election is an important landmark, coming in the wake of the successful movement to change the Constitution and the election of a Constituent Assembly dominated by Left and progressive forces. The only exception to these progressive results was in **Ecuador**,

where the rightwing won the Presidentship.

1.39 In **Brazil**, the disastrous regime of Bolsonaro is faced with growing popular protests. With former President Lula cleared of the trumped up charges of corruption, the Presidential elections in 2022 will see Bolsonaro facing a formidable challenge from Lula. The success of the latter will have a big impact on the ongoing struggle against the US-backed rightwing forces. **Columbia**, which has long been the bastion of the US-backed rightwing forces, is witnessing big working class actions led by the Left which will pose a big challenge in the 2022 Presidential election.

1.40 **Venezuela** has valiantly resisted the hybrid war launched by the US and the rightwing forces to destabilize the Maduro government through sanctions, seizure of its assets abroad, promoting armed groups and efforts to create social and economic unrest. Despite the acute shortages of food, fuel and essential commodities, the popular forces have remained united and thwarted all attempts to promote unrest. In the provincial election held in November 2021, the ruling United Socialist Party (PSUV) won 19 of the 23 Governorships.

West Asia

1.41 The main feature in West Asia is the continuing aggressive posture of Israel vis-à-vis the Palestinians and towards Iran. Emboldened by the Trump administration's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and its approval of the illegal settlements in the West Bank, Israel under Netanyahu embarked on fresh provocations in East Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa mosque. There was another record of aggression against the Gaza strip. The US facilitated another diplomatic success for Israel by getting four Arab countries – UAE, Morocco, Bahrain and Sudan – to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.

1.42 Iran saw renewed sanctions imposed by the US after Trump unilaterally withdrew from the nuclear agreement. After Biden assuming the Presidency, talks are on to revive the nuclear pact, but no progress has been made so far, given the reluctance of the US to first withdraw sanctions. Iran, under a new President, Ebrahim Raisi, is facing severe economic difficulties. It has signed a 25-year strategic pact with China to deepen strategic and economic relations.

1.43 West Asia has been the region which saw the worst forms of imperialist aggression and occupation in the last two decades. First Iraq, followed by Libya and Syria. After the US troops' withdrawal, Iraq is still struggling to stabilize amidst sectarian strife and the long struggle against Al Qaeda and ISIS. Libya, after years of civil war, is engaged in a precarious effort to establish peace and create a unified State where rival armed factions hold sway. In Syria, after the failure of the effort to effect regime change and seven years of destructive civil war, the Assad government has consolidated its hold with only one province, bordering Turkey, still with the extremist rebels.

1.44 All these three countries and others in the region are facing serious economic crisis with Lebanon undergoing an economic collapse.

Africa

1.45 In the name of fighting the armed Islamist extremist groups operating in parts of Africa and to counter the wide Chinese influence in the African continent, the United States has increased its military footprint through *Africom*. There are military bases and special forces stationed in 29 locations in 15 countries concentrated in the Sahelian region in the west and the Horn of Africa in the east. This is apart from the French troops who are deployed in various countries of West Africa.

Socialist Countries – US Imperialism’s Hostile Moves

1.46 Using the pandemic crisis as an opportunity, US imperialism is seeking to destabilise socialist Cuba. It has tightened the six decade old economic blockade. Threatening imposition of sanctions on any country in the world maintaining economic relations with Cuba, the US instigated sections of Cuban people to revolt against the Communist Party and Socialism. Economic hardship faced by Cuba due to the US imposed blockade was sought to be exploited by USA using counter revolutionary forces. However, these efforts have failed. Cuba and DPRK have once again been categorised by USA as states sponsoring terrorism. USA continues to carry out provocative military exercises in the nuclearized Korean peninsula. US-DPRK talks have failed as the US refuses to lift economic sanctions on DPRK.

South Asian Countries

1.47 The most important development in the region with global implications is the ignominious withdrawal of the US forces from Afghanistan, ending the 20 year long war. This is a setback for US imperialism. The withdrawal of the US-NATO troops led to the collapse of the Ashraf Ghani government and the takeover by the Taliban in August 2021. The formation of the Taliban government, given the experience of its earlier regime, has raised serious concerns. Russia, China, Iran and the Central Asian countries sharing borders with Afghanistan have had different levels of interaction with the Taliban. Pakistan, having been a consistent supporter of the Taliban is now playing a key role in facilitating the Taliban regime’s international relations. India, which was isolated over these developments in Afghanistan, is now seeking ways to re-connect with the country by providing humanitarian assistance.

1.48 India’s isolation in the developments in South Asia found another expression when 5 out of the 8 SAARC members joined the China initiated South Asia Forum - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. No summit meeting of the SAARC has been held since 2014. India refused to participate in the SAARC summit in 2016. There is an impression that India is not keen on reviving the SAARC and is more interested in the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral, Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) consisting of seven countries that share the Bay of Bengal coast.

India’s Neighbours

1.49 A marked feature of the period after the 22nd Congress is the rise of authoritarianism and further growth of communalism and fundamentalism in the South Asian countries. In most countries in the neighbourhood, religious and ethnic minorities are under attack from majoritarian forces.

1.50 **Bangladesh:** In recent years, Bangladesh’s economic performance and GDP growth rate has been higher than all other South Asian countries. Its Human Development Indicators have improved substantially and it stands ahead of India. The recent attacks on the Hindu minorities during the *Durga Puja* celebrations are an indication of how the fundamentalist forces are continuing to create trouble.

1.51 **Pakistan:** The Imran Khan government is faced with popular discontent due to the grim economic situation. The pandemic has only deepened the crisis. High food prices (averaging 18 per cent increase in the first nine months of 2021) and unemployment is the source of people’s disenchantment. The close liaison between the Prime Minister and the Army Chief also came under strain. The country is plagued by terrorist attacks launched by the Pakistani Taliban in the frontier tribal areas. The

extremist Islamist Tehreek-e-Labbaik, is able to mount virulent protests and force the government to accede to its demands. The activities of extremist groups are directed against India. Though Pakistan itself suffers from the vicious cycle of fundamentalism and terrorism, the authorities continue to shelter those extremist outfits who are conducting attacks against India. The overbearing role of the army continues to limit the democratic system and fosters authoritarianism.

1.52 **Sri Lanka:** The landslide victory of the Mahinda Rajapaksa-led Sri Lanka People's Freedom Alliance in the November 2020 Parliament election has consolidated the hold of the Rajapaksa family with all four brothers holding government posts. Under President Rajapaksa, an authoritarian regime with military personnel in government has been instituted. The regime banks on Sinhala Buddhist nationalism, which is hostile to both the Tamil and Muslim minorities. The economic policies of the Rajapaksa regime have resulted in an economic crisis with agricultural production plummeting and a serious foreign exchange crisis. Food shortages and inflation have badly affected the living conditions of the people.

1.53 The government has refused to proceed with an independent investigation of war crimes during the civil war. It is not showing any signs of implementing the measures for devolution of powers to the North and Eastern provinces. The Indian government has to continue efforts to see that Article 13A of the Sri Lankan Constitution is implemented in letter and spirit.

1.54 **Nepal:** The two Communist parties – Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) – united to form a merged party, the Nepal Communist Party (NCP). The NCP won a landslide victory in the Parliament elections held in 2019 and formed the government.

However, the government was soon affected by the factional struggles within the party. The faction led by Prime Minister K P Oli was reduced to a minority and when a section of the NCP MPs withdrew support he was forced to resign consequent to the Supreme Court decreeing the dissolution of the Parliament as unconstitutional. Another government headed by the Nepali Congress Party leader Sher Bahadur Deuba was formed with the support of a section of members belonging to the CPN-UML faction.

1.55 The split in the NCP and the fall of the Oli government is a setback for the Left movement in Nepal. This has opened the way for the rightwing forces to intervene and there is a growing tendency to mix religion and politics which bodes ill for the secular principles enshrined in the democratically adopted Constitution of Nepal.

1.56 **Myanmar:** The brutal military coup, in February 2021, toppling the popularly-elected government led to mass protests by tens and thousands of people across the country. The military regime has unleashed brutal repression killing hundreds of peaceful protestors. Hundreds more were jailed. Aung San Suu Kyi has been sentenced to two years in prison in a sham trial in an obvious ploy to disqualify her from contesting elections in future.

1.57 The higher echelons of the military have built up a powerful network of patronage and business interests and to protect these vested interests, it wants to exercise complete control over the State. Religious and ethnic groups promote the interests of the majority Buddhist population. Massacre of the Rohingyas led to a massive distress migration into neighbouring countries, including India.

1.58 Facing severe repression, some of the young protestors

have joined with the insurgent ethnic groups in the northern part of the country and are receiving armed training. So far the efforts of ASEAN and the United Nations have evoked no positive response from the military junta. It is important to express solidarity with the people of Myanmar who are struggling for the restoration of democracy and an end to military rule.

Perils of Climate Change

1.59 The period since the 22nd Congress is characterized by the rapid increase of global warming and climate change. Climate change is a class issue, as it is the uncontrolled plunder of natural resources by capitalism that has led to the present catastrophic situation. The latest (Sixth) Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in August 2021 has for the first time stated that the increased atmospheric greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations leading to the climate crisis are “unequivocally caused by human activities.” The Report says that global average temperatures are already about 1.1 degrees C higher than in the industrial era. Hence, there is very little margin left to meet the global target of 1.5C fixed at COP26 in Glasgow. Thus, the world seems headed for frighteningly higher temperature rises.

1.60 Even at present levels of global warming, severe climate impacts noted for their ferocity and scale have been witnessed all over the world this year, notably in the northern hemisphere, conveying the horrors in store at 1.5C or 2C temperature rise. Extreme weather events in the summer of 2021 came as a rude shock to Europe and North America who usually viewed climate impacts as mostly affecting developing nations in tropical regions. India saw annual extreme rainfall events triggering landslips, mudslides, floods and urban flooding.

1.61 These sharp reminders of the gravity of the climate

crisis, however, did not produce any substantive shift at COP26 in Glasgow. Global emissions which should have come down by 50 per cent by 2030 are estimated to actually increase by 16 per cent. Instead of addressing this, the US shifted the goalposts and aggressively pushed for a commitment by all countries, both developed and developing, to “net zero” emissions by 2050 i.e. emissions being equal to absorption by sinks such as forests and oceans. The US focus on this uncertain longer-term target, adopted by many countries, diverted from the crucial 2030 targets, and once more undermined the equity principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR).

1.62 The disappointing outcome of COP26 was ensured by the US and its allies in other ways too. The much-touted 100 billion dollars annually, promised at Copenhagen twelve years ago by developed countries to vulnerable nations to assist with climate impacts, was casually postponed by three more years. The US and other developed countries are pushing to move climate finance to the private sector. While a lot of noise was generated at the Summit on phasing out coal, the Statement was silent on petroleum except for a mild mention of doing away with “inefficient subsidies”. Clearly, advanced capitalist countries led by the US, believe they can afford to buy time for the transition to a decarbonized economy, while heaping pressure on developing countries to take up more of the burden of emissions reduction.

1.63 The crisis of the productive forces that global warming represents must be resolved on the basis of equity if the well-being of billions in the global South is not to be endangered. COP26 marks the intensification of this struggle for global equity that will be a long-drawn out one.

