



Observe May Day with More Vigour

SAVE DEMOCRACY, SAVE PEOPLE, SAVE NATION

May Day this year would be observed with more vigour by the working class for several pressing reasons. Taking into cognizance of the political developments which are moving at very fast pace on every front in the year before general elections in 2024, it is of utmost importance to assess the situation. The economy is further deteriorating and the prices are rising high, especially of the essentials like the cereals, pulses, wheat flour, rice, cooking oil, cooking gas (at about Rs 1,200 a cylinder), 15 per cent rise in milk prices in last one year, the cost of education and health care rising making it out of reach of the common man as the income/wage increase is not taking place.

May Day reminds us of the huge sacrifice of the workers and their unions to assert that the workers be treated as human beings and not as animals. Rather one could claim that the discourse of human rights was initiated by the labour movement in human history. Their cry for fixed working hours, eight hours of work, eight hours of rest, and eight hours of recreation

and rejuvenation with the family echoed in various parts of the world in 19th century. In India too, the demand of fixed hours of work began from 1866, when the unions were yet to be born sector wise, as till then the collectives for common cause was through community bases. It was on May 1 in 1886 that the workers in Chicago began their protest strike that

Amarjeet Kaur

followed the bomb explosion by the conspirators to find an excuse to crush the

sentence, two died in jail and two were given life imprisonment.

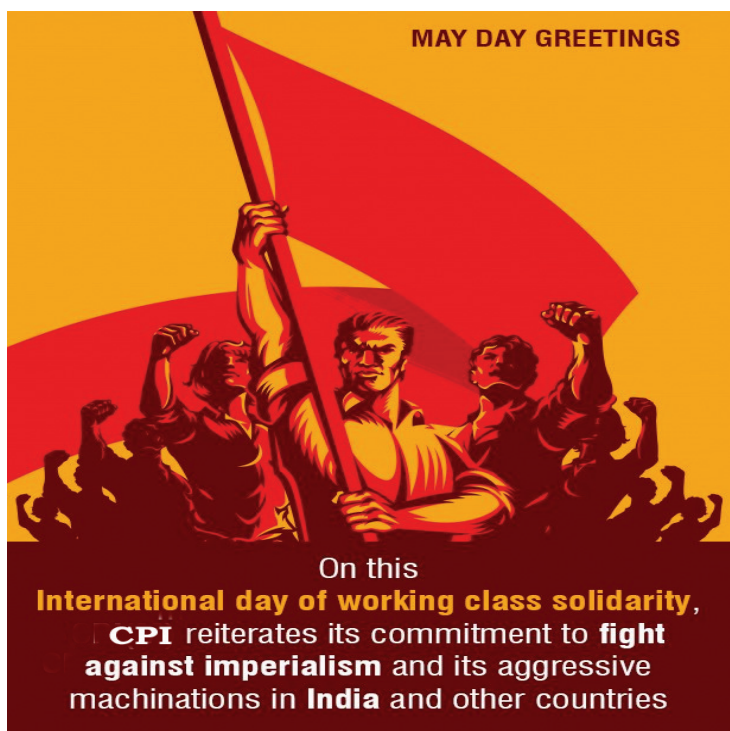
It was in 1889 that in an international meeting of workers' associations where Karl Marx talked of the cry of working

labour policies and the codification of labour laws.

Let us have a look at the last full budget of Modi led BJP government before general elections to Lok Sabha reflects the continued trend of the government leading the pro-corporate policies at the cost of the interests of workers, farmers and the poor vulnerable sections in general. The corporates are getting more concessions whereas the budget allocations on education, health, civic amenities, SC/ST sub-plan got reduced, MGNREGA allocation was reduced by 30 percent. Relative reduction in the allocation to various social welfare schemes is very much evident. The budget was jugglery of decorated words. Anna Rishi is the term used for the produce by farmers, but nothing has been suggested for improvement in the support price for their produce.

The budget speech of the finance minister was laced with falsehood. The estimations presented as achievements were far from truth at the ground level. The seven key priorities as listed in the budget such as inclusive growth, reaching the last mile, youth power, etc, remained empty without any substance. None of the real issues concerning working people were addressed such as Old Pension Scheme, social security to all, pension to all,

movement. Eight leaders arrested, four of them were given death



On this International day of working class solidarity, CPI reiterates its commitment to fight against imperialism and its aggressive machinations in India and other countries

class, the incidents of May protest in Chicago and suggested to observe May Day for paying tributes to the martyrs of that struggle and to continue the struggle for fixed working hours. It was from 1890 that the day began to be observed with a slogan 'Workers of the World Unite'. The struggle continued and the first convention of ILO was on eight hours working day in its foundation conference in 1919.

In India one of the AITUC union was the first to observe May day in 1920s in present day Tamil Nadu.

Today we face a situation when the hard won labour rights after 150 years are under threat from the anti-

Red Salute to Com V I Lenin



Celebrating the 153rd birth anniversary of Com V I Lenin on April 22, 2023 at Party's central headquarters, Ajoy Bhavan, Communist Party of India general secretary D Raja said we must intensify our struggles to end exploitation of human beings by the rich and the powerful.

Lenin and His Ever Growing Relevance

At a time when we celebrate birth anniversary of our guide and philosopher Comrade V I Lenin on April 22, we are passing through a phase called as rule of finance capital. It is defined by Lenin as the higher stage of capitalism that takes away our democratic rights, our Constitution, right to elect our own government, and freedom to live and think in our own varied ways. It refuses to give us food instead offers a well organised famine. It refuses to give us jobs because its prime interest is not investment. Health and education are not in its priority list. Despite killing negligence of public welfare, it is also true that it is scared of people and their strength. And it is at this point we find a similar situation when Lenin stressed on alliance of all democratic forces that includes bourgeoisie too which is also facing a crisis and joins the struggle for a democratic state. The government at the centre today realises the need for at least a semblance of democracy, through elections “without freedom to conduct agitation and on the basis of a restricted qualification,” but at the same time they refuse to allow the opposition to play its democratic role and become effective in the parliamentary democracy. These were the words of Lenin while defining the rule of finance capital. He said wherever there is finance capital with a significant presence, one element is common and that is national chauvinism. As if to prove it, in our country, V D Savarkar, an exponent of blind nationalism, had said in his book in 1923, “All Hindus claim to have in their veins the blood of the mighty race incorporated with and descended from the Vedic fathers, the Sindhus”. Summing it up, he wrote, “We [Hindus] are one because we are a nation, a race and own a common Sanskriti (culture).”

Hence all available opportunities must be used to further the cause of launching a united struggle for

democratic rights, elections and parliamentary democracy. Lenin said communists must take part in elections like in any other country and insisted on getting together all democratic forces in action. There must be regular mass movements and a united front has to be formed to further the cause.

It is beyond doubt that any national movement has to be bourgeois democratic movement, said Lenin articulating the significance of united front that has become the need of the time. Communist Party of India has been coming to terms with the decision that has been truly Leninist. The stance to have a united front along with bourgeoisie has been prophetic and their significance stands valid. It was Georgi Dimitrov who helped the idea to evolve ideologically and also taking in the

Editorial

new turn the imperialism was taking as an objective force. It was 1935, and anti imperialist front was emerging as the primary need. He said while speaking to the seventh World Congress of the Comintern, “...While maintaining their political and organisational independence, they must carry on the active work inside the organisations that are part of the Indian National Congress, facilitating the process of crystallisation of a national revolutionary wing among them for the purpose of further developing the national revolutionary movement of the entire people against British imperialism.”

Much before Dimitrov concretised the idea of united front, Lenin had visualised it especially in the era of imperialism. He saw it as a broad based stage in the process of transition towards socialism. In course of shaping it, he developed the concept and said that working class would be more interested in the transition. All the demands, even today, raised in the phase of bourgeois democracy are to support their cause only.

