

## CPI Leaders Meet President on Violence Torn Manipur

A high-power delegation of the Communist Party of India led by general secretary D Raja was in the violence-torn state of Manipur last week. The team met later President Droupadi Murmu on August 29, 2023 and apprised her of the alarming situation there.

Apart from general secretary, the team consisted of party national council secretaries Binoy Viswam MP, Dr K Narayana and Rama Krushna Panda. The leaders submitted the following memorandum to the President:

A five-member delegation of the Communist Party of India led by CPI general secretary D Raja visited the violence-torn state of Manipur from August 21 to 24, 2023. Reports coming from Manipur for the last four months have disturbed the entire nation and the delegation visited the state to see the ground reality and make efforts for peace-building. The delegation included CPI national council secretaries Binoy Viswam MP, Dr K Narayana, Rama Krushna Panda and senior woman leader of the CPI from Assam, Asomi Gogoi.

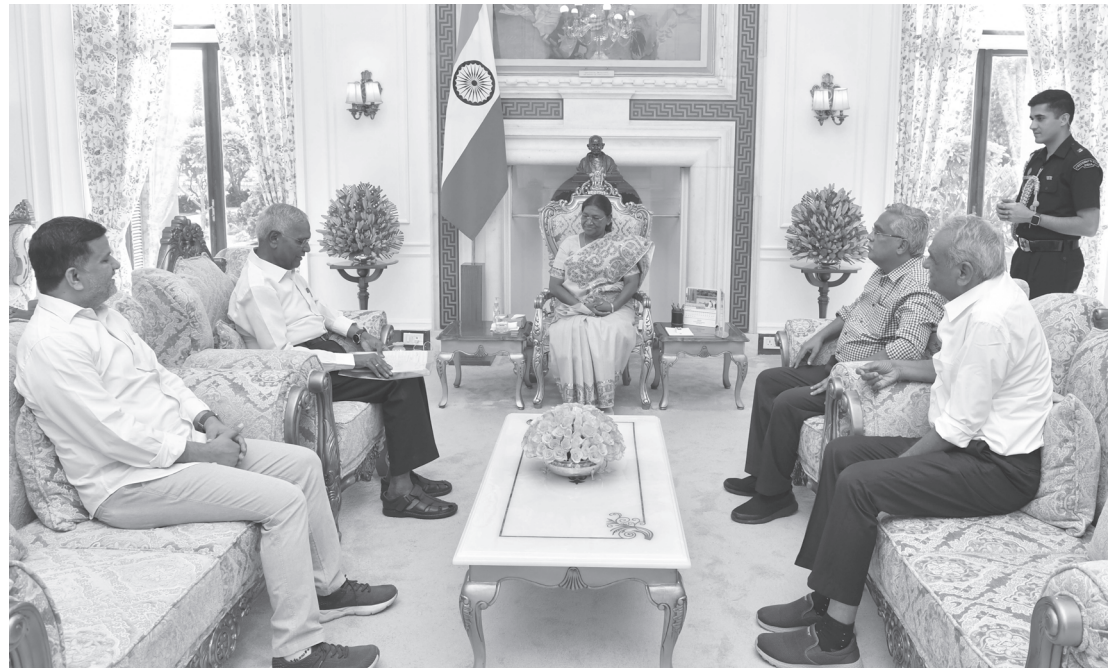
The delegation visited areas dominated by all the ethnic groups in Manipur and held interactions with all sections of the society. The delegation witnessed first-

hand the separation and divides created between different ethnic communities. Violence in the state has already claimed more than 180 lives while 4,800 houses are burnt, 733 places of worship of different communities destroyed and more than 55,000 people displaced, including women and children in large numbers.

People of Manipur are disheartened that even after more than two months of violence it took a horrific video for the Prime Minister to speak on Manipur. Prime Minister's prolonged silence and his not visiting the strife-torn state has eroded people's faith in democratic institutions.

