

Editor's Note

This double issue of Marxist is dedicated to the culmination of the yearlong observations marking the centenary of the founding of the Communist Party of India in October 1920. From October 2020 to October 2021, the CPI(M) had planned to conduct an extensive campaign marking this event. However, due to the Covid pandemic and the consequent necessary restrictions, this campaign was naturally limited, but nevertheless observed through many online programmes and events.

This issue, rather than being a narration of this rich glorious history, has chosen certain important landmarks in the Party's evolution and growth during this centenary. During the course of the centenary year all issues of *Marxist* had dealt with various aspects of the Party's contributions, role, class and people's struggles led by it that influenced the direction and content of our freedom movement.

Com. Jyoti Basu had contributed to a series of pamphlets published by the Party on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of India's independence in 1997. His write up on 'The Communists and the Indian freedom struggle' is being republished. As a participant in many of those struggles, Com. Jyoti Basu's insights will surely be useful for the younger generation of Communists today.

The most important strategic document of a Communist Party is its programme that reflects the concrete application of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions prevailing, defining the particular stage of the revolution. The programme sets out the strategy for the successful triumph of the revolution in that particular stage. Com. Harkishan Singh Surjeet discusses the 'Scope of the Party programme, brief history and evolution of the Programme'. This history of the evolution of the programme of the Communist Party of India and subsequently of the CPI(M) shows the intense discussions that took place in the efforts to scientifically apply Marxism-Leninism to India's concrete conditions. With the formation of the CPI(M) in 1964, the programme of People's Democratic Revolution was adopted at its seventh Congress. This defines the stage of the Indian revolution, the class character of the Indian state and the class alliance to be forged for the successful realisation of the People's Democratic Revolution and moving forward to Socialism.

Subsequent international development towards the end of the 1980s and the beginning of 1990s and the dismantling of Socialism in the USSR necessitated a reappraisal of some aspects and understanding contained in the 1964 programme. These international developments were analysed by the CPI(M) 14th Party Congress held at Madras (now Chennai) in January 1992 that adopted a resolution 'On certain ideological issues'. This Congress decided that the Party programme needs to be updated and adopted a resolution to this effect. The Party programme was, thus, updated in the year 2000. The issues involved in all these developments are discussed by Com. Surjeet.

One important issue that arose in independent India was on the question of Party's participation in governments. On the question of participation in bourgeois parliamentary elections and legislative forums, there was never any confusion or debate. The CPI had participated in elections in the pre-independence period and in all subsequent elections in Independent India. The issue of participation or not in governments is a tactical issue and the Party programme normally deals only with strategic issues connected with the realisation of the particular stage of revolution. However, this tactical question was incorporated in the 1964 programme in a specific para 112.

Com. M. Basavapunnaiiah discusses the reasons why this was incorporated in the Party programme and the understanding contained in para 112. In the updated Party programme, this para 112 corresponds to para 7.17 which contains certain changes in the process of updating. Com. Basavapunnaiiah discusses the implications of this para which states 'the Party will utilise all the opportunities that present themselves for bringing into existence governments pledged to carry out a modest programme of giving immediate relief to the people'. Adding further, 'that the formation of such governments will give a great fillip to the revolutionary movement of the working people and thus help the process of building the democratic front.'

It is on the basis of this understanding that the Left and Left-Democratic governments led by the CPI(M) were formed in Bengal, Tripura and Kerala.

Lenin had once said that 'concrete analysis of concrete conditions is the living essence of dialectics'. Com. Prabhat Patnaik traces the CPI(M)'s 'Lineage and praxis in a changing world'. Following the glorious role of developing class struggles and contributing to the victory of the Indian people's struggles for freedom arose the question of the nature and class character of the State in independent India. Prabhat Patnaik discusses the CPI(M)'s Marxist-Leninist analysis of this question and on the relationship that the Communists should have with the ruling Party. The conclusion is that only a revolution led by the working class in alliance with the peasantry can carry the democratic revolution to completion and lead on to Socialism.

The bourgeois-landlord ruling classes led by the big bourgeoisie in India seeking independent capitalist development with the bourgeoisie pursuing a dual character of collaboration and conflict with imperialism could not be durable because of its inner contradictions. In the background of changes in the structure of world capitalism, Indian big bourgeoisie yielded to foreign finance capital resulting in the transition to neo-liberalism. Though the factors discussed in bringing about such a change from independent capitalist development to embracing neo-liberalism were in operation even before the collapse of Soviet Union, but with that collapse the decisive shift in the balance in favour of neo-liberalism came about.

How the Left and Left Democratic front governments led by the CPI(M) in Bengal, Tripura and Kerala faced this situation is discussed.

The current global political rightward shift and the promotion of fascistic trends to keep the neo-liberal agenda flourishing and the current contextualisation of India is discussed with the emergence of the corporate-Hindutva alliance and the imperative need to defeat this alliance.

In the section of documents, we reproduce the Programme of National Liberation submitted to the Gaya Congress session in 1922 and the Manifesto submitted for the consideration of the Guahati session of the All India National Congress, 1926, by the Communist Party of India. These programmatic proposals were formulated before the CPI's Draft platform for action adopted in 1930 which is discussed in Com. Surjeet's contribution.

Reading of both these documents shows the clear imprint of these progressive ideas on the vision for a

free India in the Karachi AICC resolution. This resolution outlined the character of independent India as being a secular democratic republic with universal adult franchise, equality for all citizens before law and other aspects contained in our Constitution. The CPI called for a national movement standing firmly in opposition to communalism and against the attitude of reactionary forces advocating compromises with colonialism, under the slogan of 'Land, Bread; Education'. The imprint of these programmes on the eventual independent India's Constitutional Republican character can be seen unmistakably.