The slogan for more employment opportunities strengthens the cause of maturity of capitalism only. Even in the agrarian sector, the demand for MSP is to further their cause only. Democracy and parliamentary institutions have expanded as never before. For capitalism, establishment of democracy is an existential issue. Therefore there is greater need for broad based anti-imperialist struggle. In our country, our struggle is in defence of our Constitution that furthers the cause of a democratic set up. Hence, Lenin’s approach has become more relevant. Any democratic revolution is bourgeois democratic revolution in content. The very demands that are raised now in the process of moving towards democratic revolution, they are in reality bourgeois democratic. It is because when monopoly capitalism develops it destroys non-monopoly sections of capitalism. The medium and the small scale industries too get crushed. Thus it is the class demand of the non-monopoly sections to oppose monopolisation of capital. Thus the very content of the democratic revolution is anti-imperialist. Here comes the dialectics, when the interest of the working class is aligned with that of the capitalist class. Historical development has taken a way when the working class has become the greatest defender of democratic rights, and thus of the bourgeoisie itself. Following the path that Lenin had directed towards, Georgi Dimitrov had stressed that in India the communists must support, extend, and participate in all anti imperialist activities, not excluding those which are under national reformist leadership. While maintaining their political and organisational independence, they must carry on their active work inside the organisations of Indian national Congress, facilitating the process of crystallisation of a national revolutionary wing among them, for the purpose of further developing national revolutionary movement of the Indian people.

Coronation of CPI Onchiam Martyrs' Column



Name of Martyrs

In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Onchiam martyrdom, a

committee of the CPI. The police faced strong resistance from hundreds of comrades and villagers who came to prevent the arrest. Police opened fire against the people and eight comrades lost their lives. Two comrades, MandodiKannan, and Kollacheri Kumaran were tortured and killed in police custody. Even on the brink of death, ManodiKanan drew a hammer and sickle, the party symbol with his own blood.

This historical event

Suresh Babu Mokeri

importance of the broad alliance to defeat BJP. He said that the workers and farmers of the country have been pushed to peril and even the Constitution is under threat by the BJP rule. He applauded the Kerala model, its initiatives like Kudumbashree and stressed on creating a Kerala model government at the center.

The party flag was hoisted by SathyanMokeri, CPI



Martyr's Column

Kerala state executive member. TK Rajanchaired the public meeting. Kerala revenue minister K Rajan, Adv P Vasantham, TV Balan, KKBalan, P Gavas, PK Nassar, P Suresh Babu, and R Sathyan were felicitated in the program. Senior party leader K. Gangadhara Kurupp was honored by minister K Rajan. The documentary on Onchiam martyrs was released by CPI Kozhikode district secretary KKBalan.

Various programs were held at different places in Kozhikode in these six months in

regard to the 75th anniversary of revolutionary Onchiam martyrdom. A history seminar was conducted in Kozhikode town. The seminar was inaugurated by CPI national council member VahidhaNizam. Several programs were held at Nadapuram, Kuttiady, and Aayanchery.

On April 30, 2023 a joint program by CPI and CPI (M) will be held at Onchiam for paying rich tributes to the martyrs. Kerala chief minister PinarayiVijayan and other leaders will be attending the program.



On 75th anniversary of Onchiam martyrdom, a martyrs' column was inaugurated by CPI national secretariat member Dr Bhalchandra Kango

martyrs' column was inaugurated by CPI national secretariat member Dr Bhalchandra Kango on April 23, 2024. The memorial has been reconstructed near ChennattuthaazhaVayal where eight CPI comrades were killed in the police firing on April 30, 1948.

On April 30, 1948, the police entered Onchiam village to arrest P RNambiar, MKumaran Master, MKKelu and other leaders who came to report the party congress decisions to the Kurumbranadutaluk

brought the people of Kerala close to CPI. The police were sent to Onchiam on the instruction of feudal lords. CPI had been fighting against feudal lords and organized farmers against injustice and exploitation. The suppression of CPI was launched by the feudal lords for their own existence. But after this event, the anti-landlord anti-feudal struggle became intense in Malabar.

In his inaugural address, Dr Kango reminded the



A view of the rally

Abolish Governor's office: CPI MP

The following is the text of the private member's bill submitted to Rajya Sabha by CPI national council secretary Binoy Viswam MP for the abolishment of the governor's office:

The governor's office violates the balance of powers put in place by the Constitution between the Union and the states. The governor, not being an elected representative of the people, ought not enjoy powers that interfere with the functioning of the democratically elected government of a state. The office of the governor, is a colonial legacy and baggage prescribed by the Britishers, intended to suppress the legitimate democratic aspirations of the people of India. Thus, the Constitution must be amended to preserve the tenets of

democracy and federalism that are enshrined in the Constitution.

The encroachment on co-operative federalism by the office of the governor has been observed in several states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, West Bengal and Punjab over the years and has been intensifying over a range of issues including unnecessary interventions of governors in the day-to-day administration and deliberate delays in giving assents to the bills passed by democratically elected state assemblies. The office of governor has been used to topple governments led by parties other than the ruling party at the Centre in Karnataka, Arunachal Pradesh and Maharashtra to name a few.

Recently, Tamil Nadu government was compelled to adopt a resolution for the second time this year, urging the Centre to fix a timeframe for governors to approve bills passed by the assembly. The resolution received support from many quarters including from the government of Kerala. These frequent frictions between the office of the governor and the state governments highlight governor's allegiance to the political party at the Centre rather than to the Constitution of India.

Post-independence, India opted for a system of federal polity with division of functions between various levels and organs of the government. Our Constitution has a well-defined structure for Centre-state relations. The Constitution makers

laid down a federal structure keeping in mind the diversity and aspirations of our people situated in various states of India but RSS as an organisation is antagonistic to this diversity. Their idea of Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan is monolithic and seeks to flatten out the cultural, linguistic and regional diversity of our country. To achieve this objective and to cement a unidimensional flow of power in the country, the Modi government has encroached upon the rights of states using the office of governor on multiple occasions, thus eroding the federal spirit of our Constitution.

Many constitutional experts, commentators and pro-democracy groups have opined that the office of governor has become a burden on India's federal polity.

Several states and political parties have also come out in opposition to this tendency of running India like a unitary country. In the context of Centre misusing the office of governor like a political office to destabilize elected state governments, the demand for the abolition of the ornamental governors' office is also ever growing.

The CPI, in its Party Congress held in Vijayawada, passed a resolution urging all democratic-federal forces to join hands in making our polity truly federal by abolishing the office of governor. The bill submitted to Parliament is one more step in the direction of preserving the democratic and federal ethos of our Constitution.

NFIW Protest at Delhi Police HQ

As the Delhi Police Commissioner refused to meet a delegation of the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) on April 25, 2023, they staged a protest at the Delhi Police headquarters at Jai Singh Road, Central Delhi. NFIW members went to submit a memorandum to the Police Commissioner demanding immediate filing of an FIR based on the complaint given by young women wrestlers.

The protesters led by Annie Raja, general secretary NFIW were detained by the police, taken to the Parliament Street police station and the DCP received the memorandum on behalf of the Commissioner.



Later they joined the wrestlers who were sitting on a day and night dharna at Jantar Mantar.

The memorandum demanded the following:

- Immediate filing of FIR against

Annie Raja

Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh based on the complaints given by the sportspersons. These are cases of sexual harassment at workplace and POCSO.

- Ensure time-bound legal process to ensure justice to the complainant as early as possible.

- Action against all those police personnel who failed to file FIR, timely, on the complaint.

- Immediate steps for gender sensitization and awareness programme for Delhi Police on woman and child centric laws. It is critical for safeguarding the dignity, safety and security of women in Delhi.