International Communist Cooperation

1.64 The rightward shift and the growth of reactionary

ideologies and ethno-nationalisms require the increasing cooperation of the Communist, Left and progressive forces around the world. The regular meetings of the Communist and Workers Parties provided an opportunity to exchange experiences and work out a common understanding on how to tackle major socio-economic challenges. However, it is necessary to step up these collaborative and cooperative efforts especially in a situation of deepening economic crisis and the manner in which the Covid pandemic has been utilized to mount further attacks on the working people all across the world.

Strengthen Anti-Imperialist Solidarity

1.65 The CPI(M) will conduct a vibrant campaign amongst the people and mobilise against the abject surrender of this BJP government to US imperialism in all its manifestations.

1.66 The CPI(M) will strengthen struggles against US imperialism globally and against its interference in aggressively pursuing its strategic interests in South Asia.

1.67 The CPI(M) reiterates its complete solidarity and support to the Palestinian people's struggle against Israeli aggressiveness and illegal occupation of Palestinian lands. The right of the Palestinians to their homeland with East Jerusalem as a capital, as declared by several UN Security Council resolutions must be implemented.

1.68 The CPI(M) shall strongly oppose the growing USA-Israel-India axis being furthered by the present BJP government.

1.69 The CPI(M) expresses its solidarity with all socialist countries – China, Vietnam, DPRK, Cuba and Laos. It fully supports their efforts to strengthen socialism in their respective countries. It upholds its solidarity with them in defeating the imperialist machinations against them.

1.70 The CPI(M) expresses its solidarity with the anti-imperialist struggles in Latin America, particularly with Venezuela, in its struggle against US imperialism.

1.71 The CPI(M) continues to firmly oppose terrorism – state sponsored and sponsored by individual groups – of all forms and varieties.

1.72 The CPI(M) expresses solidarity with all forces combating neo-fascist forces, fundamentalism, religious fanaticism, ethnic sectarianism, obscurantism and reactionary forces.

1.73 The CPI(M) shall consolidate its relations with Left revolutionary movements all over the world.

1.74 At the global level, CPI(M) will extend solidarity with all struggles against imperialism in all its manifestations, against neo-liberalism, against the dangerous degradation of the world's environment and for universal climate justice.

1.75 The CPI(M) shall endeavour to contribute its efforts to bring together various streams of people's struggles to forge an all-embracing anti-imperialist movement across the world.

National Situation

2.1 The 22nd Party Congress Political Resolution assessed the then prevailing national political situation as follows:

“The nearly four years of the Modi Government has led to the onset of a right-wing authoritarian-communal regime. This regime is characterised by an intensified pursuit of neo-liberal policies, resulting in all round attacks on the working people; the concerted effort to implement the RSS's Hindutva agenda which

threatens the secular democratic framework of the State, accompanied by attacks on the minorities and dalits; a reinforcement of the strategic alliance with the United States and playing the role of a subordinate ally; and building the architecture of authoritarianism by curbing parliamentary democracy, subverting constitutional institutions and democratic rights.” (2.1)

2.2 Since then, there has been the intensification of the above right wing offensive. However, with the return of the Modi government with a larger number of seats and vote share began the aggressive furthering of the Hindutva agenda of the fascistic RSS. What is unfolding, particularly, in the post 2019 period is on the lines laid down in our Party Programme:

“The Bharatiya Janata Party is a reactionary party with a divisive and communal platform, the reactionary content of which is based on hatred against other religions, intolerance and ultra-nationalist chauvinism. The BJP is no ordinary bourgeois party as the fascistic Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh guides and dominates it. When the BJP is in power, the RSS gets access to the instruments of State power and the State machinery. The Hindutva ideology promotes revivalism and rejects the composite culture of India with the objective of establishing a Hindu rashtra.” (7.14)

“The threat to the secular foundations has become menacing with the rise of the communal and fascistic RSS-led combine and its assuming power at the Centre. Systematic efforts are on to communalise the institutions of the State, the administration, the educational system and the media. The growth of majority communalism will strengthen the forces of minority communalism and endanger national unity. The support of sections of the big bourgeoisie for the BJP and its communal platform is fraught with serious consequences for democracy and secularism in the country.” (5.7)

“Party should fight against all forms of intrusion of religion in the economic, political and administrative life of the nation and uphold secular and democratic values in culture, education and society. The danger of fascist trends gaining ground, based on religious communalism must be firmly fought at all levels.” (5.8)

2.3 The BJP succeeded in scripting a narrative that was built around communal nationalist jingoism. It was successful in shifting the poll narrative away from people’s livelihood issues and the then growing popular struggles, utilising the Pulwama terrorist attack and the subsequent Balakot airstrike.

2.4 The BJP succeeded in creating an overarching ‘Hindu Identity’ cutting across social-ethnic divides to a significant extent, accompanied by crass micro level caste based mobilisations. Massive money power and control over the media and social media by the RSS-BJP influenced the results significantly. The BJP’s money power accumulated in multiple ways, including the instrument of electoral bonds, deprives a level playing field, an imperative for free and fair elections.

2.5 The 2019 election results marked the further consolidation of the rightward political shift and growing fascistic trends in India.

Post 2019 BJP Government

2.6 Soon after assuming office for the second time, the government dissolved the state of Jammu and Kashmir, abrogated Articles 370 and 35A of the Constitution that provided a special status for J&K and created two Union Territories. While elections to the Lok Sabha were held in J&K, the state then under President’s rule, did not hold the assembly elections. This facilitated the BJP’s subterfuge in Parliament.

In the absence of an elected state assembly the Governor's concurrence was taken as a substitute for the concurrence of the elected assembly.

2.7 Following this the government enacted the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and announced the sequence of National Population Register (NPR) to be followed up by National Register of Citizens (NRC). This is a blatant violation of the Constitution which does not link citizenship with religion. The CAA excludes the Muslims while fast-tracking granting of citizenship to all others. The challenges to this blatant anti-Constitutional Act remain pending before the Supreme Court for nearly three years now.

2.8 Systematic efforts are on to change the character of the Indian Republic. The Four fundamental pillars of the Indian Constitution – Secular Democracy, Federalism, Social Justice and Economic Sovereignty – are being assaulted.

Undermining Economic Sovereignty

2.9 Neo-liberal economic reforms gained feverish momentum after the formation of the government in 2019. The destruction of India's economic sovereignty is happening in a multi-dimensional manner going beyond the usual privatisation and tax concessions for the corporates. The foundations of India's self-reliance in terms of the public sector, particularly in the fields of defence production are all being undermined leading to a dangerous direction for the Indian economy of being reduced to dependency.

2.10 This destruction and loot of our national assets and economy is having a very big impact ruining the livelihoods of crores of people and at the same time pushing the economy into a perpetual slowdown and crisis.

2.11 **Economic Recession:** India's economy, which had been slowing down well before the pandemic, is now steeped in recession. In the first half of the financial year 2020-21, the economy contracted by 16 per cent. Over the first half of this financial year (2021-22), growth was a positive 14 per cent, implying that the economy is not back to where it was before the pandemic. In absolute terms, GDP in the first half of the pre-pandemic year 2019-20 was Rs. 71,28,238 crore, in the first half of 2021-22 it was Rs. 68,11,471 crore, i.e., 4.4 per cent lower two years later.

2.12 India had been losing economic ground with growth slowing sharply over 9 quarters from 8.2 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2017-18 to 3.1 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2019-20.

2.13 The pre-pandemic deceleration in growth was driven by both medium and short-term factors. Among the medium-term factors two stood out. One was the unwillingness of the government to use the fiscal lever to drive growth. Its neoliberal fiscal policy, involving tax "reform" aimed at incentivising private investors, resulted in stagnation or even decline in tax revenues. Yet, the fiscal deficit was reined in to appease finance capital. The consequence was a weak or near absent fiscal stimulus.

2.14 The consequent **Expenditure Contraction** aggravated GDP slowdown. Private final consumption expenditure that declined by 19 per cent in the first half of 2020-21, rose by just 14 per cent in 2021-22. Gross Capital Formation that had declined by 28 per cent in 2020-21, just managed to cover that loss. And underlying all this was the fact that government expenditure fell by 6 per cent in the first half of 2020-21 and rose by just 1 per cent over the first six months of 2021-22.

2.15 In 2020-21, when the pandemic was at its peak and

called for enhanced health expenditure, direct cash transfers to those devastated by the contagion and lockdown, and a proactive fiscal policy to accelerate the recovery, Budget 2021-22 reflected the government's persisting fiscal conservatism, with total expenditure projected to rise by just 9.5 per cent in a year when nominal GDP was projected to rise by 14.4 per cent.

2.16 The burden of this fell disproportionately on the allocations for the agricultural and rural sectors and for the provision of basic social services and social protection. Employment schemes, the provision for integrated child development services, food security measures, education and health, all suffered with much lower than promised allocations, despite resort to large scale privatisation and disinvestment. This only worsened the hardship and deprivation of poor people.

2.17 **Agricultural Distress:** The sector worst hit was agriculture. This was not because of low output levels but because of low prices resulting from a combination of constrained demand, un-remunerative minimum support prices (MSPs), and inadequate procurement at even the declared MSPs. With costs rising because of enhanced user charges and reduced subsidies on a range of inputs adopted as part of reform, the sector has been rendered unviable, leading to mounting rural indebtedness, increased farmers' suicides and widespread protests by farmers.

2.18 **More Burdens on People:** The casualty has been spending aimed at supporting the poor. The Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) expenditure in 2020-21 as per revised estimate was in excess of Rs. 1,10,000 crore as compared with a budgeted Rs. 61,500 crore and an actual expenditure of Rs. 71,687 crore in 2019-20. Workers deprived of their livelihoods, including return migrants to rural areas, had turned to the MGNREGS, resulting in the spike in allocations for the demand-driven scheme. Though the damaging effects of the pandemic continued to be felt, the budgetary allocation for the

MGNREGS for 2021-22 was just Rs. 73,000 crore, with the promise that more would be provided if the demand for work was higher than estimated. By early December, the sums allocated had been utilized. In fact, more than 27 states and Union Territories had utilized more than 100 per cent of funds earmarked for them. Yet, the supplementary demand for grants of December 2021 provides for only an additional Rs. 25,000 crore for the programme, whereas what is needed is at least double that sum.

2.19 Despite the alarming rise in unemployment, growing poverty and sharply **widening inequalities**, the government's response to the growth slowdown only served to worsen the inequalities in income and wealth. Huge volumes of bad loans taken by large crony corporate groups have been written off and banks recapitalised using tax payers' money. This bonanza to defaulting business groups has continued. In the last 7 years of the Modi government, loans taken by corporates worth Rs. 10.72 lakh crore have been written off. Wilful debt defaults have been legalised invoking the Insolvency Bankruptcy Code procedures.

2.20 An additional nearly Rs. 4.5 lakh crore of bad loans taken by 13 companies have been "settled" with heavy "haircuts" of 64 per cent, i.e., Rs. 4.5 lakh crore settled for Rs. 1.61 lakh crore with banks losing Rs. 2.85 lakh crore. People's savings in bank deposits are used to provide bonanza for cronies.

