



**Communist Party of India (Marxist)**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> Congress,**  
**E K Nayanar nagar, Kannur, Kerala**  
**April 6-10, 2022**

**Speech of Comrade Manik Sarkar, President of Inaugural Session**

General Secretary of the CPI(M) Comrade Sitaram Yechury,  
Chairman of the Organising Committee Comrade Pinarayi Vijayan,  
General Convenor of the Organising Committee Comrade Kodyeri Balakrishnan,  
General Secretary of CPI Comrade D. Raja,  
Delegates and friends,

We are gathered here in Kannur for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the CPI(M). Kannur in North Malabar is the cradle of the Communist movement in Kerala. We recall with pride that the first Communist party martyrs in our history were the four Kayyur martyrs – Madathil Appu, Kunhambu Nair, Chirukandan and Abubackar.

They were hanged by the British rulers just two months before the First Party Congress of the CPI in 1943. There have been innumerable martyrs since. I pay my respectful homage to all of them.

On this occasion, I also convey my warm greetings to the lakhs of Party members, supporters and the working people of Kerala.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Party Congress is being held at a critical juncture. At no time since independence has the country faced such a severe challenge to the democratic-secular order. The BJP and the RSS, who are in State power, are working systematically to reshape the Indian Republic and install a 'Hindu Rashtra'.

There is an alliance between the Hindutva forces and corporates which supports the authoritarian regime at the Centre.

The pursuit of neo-liberal and pro-corporate policies have worsened the condition of the people – there is rampant unemployment, falling incomes and rapidly widening inequalities. Hindutva facilitates this exploitation of the Indian people by creating communal polarization with its divisive agenda. Minorities are faced with relegation to second class citizens.

The recent period has seen growing resistance to the Hindutva-corporate regime and its policies. The anti-CAA movement, the historic kisan struggle against the farm laws, the general strikes of the working class, the latest being the March 28-29 two-day strike and other innumerable struggles show that the people are prepared to fight back to defend their rights and force the government to accept their legitimate demands.

It is necessary to widen and intensify these united struggles of the working people while countering the assaults on secularism and federalism by the ruling party.

The CPI(M) and the Left forces have been active in the struggles against the Hindutva-corporate regime. The delegates who have come from all parts of India have been in the forefront of the struggles of the working class, peasantry and other sections of the working people.

The Party Congress will deliberate and decide on the most appropriate tactical line to build the widest unity through struggles and movements of all the secular-democratic forces to fight the BJP and the RSS.

The Party Congress will also discuss how to strengthen the Party organisationally, so that it emerges as an effective organization capable of mobilizing and organising the widest sections of the working people.

The CPI(M) will discharge its responsibility to develop a Left and democratic alternative to the present iniquitous and authoritarian regime.

Thank you.

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