Inequality Goes up as Growth Keeps Slowing Down

By all counts, the economic world is today a harassed one, particularly the world of working masses. A question may be asked as to when was exploitation not a harsh reality in the world for labour? We would add 'Today More So'.

In each phase of development, the labour was exploited and it always raised a voice to demand a better deal. Every time promise was made for a better deal but never was fulfilled and the labour was pushed into the next time period. With the onset of industrial revolution, the working class that had emerged, had hoped to get a better deal. Starting from about 1750, the industrial profits increased by leaps and bounds, yet, the workers were left hungry and emaciated; women and children suffering from a greater degree of financial, physical and mental exploitation.

After the World-War II (in 1945), the empires were dismantled and were replaced by democracy; colonies became sovereign countries. But under the pressure of poverty and general inherited backwardness, the newly independent countries had to continue under the financial and technological leadership of the developed countries. Yet between 1945 and 1980s, the developing countries showed autonomous behavior and models of development different from the developed countries. This resulted in reduced international advantage to the developed countries. The International Trade Organisation, a proposed multilateral organization was not at all accepted by the

United States under the fear that it may interfere in its internal economic policies. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), an agreement concluded earlier among the richest G-7 countries, continued to govern international trade. After seven rounds to establish free trade, in the 8th round in 1994, a multilateral trade organization (World Trade Organisation = WTO) was formed and operationalised in 1995. This period was known as that of Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation, in short, LPG. It promised full employment and better standards of living to the people, but the assurances did not materialize. In a sequential development, the world in general and workers in particular suffered and are suffering from recession (2008, 2015 onwards to 2020s), unemployment, inflation, income and wealth inequalities etc. And now, in 2023, comes a new report of the World Bank on a decade-long projection of 'Falling Long-Term Growth Prospects'.

Fall in Growth And Future of Workers

The World Bank research has shown that at the beginning of the 21st century, the global GDP growth rate was 3.5 percent; it has fallen during 2021-23 to 2.6 percent and is projected to further fall to 2.2 percent by 2030.

On its part, the World Bank report, keeping in mind development through private sector alone, has made six policy suggestions, to its member countries, viz.

Shreenivas Khandewale

(i) Increasing investment rates (ii) Aligning fiscal and monetary policies (iii) Improving logistics, regulation and cutting trade costs (iv) More education and skills to promote exports of digitally delivered services (v) Increasing women's participation in labour force, and (vi) Greater international cooperation, which was high in 1990s following the break-up of Soviet Union, and later faltered.

A look at these policy suggestions will show that the suggestions are supply-side oriented and no clues regarding employment, assured high incomes, reduced income and wealth inequalities among other things, which have been and are being faced by the masses.

Indian May-Day Demands

India has many specific problems and in view of the long-term slowing growth has to consider different economic demands of the labour:

(a) The most populous country: As per the State of World Population Report

(Released on April 19, 2023) of the United Nations Population Fund, by mid-2023, India will be the most populous country with 142.86 crore population followed by China with 142.57 crore. India has 68 percent population of 15-64 years of age-group.

India has slipped in Human Development Index from 130th rank in 2020 to 132nd in 2021, as per the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP) report issued in September, 2022. That the situation has been difficult in all countries is no solace because some 130 countries (out of 191 countries) are ahead of India.

The demands

We are placing below the demands from the point of view of working class and policy imperatives in India:

- Preserve Public Sector and Stop unnecessary Privatisation.

Private sector bears no responsibility towards maintenance of employment and mass welfare. Its declared objective is maximization of profit. In the face of prospects of long-term decline in the global GDP growth, stability of production and employment, public sector enterprises are a better support to a huge working population. Therefore, say no to disinvestment.

- Promote and Protect Domestic Demand

In the face of falling long-term expectations of global growth and declining prospects of exports, protect and promote domestic demand. China has already shifted focus towards domestic demand. India has the advantage of a huge internal market, compared to many other countries.

- Plan Reconstruction of Rural Housing

Houses in rural India are very old, ill-planned, ill-ventilated, suffering from lack of many essential amenities. Villages need modern planning. Phased total reconstruction of houses would need all

building materials and services of unskilled and skilled labourers, architects and engineers. Sharing of financial expenditure of such a project between the state governments and the union government would require due modification in financial allocation at the level of the Finance Commission. But it would be worthwhile as it would create rural assets; modernize rural life; create direct employment during the decade of globally falling GDP growth rate.

- Discourage Excessive Urban Industrial Concentration

During the post-Independence period in general and post-globalisation in particular, urban concentration has been promoted with the result that the metropolitan cities are suffocating. Still, formation of Metropolitan Regions (like in Maharashtra), by including surrounding villages in the metropolitan regions; aggravating migration even from the remotely located areas and accommodating migrated population into expanded metropolitan region has become a standard pattern of development of urban areas. This has to stop sometime. Probably, this is an opportune time to decongest big cities and take development to rural areas. The market forces would surely oppose it. It implies that a government has to have a new vision and resolve. Rural industrialisation needs to be

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Save Democracy, Save...

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regularisation of scheme workers, minimum wages for the unorganised and agricultural labour, filling of sanctioned posts in the Centre and states, etc. This budget left behind the interests of the nation, its 94 per cent unorganised work force who contribute 60 per cent of the GDP.

Budget did not address long-term employment and creation of quality jobs. Ten million new job seekers enter the job market every year. Unemployment is at its peak of 34 per cent. Budget talks about demand-based skilling. Skilling comes with formal education. Leaving behind the reality of formal education in India, skilling makes no sense. New age courses for industry 4.0 aims at a very small section of technically educated youth leaving behind a large section of the deserving. The budget mentioned for spending on higher education, in actual it is a blue print already to bring foreign universities. BJP has only been allocating less than three per cent of GDP on education so far.

Reduced public spending on health has made poverty accentuate in India. Spending on agriculture is reduced to the extent of paying doles to farmers which is the election gimmick.

The relief to women and senior citizens by way of enhancing the limit of deposit does not translate into any big benefit. Widening gender wage disparity and dwindling women employment rate were not addressed.

GST exemption on selected items only reduced prices of non-essential commodities. No relief to common man who pays indirect taxes.

MSMEs were not adequately addressed. What is given by way of enhancing guarantee is too small for the huge sector that is the engine of growth and employment generator.

Budget was silent on where the revenue is generated from. No attempt to increase tax income by taxing the rich

and corporates. The borrowings to make up deficit are already visible. India's debt burden is already heavy and further burden will increase the debt servicing load.

Budget not only failed the common man, it was passed without discussion in the Parliament. It has happened for the first time in the history. Even the pre-budget consultations were converted into mockery, and the CTUs had boycotted it. This 'amrit kaal' budget as named by the finance minister is the true face of the government.

Further worsening of unemployment situation in the country is a matter of serious concern. Every day the news of job cuts and lockouts are received not only from industrial hubs but also from the IT sector where highly qualified youth is in employment.

With the Hindenburg report out, the downfall of Adani empire, the public sector undertakings which had invested huge amount in Adani companies are in tight position now. About Rs 30,000 crores of LIC and Rs 42,000 crores of SBI and shipping company, Paradeep, GAIL, IOC, to name a few PSUs were made to invest in Adani companies, and it is understood that the PMO played the role of facilitator. It is worldwide known that the prime minister took personal interest and promoted Adani companies for their business expansion in several countries. In mines in Australia Indian government stood as guarantee for Adani company and money arrangement was facilitated through PSU bank, SBI. Home Minister gave cover for Adani's Mauritius company. For Port in Israel to Adani group, Indian government stood for sovereign guarantee. A new story from Sri Lanka also appeared in case of electricity generation contracts.

This filthy reality explains well why the inequalities in the lives of people are rising to disgusting level.