2.21 Further, corporates have been favoured with tax concessions. Net direct tax collection declined from Rs. 11.36 lakh crore in 2018-19 to Rs 10.49 lakh crore in 2019-20, i.e., close to 8 per cent. This decline, in the midst of a demand recession, was due to tax concessions announced in September 2019.

2.22 That '**stimulus**' took the form of a huge reduction in the corporate tax rate from 30 per cent to 22 per cent for domestic companies that do not avail of tax incentives or exemptions. New domestic manufacturing companies incorporated on or after

October 1, 2019 will pay corporation tax at the reduced rate of 15 per cent so long as they do not avail of incentives and exemptions. And the minimum alternative tax (MAT) applicable to companies that do avail of incentives and exemptions has been reduced from 18.5 per cent to 15 per cent. That was a huge bonanza, which held back the growth in direct tax revenues.

2.23 Communal Corporate Nexus: A distinguishing feature of the Modi years is a visible collaboration between select sections of big business and the State.

2.24 The result has been an engineered transfer of incomes to a few at the top of the pyramid. According to *The Economist*, Mukesh Ambani's net worth increased by 350 per cent between 2016 and 2020; Gautam Adani's net worth increased by 750 per cent during the same period. In 2020-2021 Mukesh Ambani's net worth was Rs. 7.18 lakh crore; Gautam Adani's net worth was Rs 5.06 lakh crore. Other super-rich individuals and families have also seen quick increases in the wealth they hold. According to *Oxfam India* report, top ten people in India hold 57 per cent of the country's wealth; share of bottom half is 13 per cent.

2.25 Loot of National Assets: Even the limited spending the Centre has undertaken has been financed by selling State assets. New investment is to be largely financed in two ways: disinvestment of public sector equity and monetization or sale of public assets. This reliance on sale of public assets to generate revenues has become an excuse to hand over valuable assets at a pittance to favoured corporates. With receipts from disinvestment budgeted at Rs. 1,75,000 crore in 2021-22, some of the best public sector firms and financial institutions are to be put up for sale. There are three elements here: disinvestment of equity, strategic sale, and privatisation of the public financial sector. Public sector banks and GIC are to be privatised along with disinvestment of shares in LIC. Added to this is the effort to "monetise assets". The National Monetisation Pipeline proposes to sell off Rs. 6

lakh crore of land, railway track, stations, airports, ports, fuel pipelines and other public sector assets and rely on that rather than resources from taxation to finance capital expenditure.

2.26 Clearly, therefore, this economic recession is due more to the aggressive pursuit of neo-liberal policies by the Modi government. The impact of the pandemic and lockdowns only aggravated the situation further.

Criminal Covid Mishandling

2.27 The Modi government's criminal mishandling of the Covid pandemic and its flawed unscientific approach led to a massive increase in suffering and casualties among the people. The hasty unplanned total lockdown in March 2020 disrupted economic life and forced lakhs of migrant workers to walk hundreds of miles to their villages. The government failed to prepare for procurement and large-scale production of vaccines which led to vaccine shortages; it refused to utilize the public sector drug companies to produce vaccines. It falsely announced victory over the Covid virus in January 2021 and left the country defenceless for the second wave in March 2021 resulting in oxygen and bed shortages and deaths of lakhs of people, many of which went unrecorded. Gory visuals of corpses floating on the Ganga were testimony to the total mishandling of the pandemic by the Modi government.

2.28 The Modi government obstinately refused to provide cash subsidies to support people in distress and the fiscal stimulus it announced was the lowest among the G-20 countries with meagre additional government expenditure. Altogether, the BJP government revealed its inhuman and callous approach to people in this public health emergency.

Assaults on People's Lives and Livelihoods

2.29 The assaults on people's livelihoods began long before

the pandemic. The pandemic situation was utilised to intensify the assaults which have worsened since then.

2.30 Rising Poverty: India has not counted its poor since the Modi government assumed office. Pew Research Centre, using World Bank data, has estimated that the number of poor in India (with income of \$2 per day or less in purchasing power parity) has more than doubled to 134 million from 60 million in just a year due to the pandemic-induced recession. This means, India is back in a situation to be called a “country of mass poverty” after 45 years.

2.31 Further, it was estimated that 150 to 199 million additional people will fall into poverty by the end of 2021. During the pandemic, India accounted for nearly 60 per cent of the Global increase in poverty. The NITI Aayog Multidimensional Poverty Index report classifies **51.91 per cent** of the population in **Bihar** as poor, followed by **Jharkhand (42.16 per cent)**, **Uttar Pradesh (37.79 per cent)**, **Madhya Pradesh (36.65 per cent)** and both **Meghalaya & Assam (32.67 per cent)**.

2.32 Burgeoning Unemployment: In the single month of November 2021, 68 lakh salaried people lost their jobs. Nearly 9 crore in urban India are unemployed. 23 per cent of youth in urban India are unemployed.

2.33 The total number of Indians in jobs shrank from 44 crore in 2013 to 41 crore in 2016. It further shrank to 40 crores in 2017 and to 38 crore in 2021. However, the working age population grew from 79 crore to 106 crore during the same period. Unable to find jobs, crores of people stopped looking for it and headed back to rural India for survival. Migrant workers forced to return due to lockdowns and closures suffered the most. The Labour Force Participation Rate has fallen from the pre-pandemic 43 per cent to 40 per cent. Women in the work force had fallen from 36 per cent in 2013 to 23 per cent by 2018 according to a

UNDP report. This fell further to 18 per cent in 2019 before the pandemic lockdowns. In February 2021, it was only 9.24 per cent.

2.34 Growing Hunger: The 2021 Global Hunger Index, ranks India at 101 out of 116 countries. Last year the rank was 94. India is now categorised as a country with a ‘serious level of hunger’. This data also shows that India has the highest child wasting (low weight for height) of all countries covered by this index. Our National Family Health Survey-5 shows alarming growth of malnutrition among children and infant mortality. Yet, even the meagre allocation for the mid-day meal scheme, studies have shown, was reduced by a staggering 32.3 per cent between 2014 and 2021. Only 44 per cent of the allocated funds to the Integrated Child Development Services were utilised in 2018-19. 40 crore of eligible people are left out entirely from the Public Distribution System. The PDS is wilfully being destroyed.

2.35 Backbreaking Price Rise: All through the Covid period when people’s misery was exponentially rising, petrol and diesel prices were hiked almost on a daily basis. The government continuously raised the levels of excise duties, surcharges and cess on petroleum products until both petrol and diesel rose to an unprecedented Rs. 100 per litre. The Finance Minister informed Parliament that during the last three years the Centre had through this earned a whopping Rs. 8.02 lakh crore between 2018 and 2021. Under public pressure, finally, in November 2021, the duties on petrol and diesel were slightly reduced. However, this will not contain the escalating prices. The Centre must scrap the cess and surcharges on petroleum products and roll back excise duties of petroleum products.

2.36 At the same time, prices of cooking gas cylinders have shot up enormously to between Rs. 900 and Rs. 1000 per cylinder. Since January 1, 2021 the price of subsidised gas cylinders was hiked by Rs. 205. Government has stopped subsidising gas cylinders. Prices of piped gas and CNG have also increased.

2.37 This triggered an inflationary spiral due to rise in transportation and other input costs. The Wholesale Price Index inflation scaled a 30 year high in November 2021. Food, vegetables and other essentials saw a price hike of 14.2 per cent, scaling a 12 year record.

Assaulting Secularism

2.38 The secular principles as enshrined in our Constitution are under severe assault. The national telecast, also covering the Indian diaspora globally, of the functions marking the beginning of the construction of the temple at Ayodhya and the Kashi Vishwanath Ganga corridor have been projected as State sponsored events. The principle that the State should stay away from any religious activity have been given a complete go by. This signals the growing reality that the Modi government is moving India towards a Hindutva State.

2.39 Vicious campaigns of hate and violence targeting the Muslim minority community are rapidly growing under the patronage of BJP state governments. Armed mobs are encouraged to carry out communal attacks. The communal violence in Delhi unleashed in February 2020 was an organised pre-planned assault. No legal actions have been taken against the perpetrators of this violence or against those, including Union Cabinet Ministers, who gave incendiary speeches. Far from the delivery of justice, many victims of this violence are being prosecuted. The so-called Dharam Sansad at Haridwar gave the shocking call for large scale genocide of Muslims.

2.40 BJP state governments have been enacting laws aimed at sharpening communal polarisation. A series of laws have been passed by BJP ruled states imposing a total ban on slaughter of cows and other cattle which is used to target Muslims in the cattle trade and meat selling. This has been followed by laws against conversion and so-called love jihad in states like Uttar Pradesh,

Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and recently Karnataka.

2.41 These laws are routinely used to target innocent people from the minority communities and to physically attack them or legally prosecute them. Sedition is invoked on the flimsiest of charges. Campaigns of hate and violence have been normalised and procured legal sanctions.

Growing Authoritarianism

2.42 **Democratic Rights and Civil Liberties:** The UAPA/ Sedition/NSA are indiscriminately used to detain hundreds of people without even proper charges being framed. These draconian provisions are invoked not only against the minorities who are specifically targeted but also against journalists and others who disagree or express dissent against the government. Dissent is treated as being anti-national. Anti-CAA activists, particularly the youth, victims of the Delhi communal violence and those who expressed solidarity and supported them are booked under draconian laws. In the manufactured Bhima-Koregaon case 16 intellectuals and social activists were put in jail under UAPA. Father Stan Swamy died in detention while others except two are still languishing in prison. Between 2015 and 2019, UAPA cases rose 72 per cent though the conviction rate was a mere 2 per cent.

2.43 Overall there has been a consolidation of authoritarianism resulting in undermining of the Constitutional guarantees and attacks on democratic rights and civil liberties.

Architecture of a Surveillance State

2.44 The Modi government has developed the framework of a surveillance State which involves constant intrusion into the privacy of citizens.

2.45 In India, a number of law enforcement agencies have access to our digital data through the existing digital surveillance infrastructure. This infrastructure consists of the Central

Monitoring System for telecom surveillance, NETwork TRaffic Analysis (NETRA) for analysis of the internet, NATGRID: a National Grid of Surveillance Databases, and the Integrated Criminal Justice System (ICJS) which has DNA, Facial Recognition, Biometrics and Identity Data.

2.46 The government also collects people's data through various Apps and digital platforms for its services like filing taxes, providing rations through ration cards linked to digital identities like Aadhaar. This is being done without safeguards to see that the data it collects is lawful, limited to what is required and not misused. On the contrary, the government's plan is to get private players to access the data the government is collecting and use it for their business ends. Combining the data of such digital platforms and Apps with the existing digital surveillance infrastructure represents a significant threat to individual privacy and to the civil liberties of citizens. Though the Supreme Court held that privacy is a fundamental right, the draft Personal Data Protection Bill 2019, which has been processed by the Joint Parliamentary Committee, does not protect citizens from illegal surveillance and wrongful use of data. Disregarding the Srikrishna Commission Report regarding a legal framework to protect citizens from government over-reach, the Bill provides sweeping powers for government agencies which are exempted from all the provisions of the proposed Act.

