



COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)
21st Congress
Samar Mukherjee Nagar
Visakhapatnam, April 14-19, 2015

Resolution

Protest Against the Massive Rigging of the Kolkata Municipal Elections

The elections to the Kolkata Municipal Corporation being held on April 18 witnessed yet another round of massive rigging organised by the ruling party, the Trinamool Congress, by mobilising goondas from different parts of West Bengal. These hooligans ruled and controlled the entire election process. The State administration and police not only did not take any steps to prevent the rigging by these goonda elements, but also actively connived with and participated in the campaign to make a mockery of the election.

The West Bengal State Election Commission, with all the machinery at its command, has remained a silent spectator to the chaos being spread by the ruling party. It has even expressed its helplessness in public.

The total number of wards going to the polls on April 18 is 144. By noon on April 18, most of booths in 30 wards, most of them being wards in which the Trinamool Congress trailed the CPI(M) in the previous Lok Sabha election, had been captured. The campaign to capture booths is now spreading to other wards. The voters are threatened not to go to the polling station and are being prevented from doing so. They are being physically attacked. Women have been threatened with rape. The polling agents of the opposition parties have been thrown out of polling booths. Goondas have been pushing the buttons on the electronic voting machines in favour of the candidates of the ruling party. Our reports tell us that till now about 75 comrades have been beaten. More than 100 have been physically assaulted. Twelve media persons have been threatened and attacked. There has been an instance of firing at Kyd Street, and bombings have taken place in different places. Our Party comrades are resisting hooliganism. Many Party supporters and members of the public have been injured, and some have been hospitalised.

The attacks began three to four days ago. On April 17, Comrade Kanti Ganguly, member of the West Bengal State Committee of the Party, his son, and two students of the “Pratibandhi Village,” an establishment for the all-round development of the disabled, were beaten by goondas in the office building of the establishment and in view of the police.

The rigging exposes the increasing alienation of the ruling party from the masses and the people and their fear of facing the democratic process. The TMC's vote share came down from 58 per cent in 2011 to 36 per cent in 2014. It is well known that the ruling party advanced the date of the election to coincide with this Party Congress. By contrast, elections to the 91 municipalities going to vote next week were due to be held in 2014.

The 21st Congress of the CPI(M) condemns the Government of West Bengal, the ruling party and the state machinery for its all-out attack on the democratic rights of the people of Kolkata.

The Congress congratulates the people of Kolkata, who continue to brave these attacks. It calls upon the people who will vote in 91 municipalities on April 25th to boldly exercise their franchise and prepare to resist any onslaught on their democratic rights.

The 21st Congress once again expresses its solidarity with the people of West Bengal in the intensified battle in defence of democratic rights that is looming ahead. It calls upon all democratic people in India to raise their protest against these severe assaults on democratic rights and to stand with the battle for democracy in West Bengal.