Oxfam India's report on inequality in India released on January 16, 2023 finds that just five per cent of Indians own more than 60 per cent of the country's wealth, while the bottom 50 per cent of the population possess only three per cent of the wealth. It is pertinent to mention here that this very 50 per cent population possessed 13 per cent in the previous year 2021. The upper one per cent population which owned 22 per cent of the total wealth in 2021 increased its share to 40.3 per cent in 2022. The report said that if India's billionaires are taxed once at two per cent on their entire wealth, it would support the requirement of Rs 40,423 crore for the nutrition of malnourished in the country for the next three years.

It would be important to mention here that in an affidavit to the Supreme Court last year by the counsel of the government, admitted that about 65 per cent deaths of children below five years are due to malnutrition. The hunger index of India has further gone bad and the country stands at 107 among 122 nations. The daily wagers are in extreme distress. The crime bureau report this year revealed that about 25 per cent of suicides reported last year were of the daily wage labour.

The report, 'Survival of the Richest: The India story', also says that between 2012 and 2021, 40 per cent of the wealth created in India has gone to just one per cent of the population and only a mere three per cent of the wealth has gone to the bottom 50 per cent, adding that the total number of billionaires in India increased from 102 in 2020 to 166 billionaires in 2022. The combined wealth of India's 100 richest has touched 660 billion dollars (Rs 54.12 lakh crore) – an amount that could fund the entire Union Budget for more than 18 months, the report stated.

Before the pandemic, in 2019, the central government reduced the corporate tax slabs from 30

per cent to 22 per cent, with newly incorporated companies paying a lower percentage (15 per cent). This new taxation policy resulted in a total loss of Rs 1.84 lakh crore. The government adopted a policy of hiking the GST and excise duties on diesel and petrol while simultaneously cutting down on exemptions. The indirect nature of both the GST and fuel taxes invariably burdens the most marginalized. The gap between rural and urban inflation has widened.

The government instead of taxing the rich people and corporations resorts to taxing the rest of society more. This is regressive in nature because poor people pay a larger share of their incomes. "The bottom 50 per cent of the population at an All-India level pays six times more on indirect taxation as a percentage of income compared to top 10 percent", the report had said.

The worldwide situation of recession and economic crises is being responded by the pro-capitalist regimes in various countries and the attack on the social security, the pension systems, the job and wage protection has increased. The rights to protest and strike are under attack. This is being responded by the trade unions and other sections of the society by massive protests.

We are already under attack in our country with regressive labour law changes and codification, which we have been protesting and resisting through united opposition by the platform of trade unions. The central government has made rules centrally, and also through the state governments ruled by its own party or where they are ruling in coalition. In union territories, they are imposing central rules. Many of the governments are yet to frame the rules in states. The state trade union chapters have to develop bigger resistance not to let the rules framed or where these are framed, not to be allowed to notify and implement.

The recent instances of communal violence on Ramnavami day are

indicators enough for the future events to unfold if the government continues to shelter these groups under the garb of religious activities.

The system of information in closed envelopes to the courts was another practice rampantly, used by the govt to gag media as well as the citizens specially those with whom the govt is uncomfortable. The judgement which was delivered by the bench of Chief Justice along with another judge on 5th April has tried to put an end to this procedure terming it against natural justice.

The attack on Constitution from the ruling regime is well known, but now we find how the Vice President of India Dhankar and the law minister Rijiju have been attempting to subvert Constitution with their statements time and again.

The trade unionism in India evolved in democratic assertion of Indian masses against the oppression and suppression of the local exploiters and the colonial masters. Trade unions, the collectives of workers to fight for their rights, for present and future is the basic tenets of a democracy. AITUC played its role in establishing right to unionise and collective bargaining, right to democracy, right to freedom of expression and right to dissent and these rights find place in Indian constitution. These rights are under attack in various garbs.

It is the paramount duty of the working class to protect these rights for themselves and for the whole society.

We are committed to carry forward the decisions of January 30 National Convention of Workers, its message to fight the anti-worker, anti-farmer, anti-people and anti-national policies of the RSS-BJP government, to carry the message to all nook and corner of the country, to expose the real face of the government for the people to decide to give marching orders to this ruthless tyrant regime.

**Long Live May Day
Workers of the World
Unite**

CPI, CPI(M) Joint Meeting at Vijayawada

Launch United Struggles to Dethrone BJP in 2024

Communist Party of India national council secretary Binoy Viswam and CPI(M) polit bureau member Prakash Karat said in the CPI-CPI(M) joint meeting that BJP will be dethroned in the 2024 elections. The secular, democratic, and left forces are united and will launch united struggles to defeat the forces of right that the BJP represents, he said. Political parties must come together according to the prevailing political scenario in the states, they observed.

They were speaking at the Prachara Bheri, under which a joint meeting was held on April 14, 2023 on the birth anniversary of BR Ambedkar at MB Vignaana Kendram in Vijayawada. The leaders pointed out that the Modi government with an aim to forge a Hindutva-corporate alliance is encouraging big bourgeoisie in the state and hence the united movements of communists must be launched against this trend.

The meeting with the slogan 'Let us dethrone a n t i - p e o p l e , dictatorship, communal BJP and protect our nation' was presided over by Donepudi Shankar and Ch Babu Rao state secretariat members of CPI and CPI(M) respectively. Binoy Viswam in his address stated that while entering Vijayawada, he started remembering several historical movements led by Chandra Rajeshwera Rao, Makineni Basava Punnaiah, Putchalapalli Sundararajah and the historic Telangana armed

struggle.

He said the ideology followed by Communists is just contrary to the Hindutva ideology followed by Narendra Modi. As we are left parties, we are all committed to Marxism. It is through Marxism that we have complete knowledge of world affairs. Marxism is a science and this is explained in the Communist Manifesto, said Binoy Viswam.

Karl Marx long back stated that capital will turn everybody into its

slaves. As capital is triumphing, every employee and writer is becoming a slave to it. This can be seen glaringly in the regime of Modi. He has become almost slave to Adani, a notorious corporate giant. BJP leaders talk on many deceptive matters but remain silent on Adani's scandals and how his wealth has grown many folds in such a short span of time.

The CPI leader further said that BJP and RSS leaders talk about Ambedkar's ideology but they never adopt his ideals. As a matter of fact, they work contrary to his ideals. Ambedkar has categorically stated that Hindu Rashtra is not the

Ram Narasimha Rao

policy of the country, but Modi is acting antithetical to this. We can surely say that BJP and RSS follow a fascist ideology. He reiterated that fascist ideology can be challenged only by communism.

The communists cannot be frightened by the enforcement of directorate, income tax, and central bureau of investigation. Both CPI and CPI(M) are not dependent on

attempts to own Ambedkar. He also reminded that for seven decades secular parties are defending our Constitution. In the freedom struggle our ancestors have made many sacrifices and Ambedkar included these values in our Constitution. Dr BR Ambedkar a great personality who fought against casteism and for social justice, throughout his life had also opposed the Manu Smriti. Our Constitution was created by keeping aloof the evils of caste and

Constitution into a communal, casteist document. Even though they swear by our Constitution they are conspiring to alter its structure. BJP is throttling the voice of people's representatives who are in favour of common people. They are attacking the leaders of the opposition by misusing agencies like ED, IT, and CBI. They are put behind bars by imposing false cases.

The reason for the multifold growth of Adani's income is ports, airports, and power projects, that were handed over to him by the Modi government.

The Prachara Bheri aims at making people politically conscious in order to save the country. Karat conveyed the greetings to the program and wished for its success. The speeches of Binoy Viswam and Prakash Karat were translated by the former assistant editor of Praja Shakti, S Venkata Rao.