2.47 The dangers posed to fundamental rights of citizens and privacy was highlighted by the exposure of the use of the Pegasus spyware. The spyware was used to hack the phones of opposition leaders, journalists and social activists. The government has refused to acknowledge the use of Pegasus in the Supreme Court even though the NSO, the Israeli company, which supplied Pegasus has repeatedly stated that it is only provided to government agencies. The Supreme Court has set up a committee to inquire whether Pegasus spyware has been used in India.

2.48 The proposed exemptions to State agencies in the draft Personal Data Protection Law will only embolden the government to institute a surveillance regime which will threaten the basic rights of citizens. In the coming days, the struggle to ensure a full-fledged Personal Data Protection Privacy law and to end illegal government surveillance must be carried forward.

Undermining Federalism

2.49 These years saw relentless all-round attacks on federalism in all spheres – educational, political, fiscal, social and cultural.

2.50 The role of Governors and Lt. Governors transgresses all Constitutional proprieties. They function as an extension of the BJP's political agenda in opposition ruled states.

2.51 The Centre continuously encroaches on the state rights by legislating on subjects the Constitution puts under the State List and the Concurrent List. Education is in the Concurrent List, but the National Education Policy (NEP) is announced unilaterally by the Centre without any consultations with the state governments. The three retrograde Farm Laws were enacted again without any consultation with states. Various centrally sponsored schemes coming under rural development are likewise centrally enacted. The creation of a ministry of Cooperatives at the Centre is a brazen encroachment on state rights as cooperatives are a state subject.

2.52 In the cultural field, the autonomy of the state governments is constantly being squeezed. The Central government is consciously promoting Hindi while denying equal status to all national languages listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.

2.53 **Fiscal Federalism:** Under the BJP regime the fiscal space for the states has been severely squeezed with the

implementation of GST. Not only have the states lost the taxation powers but are also facing huge revenue loss because of lack of buoyancy of GST. On the eve of the last round of state elections, the GST rates were slashed drastically to sub revenue neutral levels. The GST compensation to states has been delayed and is often in arrears. The compensation five-year period is going to end in 2022, and the Centre is refusing to extend it. Many states are facing an imminent revenue collapse.

2.54 In addition, states are being deprived of a fair share of centrally collected indirect taxes, as the Centre relies on cesses and surcharges. The revenues from these are kept out of the divisible pool of taxes, from which states receive a 42 per cent share. This process of depriving the states of a share of tax revenues is not acceptable.

2.55 The dismantling of the Planning Commission has placed huge outlay of expenditure on new projects entirely at the discretion of the central finance department, raising serious issues related to lack of planning and equity. The Central government is also signing international treaties like free trade regions on subjects which are in the domain of the states without any federal consultation.

2.56 The non-BJP state governments along with all democratic forces should come together to resist such assaults on federalism and in defence of states' rights. Safeguarding federalism, the basic feature of our Constitution, is part of the struggle against authoritarian centralisation.

Worsening Status of Women

2.57 Women are facing the brunt of economic distress. A higher percentage of women suffered loss of income avenues in the unorganised sector where majority of women work. The cuts in MNREGA have especially hit poor rural women for whom it was a lifeline. India has one of the worst gender gap indices in

the world. Lack of employment avenues is pushing women out of the workforce at a time when they require waged and salaried employment desperately. On the contrary the burden of unpaid work, both domestic work and in family enterprises saw a huge increase. Women, mandated by patriarchal norms to take the main responsibility for household management were badly hit by rising prices, by higher user charges on water and electricity, often cutting down on their own needs to ensure family survival. In particular the plight of single women and female headed families is much worse, with no specific help from Central government policies for these sections. Women have been forced to mortgage their meagre belongings, being the main agency for borrowing to run households from predatory moneylenders and MFIs at high interest rates.

2.58 Sexual violence against women and children has seen a big increase in this period with the most barbaric acts of extreme cruelty in a number of cases. During the period of the pandemic domestic violence against women has also increased. Victim blaming and shaming has marked many of the cases in which highly objectionable statements of leaders of the BJP in particular traumatize the victim while justifying the crime. The poor investigation processes in most States where BJP rules and low rates of conviction are notorious. Shockingly, funds meant for rehabilitation of victims are misused or allowed to lapse.

2.59 Retrograde Manuvadi ideologies that promote patriarchal, communal and casteist practices, and imprison women in domestic roles are actively promoted by the BJP-RSS and their affiliates. These approaches are directly reflected in policies which seek to impose coercive population policies denying women their rights over their own bodies, weakening secular laws such as Section 498A which protect women, eliminating women's choice by running the most violent campaigns against self choice marriages and providing patronage to cultures which justify so-

called honour killings. Minority and dalit women in particular have been severely victimized in this period. The fight for women's equality today is thus directly linked to the fight against the BJP-RSS theory and practices concerning gender equality.

Attacks on Social Justice

2.60 Instead of moving toward the Constitutional guarantee of equality, and realising the objective of social justice, the socially oppressed sections of people are subjected to greater injustices and discrimination.

2.61 **Dalits:** Due to the aggressive pursuit of the anti-constitutional, Manuvadi agenda by various BJP governments, the condition of dalits has worsened since the last Party Congress. Dalits continue to be deprived of educational, employment and livelihood opportunities. The central government has absolved itself from the responsibility of sharing with states its finances for scholarships to SC students. Privatisation of the public sector, ban on recruitment in government departments have curtailed employment opportunities. There are no efforts to legislate on reservations in private sector.

2.62 Attacks on dalits have increased manifold, particularly in those states which are ruled by the BJP. Violence against dalit women and girls, signified by the horrific Hathras incident, where the BJP government did all in its power to suppress the incident and the victim's family, depict the reality. While the number of attacks on dalits is witnessing an increase every year, conviction rates have not. Due to the struggle and resistance of various dalit groups, the government was forced to legislate and undo the Supreme Court's judgment diluting the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act.

2.63 **Adivasis:** The RSS is carrying out its efforts to assimilate adivasis under a homogenous Hindu identity. Christians in adivasi areas are increasingly being attacked in BJP ruled states.

The BJP government diluted the provisions of the Forest Rights Act and is denying adivasis their rightful share. Claims of adivasis under the Forest Rights Act are unjustly rejected. Through the stripping of adivasis' right to express their views in gram sabhas, corporate exploitation is being permitted. Forests are being commercialised, privatised and even militarised. Thousands of hectares of forest land are being diverted in the name of projects. Private corporates are given permission to exploit the abundant mineral resources found in forests. As a result of these policies, displacement of adivasis has increased exponentially. Adivasi farmers do not get the benefit of any Government schemes for farmers and the funds for payment of MSP for minor forest produce are shamefully inadequate.

2.64 The failure of the BJP government to address the concerns of migrant workers during the pandemic had a devastating impact on adivasis, as they constitute a substantial section of migrant workers. Over 95 per cent of adivasi students did not have the means to study online and except for the LDF Government in Kerala, no other government made arrangements for the protection of tribal students' legal right to education. Central government failed to ensure regular disbursal of scholarships for tribal students. Due to neoliberal policies, educated adivasi youth are denied employment opportunities, backlog posts are not filled and promotion in Government jobs is denied because of discrimination.

2.65 **OBCs:** The BJP government is refusing to accept the demand for a caste census to be conducted along with the 2021 general census for its partisan interests. Given the fact that there is no data on the OBCs, it is necessary to have an accurate number of various categories of OBCs. The central government enacted a law empowering the President of India to determine which community can be classified as OBC. This is an attack on our country's federal structure and takes away the rights of the states to identify OBCs for the purpose of reservations. Due to popular

pressure and also the intervention of the Supreme Court, the government was forced to rescind its decision.

2.66 Persons with Disabilities: Covid-19 has had a disastrous impact on the lives of people with disabilities. Accessing food, regular life-sustaining healthcare, loss of employment etc. have been big challenges. Sizeable sections of children with disabilities were unable to access quality education. Women and girls with disabilities were subjected to increased violence and abuse. Even the meagre one-time ex-gratia of Rs. 1000 announced by the Central Government was targeted at a mere 3.8 per cent of the disabled population.

2.67 The proposal to dilute penal provisions contained in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 met with stiff resistance and forced the government to hastily retreat. However, the move to merge/cluster various institutions catering to the disabled, will adversely affect rehabilitation services. The continued cut in allocations further hinders the process of making the rights enshrined in the RPD Act a reality. This lack of budgetary support is also an impediment in the case of the Mental Health Care Act, 2017.

2.68 Sexual Minorities: The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2020 needs to be amended to reflect the aspirations of the community. The proposal to provide them reservations from within the OBC quota is misplaced. They have to be provided horizontal reservations. The Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2020, and the Assistive Reproduction Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021 discriminates against persons from LGBTQI communities as it denies them the right to become parents. Despite decriminalisation of same sex relations by the Supreme Court, violence against sexual minorities continues.

Undermining Constitutional Authorities

2.69 Parliament is increasingly being reduced to a platform

for the BJP to exercise its ‘tyranny of the majority’. Legislations are enacted bypassing all parliamentary procedures and practices like scrutiny by Parliamentary committees. Most laws are adopted during disruption without any discussion or debate. 12 opposition MPs of the Rajya Sabha were suspended for the 2021 winter session on flimsy grounds. This ensured a comfortable majority for the BJP in the Upper House. Opposition MPs are sought to be silenced through punitive actions. No issues of public importance or people’s concerns are allowed to be discussed and debated in the Parliament.

2.70 The Modi government is escaping from its accountability to Parliament. Parliament is the crucial link in our Constitutional scheme of things enforcing people’s sovereignty. The executive (government) is accountable to Parliament and the legislature (MPs) are accountable to the people. When the Parliament does not discharge its duties, this link gets disrupted undermining the centrality of people’ sovereignty.

2.71 Judiciary: On many occasions judicial pronouncements have been more in favour of the government than in favour of the delivery of justice. The Supreme Court pronounced a verdict on the Ayodhya dispute but did not deliver justice. Crucial issues including petitions challenging the Constitutional validity of legislations abrogating Articles 370, 35A and dissolution of the state Jammu and Kashmir; the enacting of CAA; electoral bonds and many others remain pending for nearly 3 years.

2.72 Election Commission: The Election Commission (EC) is constitutionally mandated to conduct ‘free and fair elections’ by ensuring a level playing field for all contestants. However, the functioning of the EC increasingly gives the impression that it is unfairly giving advantage to the ruling party. After initially raising serious objections to the electoral bonds diluting transparency of electoral funding, the EC has subsequently

diluted its position. Nearly 80 per cent of these are encashed by the BJP to display immense money power, distorting the level playing field, so important for free and fair elections and our democracy. The recent measure to link Aadhaar with the voter ID has implications infringing upon the rights of the voters to a secret ballot.

2.73 Independent Investigating Agencies: Both the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) function as political arms of the ruling party targeting opposition leaders.

2.74 For instance, the ED raids (officially termed as ‘search and seizure’) increased from 62 in 2013, by more than ten times to 670 in 2019. Between March 2011 and January 2020, ED conducted 17,000 raids in connection with 1569 investigations. However, it managed a mere 9 convictions, mostly in low profile cases. Clearly, it is an instrument to harass and browbeat those opposing or dissenting against the government.

2.75 The CBI’s role against opposition party leaders and activists has reached such levels that 9 states – Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Kerala, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram - withdrew their general consent for CBI probing in their states without obtaining the consent of the state governments.