CPI Andhra Pradesh state secretary K Ramakrishna, CPI state executive member P Durga Bhavani, CPI city secretary G Koteswar Rao and other leaders of the party, Lanka Durga Rao, Nakka Veerabhadra Rao, Panchadarla Durgamba, CPI(M) state Secretary V Srinivas Rao, central committee member P Madhu, state executive member of CPI(M) K Sridevi, CPI(M) NTR district secretary D V Krishna, other leaders Donepudi Kasinath, Satti Babu and leaders of mass organizations of both the communist parties participated in the joint meeting.



certificates given by the Election Commission. As a matter of fact, the parties are functioning with the support and acknowledgment given by people for their struggle alongside the common masses. In every issue unity is essential and both the communist parties and mass organizations must work together, Binoy Viswam underlined. He also questioned the dual standard of the central government in the complete embracement of FDI and claims on self-development.

CPI (M) polit bureau member Prakash Karat said in his address BJP and RSS are making vain

communalism. The CPI(M) leader expressed his anger against the Modi government's attempts to transform our Constitution based on Manuvaad. He also reminded that RSS has not participated in the freedom struggle and did not come forward to fight against British imperialism though it was founded in 1925. Their dictatorial argument is that Constitution should not be in the framework of secularism and democracy. Their intention is to convert India into Hindu Rashtra. The RSS wants to convert our secular

On the occasion of Marx's Birth Anniversary (May 5)

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF MARX'S 'CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE: 1848 TO 1850'

As Engels explained, this work was the first attempt to explain contemporary history of France and Europe through the concrete application of materialist conception of history (historical materialism). The process was begun in the Communist Manifesto in a general form, applied to whole of modern history; now it has become more concretized.

The work consists of a series of articles written in *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* by Marx. When Engels prepared the work for republication in 1895, he added a fourth chapter, himself also contributing.

It explains for the first time, a whole period of history of France from materialist point of view. It was the first time ever that the concrete tactics of the proletariat were worked out. Working class, no more amorphous, yet emerging on the world history, developed its own strategy and tactics, thus becoming a conscious historical class.

Economic causes

Engels in his Introduction of 1895 to this work, pointed out that the work led to seeking out the inner causal connection between events, and to the relation of the surface events with the deeper and broader economic processes.

The materialist dialectical (scientific) method demanded that the political conflicts be traced back to the struggle between interests of the existing

social classes created by economic interests. This was done for the first time in the history of political science or 'politics'.

Economics and politics

Marx discovered that the world trade crisis of 1847 had been the true mother of the February and March (1848) revolutions.

The experience of French and European revolutions of 1848 encouraged Marx to undertake the study of capitalist mode of production, leading ultimately to the writing of volumes of the monumental 'Das Capital'. Marx and Engels were under certain illusions, as they themselves pointed out, of an impending proletarian revolution in Europe. That was because of an inadequate economic study of the capitalist mode of production.

Under the spell of French revolution of 1789

The historical experience of the French revolution of 1789 dominated the political thinking of Europe at the time. Engels says: "It was therefore natural and unavoidable that our conceptions of the nature and course of the 'social' revolution proclaimed in Paris in February 1848,

of the revolution of the proletariat, should be strongly colored by memories of the prototypes of 1789 and 1830."

The whole of Europe, right up to the Russian borders, was lighted up by the revolutionary upsurge. It proved to be the first great battle for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Hence also the importance of this work.

Certain unrealistic elements declared that there would be a long struggle ending in victory of the 'people' over the 'tyrants'. But Marx and Engels disagreed as early as the autumn of 1850, saying that the first chapter of revolution was already closed. For saying this, Marx and Engels were even excommunicated as 'traitors to revolution'!!

By the end of the 19th century, the conditions and methods of making revolution had changed completely. The mode of struggle of 1848 was now obsolete. New ways and forms had arisen. Engels described the growing importance of universal adult franchise, elections and of winning a majority in parliament, as in Germany, growingly possible now.

Anil Rajimwale

Some important conclusions

"The provisional government which emerged from the February barricades necessarily mirrored in its composition the different parties which shared in the victory. It could not be anything but a compromise between the different classes which together overturned the July throne, but whose interests were mutually antagonistic." The working class had two representatives: Louis Blanc and Albert. ("Class Struggles in France, 1848-50", Marx and Engels, Selected Works (SW), Volume 1, p 210)

This extraordinary statement, full of dialectics of revolution, made some 150 years ago, brings out the dialectics of unity and struggle of the opposite and other classes. It is the concrete application of the scientific method of dialectics.

Marx pointed out the emergence of two parallel republics (p211). The workers' representatives forced the government to declare a republic. Otherwise they would have marched at the head of some 2 lakh workers and forced the National Guard.

Consequently, somewhat outdated slogans of the French revolution of 1789 again

reverberated the streets.

"By dictating the republic to the Provisional Government... the proletariat stepped into the foreground forthwith as an independent party." It won the grounds for the fight for emancipation (not the emancipation itself!).

The proletariat 'dictating' the republic, way back in 1848-50 is very significant: it acted as an independent class. They formed their own ministries side by side with those of the bourgeoisie.

"In common with the bourgeoisie the workers made the February revolution, and alongside the bourgeoisie they sought to secure the advancement of their interests, just they had installed a worker in the Provisional government itself alongside the bourgeois majority." (p213)

This is another wonderful passage: Marx pointed out the entry of the working class representative in a bourgeois government way back in 1848! This was a great historic achievement.

At the same time, 1848 revolution was also the first great battle between the two great classes of the modern society.

'Class Struggles in France' is one of the greatest and a most interesting work by Marx. He drew upon the practical experience of

revolutionary mass struggles to develop his own theory of revolution. It was also in this work he developed his famous theory of dictatorship of the proletariat, explaining the class nature of the state. Never before was working class seen as ruling class. Today, the formulation has been given up as unsuitable to new conditions, replaced by the concept of the 'rule of the working class'.

Struggles' was written. He noted the following, among others:

1. Roads had widened since the 1830s-40s in France and other countries. Therefore, armed struggle either was not possible or would come only at the end of the struggles. Barricade fighting in narrow roads and lanes was not possible now. It would be a foolish endeavour, he said. The modern-day 'ultra-revolutionaries' should pay attention.

method is clearly visible. Marx and Engels were dialecticians of the highest order. It was no easy job to analyse European and French revolutions using dialectics.

1. In this work, enough economic data and analyses were used to identify class characteristics in France. Marx provided figures on the production, taxes etc of agriculture and finance, saying the

industrial profit, in a word, not only the whole net profit, but even a part of wages, and that therefore he has sunk to the level of the Irish tenant farmer—all under the pretence of being a private proprietor." (p276)

3. Gradually, the peasants, petty bourgeois, the middle classes in general, etc stepped alongside the proletariat for republican demands.

4. Next, Marx identifies various types of socialism: petty bourgeois, Anarchist, bourgeois socialism, utopian doctrinaire socialism, and revolutionary socialism. He sharply criticized the former, and developed scientific socialism.

5. Financial autocracy had been strengthened as there had been continual increase in the circulation of notes and in the role of the banks.

6. Europe was going through different phases of cycles of crisis and prosperity. The original process took place in England. The Continent went through different phases: primary, secondary, tertiary.

7. While therefore the crises first produced revolutions on the Continent, the foundations for them are laid down in England. "Violent outbreaks must naturally occur rather in the extremities of the bourgeois body than in its heart, since the possibility of adjustment is greater here than there."

This is a rare quotation from Marx. It has been compared to the conditions of the Russian

revolution by Lenin, in the era of imperialism. It is an extraordinarily brilliant stroke of a genius, that is Karl Marx, who anticipated the nature and conditions of revolution.

8. Europe had entered a period of general prosperity, when the productive forces were developing luxuriantly, revolution had to wait for upheavals and crisis.

We should study and discuss Marx's Class Struggles in France also in the context of the 21st century scientific and technological revolution.

Debates regarding Marx's works

World Communist Movement (WCM) in the post-Second War (WWII) period saw lots of debates and polemics including on the interpretation of Marx's works in the changed and new circumstances. The great debate of the 1960s was characterized by widespread study of the basic works of Marx and Lenin. That was the positive side. Even outside it, researchers, scholars and students and teachers studied Marx's works a lot.

Among these works were Class Struggles in France, Civil War in France, 18th Brumaire, Anti-Duhring, Poverty of Philosophy, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, Dialectics of Nature, Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism, etc.

They constitute a rich source of Marxist theory, ideology and philosophy, as also of its methodology. They need to be studied to understand Marxism and mastered.



Karl Marx also formulated the concept of the alliance between the workers and the peasants (class alliance) in the work.

Marx and Engels emphatically favoured use of adult franchise and electoral system not only for propaganda but also for democratic and socialist revolutions.

Introduction(1895) to this work by Engels

Frederic Engels wrote a very important Introduction to this work in 1895, outlining Marxist attitude to democracy, and franchise, and to other questions. Engels showed how to develop Marxism in changing situation. He explained the changes that happened during the intervening 50 odd years since the 'Class

2. Armies had modernised with latest weapons since 1848-50, moving through the wide roads. Engels said, we are not mad to jump into the place where such armies operate.

3. Parliamentary democratic systems had developed in the meantime. They not only should be used for popularization but also to win a majority and form govts. They could even become forms of transition to socialist revolution, for example in Germany. Win the majority in parliament and move step by step towards socialism, he told the German SDP. Today this is much more relevant.

Dialectics in 'Class Struggles in France'

Throughout the work, the dialectical materialist

exploitation of the peasants "differs only in form from the exploitation of the industrial proletariat. The exploiter is the same: capital. The individual capitalists exploit the individual peasants through mortgages and usury; the capitalist class exploits the peasant class through the state taxes."

This analysis is considerably even relevant today to understand the complicated relationship between agriculture and capitalism (industry).

2. "The French peasant ceded to the capitalist, in the form of interest on the mortgages encumbering the soil and in the form of interest on the advances made by the usurer without mortgages, not only the ground rent, not only the

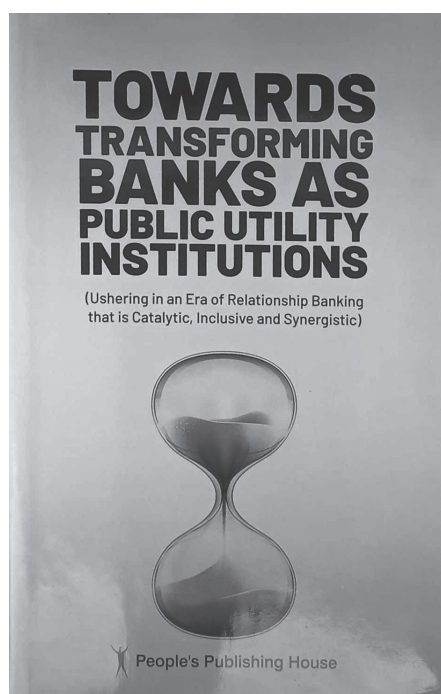
*May Day Zindabad.....
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to All the working people.....*



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WFTU Saviour of the International Working Class

The World Federation of Trade Unions was founded in Paris on October 3, 1945, which makes it the oldest International Trade Union.

Organisation. WFTU is a class-oriented trade union movement fighting against capitalist/ imperialist barbarity and for a society free of exploitation of humans by humans. WFTU has more than 110 million members from 133 countries. WFTU has played a very crucial role in the establishment of all the major and core conventions of ILO including Convention 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the

Right to Organize Convention, 1948

WFTU throughout its history has played a central role in the struggle against apartheid, racism, colonialism, as well as against the policies of the imperialist countries US, Israel, NATO and its allies. WFTU has been at the forefront of the struggles for labour and trade union rights. WFTU is struggling for uniting the workers regardless of their ideology, religion, language, gender, ethnicity, uniting the peoples in their struggle against capitalist exploitation and imperialism.

Let us just go through the Manifesto issued by the London Conference in February 1945 which was the preparatory

conference for formation of a world organization of trade unions. The Manifesto underlined

“Organized labour, with so great a part in winning the war, cannot leave to others – however well intentioned they may be – the sole responsibility of making the peace. The peace will be a good peace, an enduring peace, a peace worthy of the sacrifices by which it has been won – only if

C Srikumar

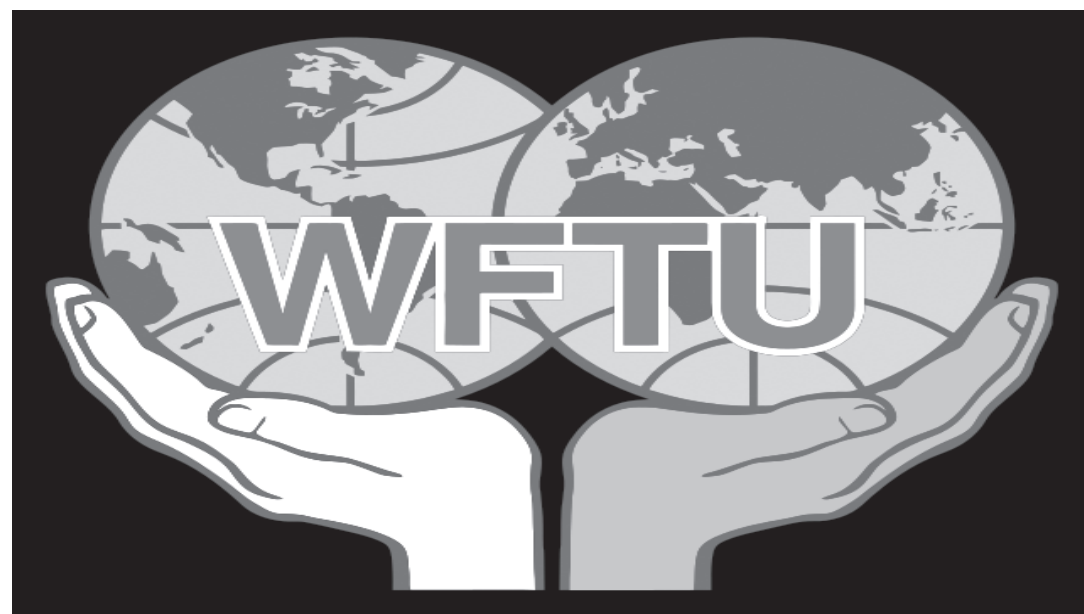
conditions of the working class is getting deteriorated. The social inequalities are widening resulting in poverty and exploitation. The capitalists and the corporates with the help of their political representatives are using the crisis to attack the working class in

Bangladesh is on the struggle path with daily demonstrations, rallies and strikes taking place throughout the concerned country. The WFTU and its affiliates are in the forefront of these struggles demanding the needs of the workers and the major demands are employment, job security, reasonable wages, reduced working hours, social security, health care, old age

promotion of foreign imperialist interests in sovereign and independent countries. WFTU is continuously raising its voice to end the criminal embargos against Socialist Cuba and the continuous crime against Palestinian people. The powerful weapons of the WFTU are internationalism and solidarity. WFTU work hard to ensure that no worker feels that he is alone.

On the occasion of the International Workers Day 2023 (May Day) WFTU has reiterated the above in its May Day declaration and has conveyed its warm, internationalist, militant and class greetings to all struggling workers and to all militant trade unions that tirelessly and decisively conduct the daily fight for dignity, for achieving the contemporary needs of the working class. WFTU and its affiliated unions will carry forward the struggle in every country, in every sector, in every industry for the emancipation of the working class to achieve our own class interests and needs to eliminate the root cause of poverty, misery, wars and refugees and build a human centred society with dignified living and working conditions for every human being, a society free of the capitalist barbarity and man by man exploitation.