2.76 Media: During these years, the BJP and its government have tightened their control over the media, largely owned by corporate houses, to control and doctor the flow of news and information to the people. Such is the situation that the media, save honourable exceptions, is generally referred to in public perception as ‘Godi media’.

2.77 Various methods including intimidation are used to ensure the propagation of the BJP and the government agenda, to obfuscate the realities of people’s sufferings and projecting a larger

than life image of PM Modi.

2.78 All dissent and contrary opinions that reflect the real issues concerning people, their livelihood and their agonies are treated as anti-national and journalists arrested indiscriminately under draconian laws like UAPA/Sedition.

2.79 Legalising Political Corruption: The electoral bond scheme has led to a large scale opaque non-transparent electoral funding of political parties. Close to 80 per cent of these bonds have been encashed by the BJP. In 2018-19, the BJP received Rs.1450 crore. In 2019-20 the BJP received Rs. 2,555 crores, 76 per cent of the total electoral bonds sold. The total value of electoral bonds sold so far is Rs.7380.64 crore.

2.80 Soon after the pandemic arrived, a new fund was established called PM Cares. This was declared as a private trust despite the trustees being the Prime Minister and other senior ministers and despite using the entire government machinery. Official orders were given to government employees to contribute a day’s salary. Government decided to exempt donations from any taxes. Corporates were allowed to donate to this fund from their legal Corporate Social Responsibility funds. PSUs were directed to donate handsomely. Despite such government directives it remains a private trust. It is neither auditable, accountable nor transparent. How much money is being collected, where it is going, remains a secret.

2.81 Concessions to corporates in return for political funding are the highlight of crony capitalism under the Modi government. During the last 7 years of this government Rs.10.72 lakh crore of loans taken by its crony corporates have been written off. The consequent money power in the hands of the BJP is completely distorting a level playing field for all contestants to ensure free and fair elections.

Jammu and Kashmir

2.82 Post 2019 election, the first step taken by the Modi government was the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35 A of the Indian Constitution, dissolution of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and replacing it with two Union Territories. Thus, it implemented the RSS Hindutva agenda of targeting the only Muslim majority state and implementing its long standing demand for abolishing the special status accorded by the Indian Constitution to this state, as part of the instrument of accession. In 2019, Jammu and Kashmir held Parliament elections but, elections to the dissolved state assembly were not held. This facilitated the bypassing of the Constitutional requirement of obtaining the concurrence of the state assembly on any change of the state borders by substituting it with the concurrence of the Governor in the absence of the assembly. This was done by putting the state under massive security lockdown detaining thousands of people under draconian laws of UAPA/NSA/PSA, including former Chief Ministers and leaders of political parties. There was complete blackout of communication and internet.

2.83 The strict security lockdown ensured that all day to day activities came to a standstill including public transportation. The economy of the state was devastated. Curfew was imposed for a long time. These measures further alienated the people of the state. The recent spate of killing of innocent people due to militancy and the excessive brutal force and arbitrary detention have created further alienation.

2.84 Most unfortunately, judicial challenges to the Constitutional validity of the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, dissolution of the state through the 'J&K Reorganisation Act' continue to remain unheard by the Supreme Court since August 2019. In the meanwhile the Central Government is continuously taking irreversible decisions like amendment of the J&K Development Act allowing non-permanent residents to buy land;

amending domicile laws; and winding up state level statutory commissions.

2.85 The Central government constituted a J&K Delimitation Commission whose recommendations are patently unjustified and illogical. They have proposed to increase 6 seats in the Jammu region while only 1 in the Kashmir valley. According to the 2011 census, Kashmir population is 68.8 lakhs while Jammu is 53.5 lakhs. A fair delimitation should have given 51 seats to Kashmir and 39 to Jammu in the 90 member assembly. Instead, the proposal is 47 and 43 respectively. This proposal is clearly politically motivated aiming at changing the demographic character and composition of J&K.

2.86 The erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir and its special status must be restored; all political detainees should be released; curbs on media and other form of communications and internet shutdown should end; indiscriminate arrests should stop, particularly of the youth.

North East

2.87 The BJP-RSS have utilized their hold over the Assam government in the past few years to extend their influence in the North East region. All the governments in the various states are run by the BJP or with it in coalition, with the exception of Mizoram. In Assam, under the BJP government, systematic efforts were made to communalise the situation by targeting the large Muslim minority. The CAA-NRC was utilized for this purpose. Evictions of Bengali-speaking Muslim peasants from the lands they cultivate have taken place. The BJP is using the border disputes between states to tighten its grip.

2.88 The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) has been in force in several states for decades. In Nagaland, where the framework agreement announced in 2016 has not been implemented, the army killed 14 innocent civilians illustrating

the impunity given by this draconian law. AFSPA must be repealed.

New Education Policy

2.89 The National Education Policy 2020 was adopted without the needed process of consultation and debate and the constitutionally mandated discussions with state governments. A government appointed committee which included a large number of RSS functionaries and organisations finalised the draft document. This draft, instead of being subjected to widespread consultation and debate was unilaterally adopted and announced.

2.90 The running thread of the new policy is to advance the Hindutva agenda in education shaping a consciousness amongst the country's youth favourable to it. The curriculum, syllabus and methods of teaching are all tweaked to achieve this objective. In the process, reputed universities and institutions of higher education are attacked with impunity.

2.91 The thrust is on the Commercialisation, Centralisation and Communalisation of education. The pursuit of these objectives strikes at the roots of the principles of universalisation and democratic and scientific education. The move towards online education mostly provided by private corporates has led to a large sections of students dropping out of the system altogether. The wide digital divide in India is compounding this situation. The NEP abandons the scientific concept of early childhood care and schooling for children under six years. Private universities, institutions, tutorial and skill development centres are mushrooming, converting education into a commodity whose access is out of reach for a vast majority of people. The NEET, in its present form, is iniquitous and works against the interests of the States, rural students, regional linguistic groups and deprived sections.

2.92 Undermining the role of the state governments and autonomous bodies, including universities, the central government

will directly control and regulate institutions. The Constitutional rights of the state government to decide the conduct, regulate and run schools and state level institutions is being encroached upon.

2.93 The content of education under this policy deliberately undermines the urge for knowledge based on rationality and reason. Scientific temper is edged out giving precedence to obscurantism, blind faith, irrationality and unreason. Instead of strengthening consciousness of the youth on the principles and values laid down in our Constitution, the focus is to advance the ideas of the communal Hindutva agenda, replacing the teaching of India's rich history with Hindu mythology and replacing the various streams of syncretic Indian philosophies by Hindu theology.

2.94 Consequently, the balance between quantity, quality and equity in Indian education which was always fragile, will now be virtually destroyed.

2.95 A broad based struggle uniting all sections involved with education and intellectuals must be strengthened to resist such far reaching changes in our education policy.

2.96 **Attacks on Reason and Rationality:** The Hindutva ideology being unscientific and ahistorical assaults both rationality and reason. The spread of obscurantism, superstition and backwardness helps the easier assimilation of Hindu mythology which can increasingly then be passed off as real history. Promotion of blind faith amongst people makes them more receptive to unscientific and irrational discourses. This assaults scientific temper and rationality.

2.97 Along with promoting such line of thinking in the New Education Policy all cultural and research institutions in India are being controlled by the RSS elements and increasingly used to rewrite Indian history to advance the Hindutva agenda. The

homogenisation of culture is essential for the spread of Hindutva ideology and thinking. The efforts to replace reason with unreason and rationality with irrationality are pernicious exercises that rob people of a scientific outlook and discourse.

Environment and Climate Change

2.98 The country has been witnessing extreme climate impacts due to global climate change. Extreme rainfall has led to flooding in large areas causing huge damage to crops and infrastructure; urban flooding has also become a common feature. Coastal erosion and sea level rise are seriously affecting coastal regions and lives and livelihoods of fisher folk and farmers. This is compounded by the damage done to the fragile Himalayan region due to badly planned and implemented infrastructure projects.

2.99 The government has been doing nothing to deal with the various adverse impacts of climate change. On the contrary, the government has diluted and subverted the laws related to environmental protection. The dilution of the Environmental Impact Assessment, the proposed amendment to the Indian Forest Act and the earlier amendment to the Mines and Mineral Act are all directed towards commercialization and privatization of India's forests and allowing mining and infrastructure projects indiscriminately. This is going to prove detrimental to the environment and the lives and livelihoods of tribals and other forest dwellers. This retrograde approach to forests is what led India not to join over a hundred countries in planning to end deforestation by 2030 at the COP26. Given the gravity of the situation, it is necessary to form a representative national body, which includes state governments, political parties, experts and other stakeholders to formulate plans, programmes and financial allocations to urgently tackle climate impacts.

Foreign Policy

2.100 **Subordinate Ally of US Imperialism:** The Modi government has abandoned India's time tested independent foreign policy. India has now been reduced to a subordinate ally and surrogate of US imperialism in all global matters.

2.101 After Modi became the PM he did not attend successive Non Alignment Movement summit meetings. India has cemented strategic ties with Israel and diluted our traditional historical support and solidarity with the Palestinian cause and struggles. For the first time an Indian Prime Minister paid a state visit to Israel without visiting Palestine. The US-Israel-India nexus is consolidated.

2.102 Since the 22nd Party Congress, India further cemented strategic and military ties with the USA. The Quadrilateral Alliance (QUAD) of USA, Japan, Australia and India began with secretary level meetings in 2018. In 2019 this was upgraded to foreign ministers' level, and later India joined US imperialism's efforts to convert QUAD into an active strategic and military alliance in the Indo-Pacific region aiming to isolate China.

2.103 The 2+2 format which consists of regular meetings between the foreign and defence ministers of India and USA began in 2018. In 2019 the 2+2 meeting came up with the Industrial Security Annexe (ISA) agreement which facilitates transfer of sophisticated US military technology to India. Out of the three foundational agreements of Strategic Military cooperation, two were signed during the first Modi government - LEMOA in 2016 and COMCASA in 2018. The third and final agreement, Basic Exchange Cooperation Agreement (BECA) was signed on October 27, 2020 sealing a framework of long-term military and strategic cooperation.

2.104 The BECA has very disturbing features detrimental

to our country's security. It provides sharing of geopolitical intelligence between both the militaries. It also establishes a permanent link of India navy headquarters at Delhi with the US Asia Pacific command headquarters at Hawaii.

2.105 India has also agreed to more purchases of US military equipment including aircrafts and helicopters. India is becoming totally dependent on the US and Israel for military equipment.

2.106 **India-China Relations:** The Indo-China military standoff has led to a physical clash with casualties on both sides, in which 20 Indian soldiers lost their lives on June 15, 2020. Such a violent clash with loss of life occurred on the Indo-China Line of Actual Control after 45 years. This incident in the Galwan valley in Ladakh was a serious breach of peace and tranquillity.

2.107 Party extended support to the approach and stand adopted by the government of India. The statement issued by India said it was agreed that the overall situation would be handled in a responsible manner, and both sides would implement the disengagement understanding sincerely. Neither side would take any action to escalate matters and instead, ensure peace and tranquillity as per bilateral agreements and protocols.

2.108 The lack of clarity on LAC demarcation has been leading to such disputes and standoff situations. It is necessary to agree on a clear demarcation of the LAC by both India and China to maintain peace and tranquillity on the border.

2.109 Party must be conscious of and vigilant to counter the anti-communist campaigns mounted by rabid right-wing forces against our Party and Communists as being 'Pro-China'. Such campaigns earlier on the social media have all been proven to be

fake news using morphed photographs and outright lies.

Growing Struggles

2.110 The highlight of the period since our 22nd Congress is the massive organised and spontaneous people's struggles. Party actively supported and expressed solidarity with these struggles – anti-CAA, Kisan struggle, TU strikes and actions. There was large women's participation in these struggles, the highlight being the anti-CAA Shaheen Bagh protest.

2.111 **Anti-CAA Struggle:** Soon after the enactment of the CAA, spontaneous struggles emerged in protest against this brazen violation of the Constitutional definition of citizenship. The CAA was rightly seen as targeting the Muslim minority community and destroying the foundations of the principle of secularism and communal harmony. The youth were in the forefront of these struggles resisting the offensive onslaughts of the Hindutva brigade. The police brazenly sided with the Hindutva communal gangs, when they launched violent physical attacks in many campuses. These protests spread all across the country rapidly with the involvement of people's movements, a large cross section of women, intellectuals, academicians and NGOs. In this sustained struggle, the highlight was the long day-night protest in Shaheen Bagh in Delhi. Similar peaceful sit in protests emerged in hundreds of sites all over the country.

2.112 The anti-CAA movement got halted with the pandemic and the national lockdown that was declared in March 2020. However this was the first serious mass movement against the Modi government's Hindutva agenda.

2.113 **Historic Kisan Struggle:** The year-long historic struggle of the peasantry led by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha emerged victorious by forcing the Modi government to repeal the three retrograde Farm Laws that were designed by the ruling classes to acquire corporate control over agriculture for profit

maximisation.

2.114 From November 26, 2020 tens of thousands of farmers, men and women, sat on dharna at five different points of highways on the borders of Delhi. They braved police repression in reaching the borders. This unique form of struggle drew lakhs of farmers mainly from Punjab, Haryana and UP and mobilizations from Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. There were mass protests and solidarity actions in other states. This struggle lasted for over a year. 715 farmers died during this struggle due to the severe cold, disease and accidents. The period saw three successful countrywide bandhs on December 8, 2020, March 26, 2021 and September 27, 2021. This struggle saw the development of joint worker-peasant actions. The first call for Delhi Chalo by the farmers organisation was given for November 26, 2020, the day the Central Trade Unions gave a call for general strike.

2.115 Though the laws have been repealed under pressure of this protracted struggle just before the round of assembly elections, the crucial issue of Minimum Support Price as a legal entitlement covering all crops and all farmers is yet to materialise. A committee has been promised to work out the details, but has not yet been formed.

2.116 This successful historic struggle inspires all other sections of the people in their struggles against the anti-people policies of the government and for a better life.

2.117 **Workers Struggles:** The BJP government led by Modi has, in Parliament, passed the four Labour Codes, annulling all existing labour laws, the law facilitating privatisation of general insurance, banning strikes in Defence sector including all industries related to defence production and has introduced the National Asset Monetisation Pipeline (NMP), meticulously designed to hand over the country's infrastructural assets under Government/PSUs and mineral resources virtually free to private hands.

2.118 The working class has consistently been opposing these policies through united struggles both at national and sectoral levels. The working class was in continuous struggle mode during the intervening period since the 22nd Party Congress, including the pandemic and the associated lockdowns and restrictions that were in force since March 2020.

2.119 Three country wide general strikes were held under the banner of the joint trade union platform comprising 10 central trade unions and almost all independent sectoral federations – on 8-9 January 2019, 8 January 2020 and 26 November 2020. The fourth is to be held on 28-29 March 2022.

2.120 In addition to the general strikes, coal, steel, bank and insurance employees, medical representatives, telecom, state and central government employees, scheme workers, construction workers, workers in private organised sectors went on strike-struggles during this period, including during the pandemic. The steel workers of Visakhapatnam steel plant have been on a long struggle opposing privatisation. They have been able to mobilise wide public opinion compelling most of the non-Left ruling class parties, who have been pro-privatisation all through, to openly support their struggle and oppose privatisation.

2.121 **Joint Worker-Peasant Struggles:** This period witnessed the coming together of the workers' and peasants' movements and the increasing convergence of joint actions. A huge Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh Rally was held at Delhi on 5 September 2018 with the participation of around 2 lakh workers, peasants and agricultural workers. This was preceded by a 10 lakh strong nationwide Jail Bharo struggle on 9 August 2018.

2.122 The joint trade union platform raised the demands of repeal of farm laws, MSP and withdrawal of the Electricity Amendment Bill and SKM raised the demands of the working class including scrapping of the labour codes and stopping of

privatisation. This created an atmosphere for strengthening unity between the workers and peasants.

2.123 **Class Implications:** New class conflicts have emerged during the course of this struggle, between the big bourgeoisie in collaboration with international finance capital and the entire peasantry, including sections of the rich peasants.

2.124 Secondly, conflicts amongst the ruling class partners are also emerging between the big bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the non-big bourgeoisie, particularly those belonging to the MSME sector, on the other.

2.125 Thirdly, BJP's drive to establish its complete political hegemony in the country by destroying the federal structure of our Constitution and, in its place, erect a unitary State structure is creating conflicts between the Central government and elected state governments. Some regional parties, who head state governments, who were supporters of the BJP in Parliament and those who vacillated and remained largely neutral in their support to the BJP in Parliament, are being forced by this hegemonic drive of the BJP to come out in opposition, particularly during this Kisan struggle.

2.126 The emergence of such conflicts amongst the ruling class partners creates possibilities that must be utilised by the exploited classes, particularly the working class, poor peasantry and agricultural labour, to intensify the class battles against the bourgeois-landlord order.

2.127 Such possibilities for advancing the class struggle have emerged with the growing coordination between the working class trade union movement, the peasantry and the agricultural labour. Such developments began much earlier and since 2018 made significant advances through joint movements of these sections. This growing unity in struggles must be strengthened further in the coming period.

Summing Up

2.128 To **sum up**, the period since the last Party Congress has seen the BJP consolidating its position. Functioning as the political arm of the fascistic RSS, the BJP is aggressively seeking to implement its Hindutva agenda. It is feverishly pursuing neo-liberal reforms and strengthening authoritarianism. There is a systematic effort to undermine the Constitution and the independence of authorities established by the Constitution.

2.129 At the same time, popular discontent against the mishandling of the pandemic and the miseries imposed by the economic policies are growing. The historic and victorious farmers struggle against the Farm Laws, the joint actions of the central trade unions against privatisation and abrogation of labour laws and the emerging unity in struggles of the trade unions, farmers and agricultural labour organisations must be strengthened to effectively resist the overall onslaught. These must lead to the sharpening of class struggles.

2.130 During this period, the BJP central government has further consolidated India's status as a subordinate ally of US imperialism and entered into various military and strategic treaties and groupings. Party must rouse anti-imperialist consciousness amongst the Indian people.

Position of Political Parties

2.131 **BJP:** The BJP has emerged as the principal political Party of the Indian ruling classes. It has spread its influence all over the country on the back of the RSS network that is rapidly expanding. It has emerged as the dominant political party in the country.

2.132 After forming the government in 2019, BJP has embarked on an aggressive pursuit of neo-liberal reforms consolidating the corporate-communal nexus; further cemented

subordinate ally status strengthening strategic and military relations with US imperialism; is speedily sharpening communal polarisation and assaulting democracy through growing authoritarianism.

2.133 BJP adopts completely anti-democratic unscrupulous methods in order to form governments in various states by engineering defections of the opposition MLAs using a three-pronged method, first, monetary allurements, along with offers of appointment to high office, second, threats and intimidation through the CBI/ED and other central agencies, and finally foisting cases and arresting opposition leaders.

2.134 In a number of state assembly elections the BJP suffered setbacks in achieving its objectives. In Jharkhand and Maharashtra it could not form governments. In Kerala it could not retain its lone MLA. Its bid to form the government in West Bengal was rejected by the people though its MLAs and vote share increased. In Tamilnadu, its efforts to retain the state government under its alliance partner, AIADMK was defeated. In Assam, it barely managed to retain its government with a narrow difference in vote share of 0.86 per cent.

2.135 It currently leads the governments in 12 states and is in coalition in 6 others. It controls both the Houses of Parliament.

2.136 **Congress:** The Congress party represents the interests of the Indian ruling classes – bourgeoisie and landlords led by the big bourgeoisie. In states where it heads governments it continues to pursue neo-liberal policies.

2.137 Its political influence and organisational strength has been declining and currently it is plunged in a series of crises with defections of several leaders to the BJP in various states. While it proclaims secularism, it is unable to effectively mount an ideological challenge to Hindutva forces and often adopts a compromising approach. A weakened Congress is unable to rally

all the secular opposition parties.

2.138 The Political Resolution of the 22nd Congress had stated (Para 2.89) that with the BJP in power and given its basic link to the RSS, it is the main threat. So both the BJP and Congress cannot be treated as equal dangers. However, there cannot be a political alliance with the Congress party.

2.139 **Regional Parties:** Initially establishing themselves as championing the interests of the regional bourgeois-landlord classes, regional parties, have subsequently, by and large, embraced the neo-liberal trajectory. Keeping their own interests in their region paramount they have often shifted political positions displaying political opportunism. However, with the growing attacks on federalism many regional parties leading state governments find conflicts with the BJP sharpening.

2.140 The DMK led secular front defeated the BJP-AIADMK alliance and formed the government in Tamilnadu. The RJD in Bihar and the SP in Uttar Pradesh are the main regional parties that are playing the leading role against the BJP in their states. The NCP played a role in preventing the BJP government in Maharashtra by entering into an alliance, along with the Congress and Shiv Sena to form the government. The NCP is a constituent of the LDF in Kerala. In some states, there are smaller regional parties championing issues of social oppression like VCK in Tamilnadu who take secular democratic positions against the BJP.

2.141 At the same time, some regional parties are under pressure, with threats, intimidation and fear of the BJP's gross misuse of central agencies. Parties like YSR Congress and BJD are maintaining neutrality while supporting the ruling party to a large extent in Parliament. The TRS is currently taking some anti-BJP positions. BJP's traditional allies like the Shiv Sena and Akali Dal have parted ways due to conflicts in their respective states. The JD(U) and AIADMK are in alliance with the BJP. The TMC,

having been part of the BJP-led NDA, is today ranged against the BJP. It continues with its anti-CPI(M), anti-Left offensive and is today aspiring to be the leader of the anti-BJP forces at the national level. Former ruling party in Andhra Pradesh, the TDP is inclined mostly towards the BJP.

2.142 While we seek to cooperate with the regional parties when they are willing to join common struggles against the anti-people policies of the central government and in defence of secularism against the communal forces, their political positions in the state should be taken into account while working out our tactical approach towards them.

2.143 In states where the regional parties are heading governments, on the policies which we oppose, we should mobilise the people against such policies independently and jointly with Left parties. However, we do not equate these governments with the BJP led central governments.