**Long Live May Day!
Long Live WFTU!
Long Live International Solidarity of the Working Class!**



it reflects the deep resolve of the free peoples, their interests, their desires, and their needs.”

The WFTU from its founding days is functioning for the past more than 78 years on four fundamental organizational principles. It is unifying, universal, democratic and class-based character. Even today the WFTU is functioning with these four principles.

Today there are lots of challenges before the WFTU. The crisis of capitalism is deepening throughout the world, resulting in blatant violation of democratic and trade union rights. The working and living

whatever manner possible. They are working day and night to transfer all the burden and the consequences of the crisis on the shoulders of the working class, the pensioners, unemployed youth, women, the farmers and the poorest part of the self-employed people.

The working class is the major victim of the uncontrollable increasing prices of all essential commodities. Wage cut, increasing working hours, job loss, etc, have become the order of the day. The working class not only in India but in UK, USA, France, Greece, Italy, Germany, Latin American countries, Sri Lanka, Pakistan,

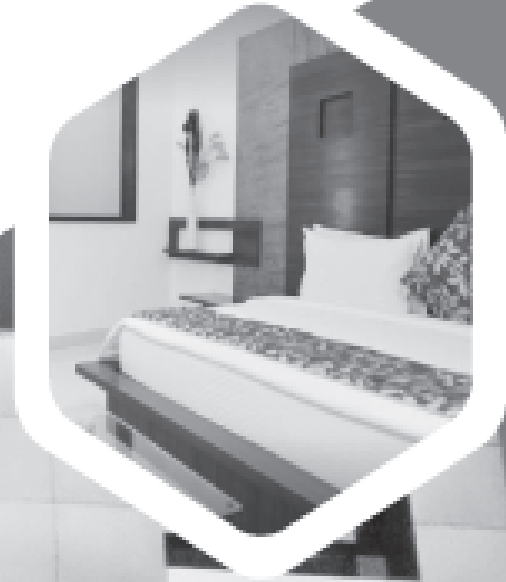
security, rights of the women workers, elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work, etc. All these struggles are facing the attack from the states and its forces.

The Working class has already paid a lot during the Covid-19 pandemic period. Now the imperialist and the capitalist want the working class to pay the price of the imperialist war of the US, NATO, European Union with Russia in Ukraine. WFTU is standing firm with the suffering people and help them in whatever manner possible. WFTU fight to stop the economic wars and sanctions as a means of



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CPI Committed to Defeat BJP in Karnataka

Karnataka is one of the important states in Indian politics as it sends 28 members to the Lok Sabha. The election commission has announced elections to the Karnataka assembly on May 10 and counting of votes will be completed by May 13.

Karnataka is a state in which the caste dominates the elections. The communities like Lingayat, Vokkaligas, and OBCs, minorities identify themselves with a political party and a political party identifies itself as the representative of one of these caste groups.

Most elections are fought on caste equations as each caste people want their representative to win. But in the current election, the caste agendas have been replaced by serious topics like corruption, unemployment, lack of infrastructure, and communalism. From ordinary tea sellers to branded outlets these issues have become the vibrant topics of discussion.

Basavaraj Bommai-led BJP government in the state is branded as a 40 percent commission government not only by the opposition but also by common people and BJP supporters. It is alleged that the ministers and influential people in the government ask 40 percent commission from the contractors to release funds for the work done by them. This was announced by the government contractor's association in a press meeting.

Santosh Patil, a contractor from Belagavi was an active member of

SanghParivar. He did some projects under the Panchayat Raj department in his area. He later wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleging that then Panchayat Raj minister Eshwarappa had been pressuring him to pay 40 percent commission amount in advance and only then his bills will be cleared. Prime Minister Modi once famously said "Na Hi Main Khaunga, Na Kisi ko Khane Dunga". But unfortunately Prime Minister's silence in responding to the letter from Santosh Patil resulted in the latter's suicide. After this incident, Eshwarappa resigned from the cabinet, and he has been denied a seat to contest in the upcoming assembly elections, as fielding him will add to the waves of anti-incumbency.

All recruitments in the state government lack transparency. Scams in the recruitment of lecturers, police sub-inspectors, and engineers have denied entry for qualified and eligible candidates. Employment exchange has become an outlet to sell jobs in wholesale and retail. These scams also have been brought to daylight but no positive actions have been taken against the officials and personnel involved.

Unemployment has become unprecedented in the state. One can visibly see rural unemployment as scores of youths migrate to Bengaluru, the state capital, to do odd jobs like delivery workers, and cab drivers. Basavaraj Bommai describes

Harish Bala

his government as a double-engine government. This double-engine government had put double efforts to sabotage MNEGRA by minuscule allocation to the scheme which resulted in rural unemployment. The double-engine effect of demonetization and covid lockdown caused the closure of small-scale industries in the state and has left lakhs of people unemployed. Also, urban employment in MNCs is filled by outsiders than the Kannadigas.

BJP's claims about infrastructure development are half-baked and are for appeasement for votes. PM Modi Inaugurated the much-hyped Bengaluru Mysore highway a few days before the election announcement. But after a very few days of the inauguration, the road celebrated as "world-class" was flooded in a nominal rainfall. This event exposes how bogus is BJP's claim about infrastructure. The floods that happened in Bengaluru in the previous year were due to a lack of proper infrastructure.

IT corridors of outer ring road areas in Mahadevpura, Marathahalli, Kadibeesanahalli, and Devarabesanahalli were flooded due to rains. It was estimated that just two days of flood in these areas created a total loss of 250 crores to the IT firms.

Instead of addressing such issues, BJP is now focusing on creating statues to obtain caste-based votes.

Karavali Karnataka region which comprises the districts of Uttara Kannada and Dakshina Kannada is the lab for the communal agenda of SanghParivar and the BJP. The Hijab ban and allied controversy were ignited in this area. It started with the Hijab ban followed by halal meat and then by a beef ban. The government has banned beef which has not only caused trouble to certain sections but has also given license to the so-called Gau Rakshaks who are primarily goons to dominate the streets. A group of cow vigilantes led by Puneeth Keerenahalli had killed Idrees Pasha in Kanakapura, the outskirts of Bengaluru. Idrees Pasha and his colleagues were attacked by the gang while transporting cows to Kerala for selling them. Idrees Pasha was killed by the gang in the vicinity of Sathanur police station. Many Christian houses were attacked in places like Mandya, and Kunigal for organizing mass prayers. The law-and-order situation has become worse as the cow vigilantes and Dharma Rakshaks have taken the law into their hands.

The people of Karnataka are fed up with the BJP government as it has not done anything to the improvement of common man's life. There is a huge anti-incumbency wave against the BJP

government. BJP's dependency on the Lingayat vote bank will also take a hit as popular faces like former chief minister Jagadish Shettar and Lakshman Savadi have deserted the party and joined Congress.

CPI's Role

The party congress held at Vijayawada had decided to join hands with left, secular, democratic forces to defeat BJP. CPI had initiated the talks with Congress several months before the announcement of the election. CPI has fielded candidates in seven constituencies and will have a friendly contest with Congress here. CPI state secretary Saathi Sundaresh and Congress in-charge for Karnataka Randeep Surjewala announced the understanding in a press conference held on April 23, 2023.

The party has extended support to CPI (M) in Bagepally and Darshan Puttanaiah of Sarvodaya Paksha in Melukote. In the remaining 215 seats CPI has extended support to Indian National Congress candidates. This is to avoid a split in anti-BJP votes. CPI's commitment and resolve to defeat the communal and fascist BJP in Karnataka is reflected in the decision taken by the party. Intellectuals, progressive thinkers, and activists have appreciated this generosity of CPI.

With CPI's support and rigorous campaign, Congress is all set to form a government after the votes are counted on May 13.

Workers' Demands...

From Page 05

planned afresh. Today, engineering and MBA students in the remote taluka places are given a vision of being a part of urban industrial corporates. Recently a professor of a metropolitan IIT has argued (and rightly so) that the teachers and students of an IIT should go to people in the adjoining areas and solve their problems. But at present, neither the metropolitan nor the up-country technical institutions would go to people living in surrounding areas. Fault lies not with the teachers and students but with the corporate capitalist model of education. Now, if the global capitalist model of development is suffering

from recurring slowdowns, will Indian model of capitalist development be suitably changed? If a critical review of the above-mentioned World Bank Report is not undertaken, it would mean that in respect of objectives, vision, models, institutions and styles of governance, the story may get repeated every decade! All these required changes would basically flow from workers and citizens insisting upon right type of economic and political system.

■ Climate Change : Immediate Challenge

Apart from the soothing opinions that India (particularly agricultural sector) is not going to be materially

affected by the climate change, it is a truth that untimely, unseasonal rains are spoiling kharif, rabi or horticultural crops in various regions and are adversely affecting (1) agricultural materials available to the society on the one hand, and (2) the quantity of products to sell and income from them to the farmers.

Apart from the quantification of climate change and consequences, thereof, let us ask about the basic cause of it. It is the exaggerated rate of growth targeted and attempted; excessive competition among national economies and indiscriminate use of (even now continued) fuels causing pollution. Fighting climate change needs to be made a part of

culture of every household, community and institution.

■ Right Mix of Direct And Indirect Taxes

The income distribution structure in India, as per the government data, is bypassing nearly ninety percent population, disproportionately benefitting the 10 per cent uppermost population. Can such a skewed distribution of national income help people to survive during the long-term recessionary situation? Certainly not. Heavy indirect (GST) taxation and lower direct taxation is imposing hardship on the low-income masses. Utmost care has to be taken by the government to redesign the tax structure so as to give fiscal relief to the low and middle income people

to enable them to survive in the face of 'Falling Long-Term Growth Prospects'. Policies are for the people and not vice-versa!

Having tried almost all policy options to avoid and cure recurrent recessionary trends, there is a sense of frustration regarding policy and institutional failure and bewilderment of what can be done in future. There is an opinion that some out-of-box thinking should be done. Some others are of the opinion that after Corona, the World has changed and a new economic system should be devised. We, on our part, may partly agree with such views and add that, in any thinking during the 21st century the people as a whole must have a reasonable share in the value generated with the help of the socially owned resources.

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Unionizing is the Way Forward for Delivery Workers

Delivery workers are a burgeoning class of labor whose demands continue to be ignored by their employers despite their services becoming integral to modern commerce. Currently, around 5 lakh workers actively engage in these jobs across India. The number of people entering the services is increasing rapidly. Yet there are no reforms brought to their working conditions, forcing all of them to bear unnecessary risk and difficulties while on the job.

Mega start-ups that operate in the on-demand delivery sphere continue to rely on this labor group without compensating them appropriately. A lack of unionization is the primary reason which makes delivery platforms vulnerable to predatory employment practices. The workers are forced to remain silent here.

The research results of the survey conducted by a group of students of School Social Work at St. Joseph University Bengaluru has revealed the pathetic conditions of the delivery workers. The survey found that the delivery platforms foster a partnership with the workers rather than onboarding them as employees to circumvent the provision of essential security benefits. Facilities like Pension Funds (PF), Employee State Insurance (ESI), or even a minimum wage are not provided to the workers.

Moreover, the partner status allows delivery platforms to exploit workers by pushing them to work beyond the maximum working hours. The workers are not compensated by overtime compensation mechanisms prescribed in the legal framework. The delivery platforms project the job as a gig, part-time job with a mask of work being more leisurely and performed

as a side hustle. But the research shows that delivery workers work no less than ten to twelve hours every day. Several other seven push themselves to work over fourteen hours, impeding their need for rest and leisure. The practices bred by the platforms go against what they promise, resulting in a system where workers are exploited to the zenith.

The promise of high incentives by the platforms is proved to be a myth. The experiences shared by workers suggest that the promised incentives get slashed for various reasons beyond their control. Reasons such as reward periods expiring before they can complete their delivery quotas and even blatant denial of incentives are common complaints by workers. It is no surprise that we are presently witnessing city-wide protests led by Blinkit delivery workers whose pay was reduced unjustly. Such pay cuts are also practiced by other platforms beyond the unfair slashing of additional incentives.

Furthermore, the workers are left to fend for themselves when critical issues such as non-payment, sudden reduction in compensation, and others spawn. They are

Suraj M

presented with unsatisfactory grievance mechanisms that do not offer the needed help. It leaves workers waiting for days to receive any solution to the complaints they raise.

In a swift sector like this instant addressing of worker issues is a must. The workers face hazard on the road that pose serious threats to their lives. Some workers complained of being asked to wait over forty-eight hours for monetary cover after meeting with road accidents while on the job.

These covers are promised by platforms to help workers bounce back and resume work instantly. What is promised is not being met, especially those assurances that are supposed to help workers with health- and life-threatening situations.

Guarantees made by the platforms of delivering food and other items within a short span of time to customers force workers to indulge in rash driving, putting themselves and others on the road at serious risk. To that effect, delivery workers are targeted often by traffic police personnel who view them as sources to extract fines easily.

Delivery services are increasingly popular now, resulting in more individuals stepping in to fill the role of delivery workers. However, relevant structures to support the workers' rights and demands do not exist. As a result, the

All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), the oldest trade union in the country is stepping in to organize and unionize delivery workers so their voices can be heard, and their demands met.

Employees working in the organized sector can adhere to their rights and social security with the help of unionizing.

The present demands put forward by AITUC for delivery workers are of paramount importance and will remove unfair practices and systems adopted by delivery platforms. The demands include the incorporation of minimum wages act, increased job security, removal of hiring agents to establish a direct relationship between workers and employers, and providing the 'essential services' tag to

workers.

Employers must bear bike maintenance and mobile recharge expenses for those working for them. Most importantly, employers need to extend their rapid delivery policies to one hour to prevent urgency in deliveries and ensure the safety of workers on the job. By bridging these gaps, delivery platforms can create fair and sustainable working conditions for the workers who toil to bring value to their businesses.

Further needs like PF, ESI, and other social security measures will be addressed after a large level of unionizing. Like any other labor group, unionizing is the need of the hour for delivery workers to stand against exploitation and it is the duty of the government to prevent exploitation.

Probe Malik's Pulwama Claims: CPI

Communist Party of India national council secretary Atul Kumar Anjaan has sought a thorough probe into the 2019 Pulwama terrorist attack in which 40 soldiers were killed following former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satya Pal Malik's sensational allegations against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government.

Anjaan said it sounds mysterious that the prime minister and Union home minister have not yet responded to the revelations of Malik and the questions raised by Chief of the Army Staff General Shankar Roy Chowdhury, who was then posted as the commanding officer in Jammu and Kashmir.

"CRPF personnel could not be transported by road from the point of view of security. But the Union home ministry rejected the demands. Malik also said that when he informed Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he (the latter) was shooting a film for a foreign company at Jim Corbett Park and later he instructed Malik not to speak anything on the incident. In fact, immediately after the incident Satya Pal Malik had expressed grief over the incident and termed it a serious mistake," said Anjaan.

In his interview to a news website Malik also alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and national security advisor Ajit Doval had asked him not to publicize 'intelligence failures' or the government's 'incompetence' in the Pulwama attack.

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