2.144 There are Muslim extremist and fundamentalist organisations like the Jamaat-e-Islami and Popular Front of India and their political fronts which are trying to utilize the alienation and insecurities among the minority community in the background of vicious targeting by the Hindutva forces. However, their activities only help the Hindutva communal forces. It is of utmost importance that the democratic and secular forces firmly defend the rights of minorities and rally them to the secular platform.

2.145 **Left Parties:** At the national level five left parties have given joint calls for action and struggles on various issues. Effective action programmes and large mobilisations were not possible due to the pandemic. Joint efforts by the Left are essential to rouse confidence amongst people about the Left Alternative. These efforts must continue in order to strengthen Left unity. The Party must take the needed initiative for this.

2.146 Left could make an advance electorally in Bihar.

However, divergent political positions exist. RSP and AIFB are with Congress-led UDF in Kerala and with the Left Front in Bengal. CPI(ML) adopted different electoral tactics in Bengal. Nevertheless, efforts must be made to arrive at a common understanding to strengthen Left unity.

2.147 **CPI(M):** In this period when the BJP emerged as the dominant political party in the country and the RSS network expanded rapidly, there has been a further erosion of our Party's independent strength and our political intervention capacity.

2.148 During this period the Party has played an active role in supporting the joint struggles - first, in opposition to CAA/NPR/NRC and later in support of the historic victorious Kisan struggle. The Party conducted various movements and struggles against the impact of neo-liberal policies; sharpening of communal polarisation with the spread of hate and violence; with the struggles to defend democratic rights and civil liberties of the people and in support of the various strikes/protest actions called by the trade unions and other mass organisations. In many parts of the country the Party was active in providing relief during the continuing pandemic period.

2.149 Given their anti-Communist ideological position, the RSS-BJP have been targeting the Left, particularly, the CPI(M). They have specifically targeted our strongholds in West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala with physical attacks against our cadre and Party offices.

2.150 **Kerala:** In Kerala, the RSS-BJP attacks and murders of our cadres continue. The BJP has indulged in gross misuse of central agencies in its efforts to destabilise the LDF government. The Congress party led UDF supports the BJP in these efforts and has carried out physical attacks on and killings of our cadres.

2.151 The CPI(M) led LDF won the Kerala assembly

elections once again in 2021. This is unprecedented as the Kerala electorate always changed the government every election in the last more than four decades. The performance of the earlier LDF government and this victory provided strength and prestige to our Party.

2.152 The exemplary work of the LDF government made qualitative changes in matters relating to people's lives. The earlier LDF government implemented and executed social security programmes in a proper manner. The alternative people centric policies showed what can be done by a state government within the limitations of a federal system. Based on the foundations of communal amity, protection was provided to all sections of the people. Importantly, the clear political line highlighting the fight against the RSS/BJP danger and exposure of the Congress led UDF's opportunistic collaborationist role with BJP contributed to this unprecedented victory in the 2021 assembly elections.

2.153 The Party and LDF's role in providing assistance to the people when a series of national disasters hit Kerala was highly appreciated. With its public health system, the outbreak of the Covid pandemic was most efficiently handled earning Kerala appreciation from all over the world. The subsequent Covid waves have been tackled effectively by the testing, tracing and treatment through the public health system and the involvement of the local bodies.

2.154 **West Bengal:** In West Bengal, our Party had to face severe repression through fascistic attacks. There was resistance against these attacks. Between 2011 and 2021, we have lost 229 comrades. During this period, more than 1,02,000 of our Party members and sympathisers were driven away from their homes and Party had to make arrangements for looking after them in the urban areas. More than 1,30,000 of our members and sympathisers are subjected to false cases filed against them and the consequent harassment and intimidation. Bravely facing this

repression, Party and mass organisations have conducted many struggles mobilising large number of people to observe central and state level calls and protest actions.

2.155 The defeat of the Party in the West Bengal assembly elections has been devastating. Party conducted a serious self-critical introspection and drew lessons. These need to be internalised by the Party and sincerely implemented.

2.156 **Tripura:** Our Party has been at the receiving end of fascistic attacks by the BJP under the protection of the state government. 22 Party members have lost their lives. Earlier, in response to our Party struggles and protests and those of our mass organisations on people's issues, the BJP unleashed widespread attacks and arson on 47 of our Party offices across the state, extensively damaging and vandalising them. Hundreds of homes of members and sympathisers including vehicles, books and furniture were destroyed. Many comrades were injured in these attacks, some had to be hospitalised.

2.157 Under the BJP state government all elections to the local bodies have been reduced to a farce with opposition candidates being prevented from filing nominations or voting. Elections are marked by large scale violence, terror and near total rigging.

2.158 Earlier, in the elections to the tribal autonomous councils and later, to the 334 local body wards elections many of our comrades were prevented from filing nominations, those who succeeded were threatened to withdraw accompanied by large-scale violence. The BJP won 112 wards uncontested and in the remaining 222, except 5 it won all the seats through large scale rigging. The Left Front polled nearly 20 per cent of the votes even under these circumstances.

Left and Democratic Front

2.159 Party must prioritise the efforts for the formation

of the Left and Democratic Front. The 21st Party Congress political resolution spelt out the contours by stating:

“A step in this direction would be to build a common platform of the various class and mass organisations with a common charter of demands. Special emphasis must be given to joint struggles of workers and peasants.” (Para 2.87 of 21st Congress Political Resolution)

“At present, the nucleus of the forces that can be drawn into the Left and Democratic Front are of the Left parties and their class and mass organisations; Left groups and intellectuals; socialists scattered in various parties and democratic sections within the secular bourgeois parties; democratic organisations of the adivasis, dalits, women and minorities and social movements which are taking up the issues of the oppressed sections. Only by drawing all these forces on to a joint platform based on a programme that is distinct and opposed to the policies of the bourgeois-landlord parties can the movement towards the Left and Democratic Front take a concrete shape”.(Para 2.110 of 22nd Congress Political Resolution)

2.160 Carrying this understanding forward, efforts were made to form a joint platform of Left mass organisations - Jan Ekta Jan Adhikar Andolan (JEJAA). This however, could not take off in the manner that was envisaged for various reasons. Efforts to forge effective joint platforms must continue.

2.161 Joint struggles of class and mass organisations were organised, the highlight being the stronger unity in struggles amongst the trade unions, kisans and agricultural labour organisations. Broader unity of kisan organisations was forged on common demands emerging from the deepening agrarian distress. The All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) launched a nationwide campaign and held a national conference with over 500 Kisan organisations

from which emerged the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) that led the historic Kisan struggle to victory.

2.162 The solidarity expressed by various other mass organisations, social movements and intellectuals with the Kisan struggle must be consolidated. The identification of forces in each state that can be part of a Left and Democratic Front has not been done in substantial measure. This must be pursued and urgently done. On this basis, unity in struggles must be strengthened to project the Left and Democratic programme as the only real alternative to bourgeois landlord policies.

Left and Democratic Programme

2.163 The outline of the alternative to bourgeois landlord policies in the Left and Democratic Programme must be based on the following:

- a) **Safeguarding Economic Sovereignty:** Reverse the privatisation of PSUs and government departments; ensure basic services like water, electricity, public transport, health and education; scrap National Monetisation Pipeline and Ordinance Factories corporatisation; end crony capitalism; promote the MSMEs; protection of the informal sector; taxing the super-rich; restore balanced development; hike public investment to build much needed infrastructure, generating jobs and boosting domestic demand; implement land reforms; development of agriculture through cooperative farming, production and marketing. Strengthen India’s food security.
- b) **Defence of the Indian Constitution** and the Secular Democratic character of the Republic. Alternative policies to strengthen the fundamental pillars of the Constitutional order. The basic principle of secularism

i.e. separation of religion from the state and politics must be spelt out as a Constitutional tenet. Campaigns of hate and violence based on communal polarisation must be banned; the protection of life, liberties and rights of religious minorities; cleanse the system and state institutions of rabidly communal personnel; ban all illegal private armies and vigilante groups; enact law against lynching. Repeal CAA/NPR/NRC.

- c) **Safeguard Democratic Rights and Civil Liberties** as guaranteed by the Constitution. Repeal the UAPA in its present form which is grossly misused. Repeal the Sedition law, the AFSPA and the National Security Act (NSA); abolition of death penalty; ban the Electoral Bond Scheme; implement electoral reforms including introduction of proportional representation with partial list system; ensure mandatory social auditing and accountability; strict implementation of the Right to Information Act.
- d) **Federalism:** Restructure centre state relations with more powers to states; strengthen fiscal federalism by sharing central surcharges and cesses and make non tax revenues of central government part of the divisible pool; revive the Inter-State council, Planning Commission and National Development Council; revisit the institution of governors; replace Article 356 with suitable safeguards. Restore the full statehood of J&K with its autonomy; repeal abrogation of Articles 370/35A.
- e) **Working Class and Peasantry:** Ensure a statutory minimum wage for unskilled workers of not less than Rs. 21,000 per month linked with the Consumer Price Index; repeal four labour codes; ensure recognition of trade unions through secret ballot; guarantee of

social security and workers participation in management; legalise statutory payment of MSPs for all crops and all farmers on the basis of the C2+50 per cent formula; loan waiver by the central government to the peasantry; central legislation for agricultural workers on wages and social security.

- f) **Social Justice:** Abolishing of the caste system and all forms of the caste oppression; special measures to ensure basic human rights to the SCs and STs; enactment of central legislation for special component plan for SCs and an ST sub-plan with an empowered committee to monitor its implementation; protection of Constitutional and legal provisions for adivasi rights to forest lands, livelihood and culture; enactment of law to provide reservations in the private sector; conduct a caste census; filling up of all backlogs of jobs in reserved categories. Strict implementation of the abolition of manual scavenging; strict punishment against practices of untouchability; strict implementation of the Forest Rights Act; Caste census to enumerate OBCs.

Women: Enact the Women's Reservation Bill; ensure equal rights and remuneration of women; stringent measures against horrific increase in violence against women and children; strict measures to prevent, curb and punish the culprits; law banning 'honour crimes'.

Children: Universalisation of the ICDS to cover all children; strict implementation of the Right to Education Act; ban all forms of child labour; penal action against child trafficking.

LGBT: Protect and advance the rights of transgender citizens; take strict action including legal measures to prevent crimes and harassments against LGBT citizens.

Disability: Adequate budgetary allocation for the strict implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act and the Mental Health Care Act; revamp National Disability Policy and amend other legislations in tune with the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities; clear backlog of vacancies; make built infrastructure, transport and IT enabled services accessible.

g) **People's Welfare**

i) **Universalise Public Distribution System;** Supplying all essential commodities; universal pension benefit; safe drinking water, sanitisation and housing for urban and rural poor.

ii) **Employment:** Expansion of work and increase of wages under MGNREGA; enact Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme. Provide unemployment allowance.

iii) **Scrap the New Education Policy;** Revamp syllabus and curriculum to strengthen Constitutional values and to inculcate scientific temper; regulate private educational institutions; increase central allocations on education to 6 per cent of GDP. Eliminate digital divide in education.

iv) **Universal Public Health Care System** with state funding; increase central expenditure on health to at least 5 per cent of GDP. Reduce prices of essential drugs; regulate private health facilities.

v) **Environment:** Safeguard environment by reducing emission of toxic gases through regulation; promotion of renewable energy; ensuring energy equality for all; conserving forests and wet lands; checking pollution and ensure strict action against violators.

vi) **Culture and Media:** Developing secular and democratic culture, focusing on people's issues to curb the communal and obscurantist influences; nurturing the multiplicities of cultural forms and traditions including folk arts; all languages listed in 8th schedule of the Constitution be equally encouraged and developed. Firmly deal with attacks on cultural personalities and productions by communal forces; promote free software.

Protect the freedom of the press; strengthen public broadcasting services; curbing monopoly and prohibiting cross ownership of media; independent regulatory authority for media; ensure protection and security for media personnel.

vii) **Foreign Policy:** Strictly ensure the independent foreign policy of India; reverse the current status of India as a subordinate ally of US imperialism; revisit all strategic and defence agreements; disengage from regional and international alliances that promote US strategic interests and concerns.

Strengthening the Party

2.164 Our mass base in West Bengal is severely eroded. In Tripura also the erosion is taking place. We polled the lowest ever votes in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Since the 16th Party Congress we have been noting the need to strengthen the Party's independent strength and influence.

2.165 The 17th Party Congress Political Resolution stated:

“While chalking out our future direction, the main concern should be how to strengthen the independent role and influence of the Party. It must be admitted that we have not made much advance in this regard over a considerable period.” (2.80)

2.166 The review of the election results during the period since the 22nd Party Congress has highlighted, amongst others, the basic issue of the need to strengthen our independent strength and political intervention capacities. This is imperative. Party has taken many political and organisational decisions in this regard in the past on many occasions. These have to be internalised by the Party and implemented urgently in right earnest.

2.167 It is imperative that this decline must be arrested and reversed. Unless this is done we cannot advance towards realising our revolutionary tasks. We should prioritise the following:

- a) Urgently strengthen the political, ideological and organisational work. An all sided and concentrated effort must be made to forge live links with the people and to develop sustained class and mass struggles and consolidate these to strengthen our political influence. Activities like organising literacy campaigns and setting up libraries, especially in rural areas must be undertaken.
- b) The focus must be to strengthen struggles in local areas on issues that concern the people and their problems. Such struggles should not be token and must be sustained till tangible gains are achieved.
- c) The Covid pandemic with associated lockdowns and protocols has created impediments, naturally, for developing militant mass actions. This lag has to be overcome by properly planning and executing people's struggles on the large varieties of livelihood problems confronting them.
- d) The Party has to vigorously face the challenge of the Hindutva forces ideologically, politically and organisationally. We must counter the divisive

communal agenda and the destruction of secular values; we must champion the protection of the minority communities; we must challenge Hindutva nationalism with Indian nationalism strengthening the consciousness of an inclusive India.

- e) The Party must conduct struggles on issues of social discrimination, caste oppression and gender discrimination. Struggles against social oppression must be combined with the struggles against economic exploitation. Struggles against identity politics that seek to disrupt class unity must be carried out.
- f) The decisions of the Kolkata Plenum on organisation must be urgently implemented in right earnest. Party organisations must be streamlined on the basis of the Plenum guidelines.

Way to Combat Hindutva

2.168 Strengthening the Party is the basic prerequisite to isolate Hindutva forces. Combating Hindutva and its multifarious communal outfits has to be conducted in a sustained manner in political, ideological, cultural and social spheres. Concrete steps must be undertaken to strengthen this struggle against Hindutva agenda.

2.169 Party and mass organisations must conduct this sustained struggle by undertaking:

- i) Preparation of ideological and political material continuously by dedicated groups set up by the Party. This should be in a popular style able to reach out to large sections of the people exposing the reactionary content of Hindutva and the communal forces.
- ii) Actively countering the offensive of Hindutva groups

who mount a vicious campaign of hate and terror and launch fascistic attacks particularly on the religious minorities. Utmost vigilance must be maintained to resist attempts to communalise public spaces both at the macro and micro level.

- iii) Promoting the organisation of social, cultural activities, popular science movements to combat the growing obscurantism, superstition, irrationality and blind faith by promoting a secular scientific thinking based on rationality. This is necessary to counter the spread of irrationality and unreason by the Hindutva brigades.
- iv) Championing the issues against social oppression. Hindutva denies women equal rights and creates conditions to mount vicious attacks by justifying gender subjugation.
- v) Combating the spread of pernicious Hindutva casteist and obscurantist values among dalits and adivasis. Special attention must be paid to organise cultural events that highlight the composite culture of Indian society.
- vi) Promoting social service activities. The work being done during the time of the Covid pandemic should be continued through health centres. Activities like setting up libraries and reading rooms, educational coaching centres, skill development centres etc. must be undertaken.
- vii) The RSS and the Hindutva forces are very active in the education sector. We must take the initiative to intervene in the educational sphere to create and propagate the secular, democratic, syncretic content in education.

2.170 In the absence of such activities RSS-BJP and communal outfits succeed in further strengthening the overarching 'Hindu identity' largely cutting across social and ethnic divides. Of utmost importance is the combating of irrationality with rationality and unreason with reason.

Political Line

2.171 1) The nearly eight years of the BJP government have seen the consolidation of the communal corporate nexus mounting authoritarian attacks. Since returning to government in 2019 it has been aggressively furthering the Hindu Rashtra agenda of the fascistic RSS. This is accompanied by an equally aggressive pursuit of neo-liberal policies and growing authoritarian governance. The RSS driven Hindutva Rashtra agenda is perniciously eroding the Constitutional framework and destroying the secular democratic character of the Indian Republic.

2) Thus, the main task is to isolate and defeat the BJP. This requires the growth of the independent strength of the CPI(M) and the Left forces to mobilise the people in class and mass struggles in a powerful militant manner.

3) Strengthening the Party and the Left forces is also required to lead the fight against the Hindutva agenda and the activities of communal forces. The Party must work for a broad mobilisation of all secular forces against Hindutva communalism.

4) The Party must be in the forefront to mobilise the widest sections of people against the aggressive pursuit of neo-liberal policies; the outright loot of our national assets; large scale privatisation of the public sector, public utilities and mineral resources. It is by intensifying class and mass struggles, like the recent Kisan struggle, that the broadest mobilisation of people and rallying of secular opposition forces against the

corporate-communal regime can be accomplished.

5) The success of the fight against the Hindutva-corporate regime requires the simultaneous struggle against the Hindutva communal forces and the struggle against the neo-liberal policies.

6) The Party will cooperate with secular opposition parties in Parliament on agreed issues. Outside Parliament the Party will work for the broadest mobilisation of all secular forces against the communal agenda. The Party and the Left will independently and unitedly with other democratic forces, on an issue to issue basis, fight the assaults of neo-liberalism, authoritarian onslaughts against democracy, democratic rights, suppression of dissent by the use of draconian laws.

7) The Party will support joint platforms for united actions of the class and mass organisations. The Party will support all measures that strengthen the Worker-Peasant-Agricultural labour united actions.

8) Developing the independent strength of the Party along with efforts to strengthen Left unity shall be prioritised. United Left campaigns and struggles must highlight the alternative policies to the bourgeoisie landlord ruling class policies.

9) The Party must work in a sustained manner to rally all left and democratic forces including mass organisations and social movements. The Left and democratic platform should conduct joint struggles and movements highlighting the Left and Democratic programme as alternative policies.

10) As and when elections take place appropriate electoral tactics to maximise the pooling of anti-BJP votes will be adopted based on the above political line.

Tasks in Present Situation

2.172 i) Party must prioritise the strengthening of its independent role, expanding its influence and political intervention capacities through sustained class and mass struggles. Special attention must be paid to strengthen local struggles on people's problems with proper follow-up.

ii) All sections of people subjected to intensified economic exploitation by the neo-liberal policies must be rallied together in the struggles on livelihood issues. Party must actively intervene and join all spontaneous struggles that develop in order to strengthen them.

iii) Party must be in the forefront of the fight against Hindutva communalism. This struggle has to be conducted in a sustained manner at multiple levels. Broadest possible unity of the secular democratic forces including concerned citizens, organisations and social movements should be forged to counter the activities of the Hindutva forces.

iv) Party should take the lead to oppose authoritarian measures and seek the cooperation of all democratic forces to forge joint struggles in defence of human rights, democratic rights, civil liberties, artistic freedom and academic autonomy against activities of Hindutva communalism and destruction of the democratic and secular content of the Constitutional order.

v) Party must strengthen efforts to advance the struggles for social justice and champion the issues against social oppression of women, dalits and adivasis.

vi) Protecting the rights and security of minorities against the aggressive onslaughts of Hindutva communalism must be strengthened.

vii) Party must strengthen the ideological/social struggles

against the growth of obscurantism, superstition, irrationality and blind faith. Party must be in the forefront in the campaigns to develop scientific temper and to strengthen public discourse for rationality and reason against irrationality and unreason. Broadest mobilisation in defence of scientific temper and against revivalism must be forged.

viii) The Party must rouse the anti-imperialist consciousness amongst the Indian people in defence of our national and economic sovereignty. Campaigns highlighting Socialism as the only real alternative to capitalism must be strengthened.

ix) Party must mobilise popular opinion against Modi government's surrender to US imperialism. Struggles for restoration of India's independent foreign policy must be undertaken.

x) The Party must take up the defence of the LDF government in Kerala and against the fascistic attacks being mounted against the party especially in West Bengal and Tripura.

Conclusion

2.173 Building a strong Communist Party throughout the country is essential in order to accomplish these tasks. Based on Marxism and Leninism a strong Party with a mass base throughout the country can be built only by sincerely implementing the decisions taken by the Kolkata plenum on organisation. This must, particularly, concentrate on:

- 1) Strengthening the revolutionary Party with a mass line to establish strong bonds with the people.
- 2) Widening the Party's reach and influence among the people and rallying the Left and democratic forces.
- 3) Strengthening the Party organisation with quality

membership as directed by the Kolkata Plenum.

- 4) Focus efforts to attract youth as well as women to the Party.
- 5) Strengthening ideological struggles against all alien ideologies.

Let us redouble our resolve to strengthen the building of a strong Communist Party!

Forward towards a revolutionary Party with a mass line!

Forward towards a stronger CPI(M) with an all India mass base!

Procedure for Sending Amendments to the Draft Political Resolution

Following is the procedure to send amendments to the **Draft Political Resolution**

1. All amendments should mention the para number/line number.
2. The name and unit of the concerned comrade/unit proposing the amendment should also be mentioned.
3. All amendments should reach latest by March 10, 2022.
4. Amendments being sent by post/courier should be sent to the following address:

Communist Party of India (Marxist)
Central Committee, A.K. Gopalan Bhavan
27-29 Bhai Vir Singh Marg, New Delhi – 110 001

5. The envelope should be marked '**Amendments to the Draft Political Resolution**'.

6. Those sending amendments by email are requested to send it either as text or Word files only. Those sending in languages other than English should send PDF files.
7. **“Amendments to the Draft Political Resolution”** may be mentioned in the subject of the email and sent to **pol-23@cpim.org**
8. It would help if amendments are sent in the following format:

Sr. No.	Para No.	Line No.	Amendment	Proposed by
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
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