The delegation met leaders of several political parties, communities, women's organizations, civil society groups, activists, people engaged in educational and healthcare sectors and held extensive discussions aimed at re-establishing peace and harmony in the strategically located state. The delegation also visited several relief camps and found the arrangements to be inadequate, especially about the needs of women, children and the elderly.

The educational ecosystem of the state is in disarray, harming the future prospects of the younger generations. People all over the state expressed apprehensions about drug



trade, poppy cultivation and threats to land, forests and natural resources. The issue of illegal migration and border fencing were also raised by the people.

The delegation also called on Manipur governor Anusuiya Uikey and apprised her of the sorrows Manipur is facing. The CPI appealed for peace, harmony and unity everywhere.

After having extensive deliberations and discussions with all shades of opinion in Manipur, the CPI wishes to brief you on the sufferings of the people of Manipur and the demands being raised by them. The Union and state governments have failed in curtailing violence and divisions in the state and segregations have come to such a level that people from one community cannot visit the areas dominated by another community. This strife needs immediate redressal and a political

initiative engaging all sections of society in Manipur.

The major demands raised by the people of Manipur before the CPI delegation are as follows:

- Presence of MLAs belonging to different ethnic groups should be ensured in the Manipur Assembly Session.

- People have lost faith in the government of N Biren Singh and he should be removed from the post of chief minister.

- Immediate steps should be taken to restore peace and normalcy in Manipur.

- Dialogue engaging all sections of society, political parties, civil society groups and opinions should be initiated to break the deadlock.

- Urgent steps should be taken to disarm all groups.

- Special package for relief and rehabilitation

without any disparity should be sanctioned and adequate compensation for victims of violence, arson and displacement should be provided.

- Violence, arson and displacements have had a major impact on livelihoods throughout the state. Adequate means of livelihood must be ensured for all affected people.

- Stringent action should be taken against all perpetrators and enablers of rapes, murder and violence.

- Initiative should be taken to bring normalcy in educational institutes. No student should be deprived of education. Internet services must be restored and made available to all.

- Special safety measures should be taken for women.

- Uninterrupted supply of medicines and medical services must be

On Page 12...

In the name of Hindutva, deterioration of law and order situation is taken to unprecedented limits, which has been witnessed by the country only rarely. Fascism has entered in a new garb. With hands covered in gloves, politics is made to overshadow the Constitutional restraint, and dehumanize the multicultural ethos we stand for. It appeared in its true colour when the Central government refused to drop chief minister N. Biren Singh despite the total breakdown of law and order in the state.

In Manipur, communities are pushed against the wall with an alien force inciting them to violate whatever was sacred for us all till today. The video showing two women dragged by a demonic mob, unclothed, tears in eyes, witness to the merciless killing of father and brother when they protested, were taken to jungles where they were tortured and molested. It was May 4, 2023. They had managed to get to police in Kongpokpi district of Manipur on May 18. For two months no action was taken. There was in the report about the gang rape, kidnapping, murder, but still it was shelved aside. It was only after the video went viral, that the arrests were made. But still police remained apathetic. In addition, despite the break down of law and order, neither the state nor the Centre rose up to the occasion. There was absolutely no urgency to restrain the crushing engine of dehumanization. It was only after the video went viral that steps were taken.

Another example is violence in Nuh. It has a totally different flow of events. The story that has come out is if the ruling regime is willing, there can be no riots. The Haryana administration did not allow Hindutva groups led by Vishwa Hindu Parishad to take out a religious procession in violence-hit Nuh district and instead asked locals to offer prayers in temples amid heavy police deployment on the last Monday of the holy month of Shravan.

According to sources the BJP-ruled Haryana had asked police to strictly maintain law and order to avoid any untoward incidents ahead

## In the Name of Hindutva

of the G20 summit in Delhi and Gurgaon. But people had themselves found alternative support against the injustice when the farmers came out to counter the aggressive forces. They declared that if Vishwa Hindu Parishad takes out the rally, they would stand against it.

Nuh is barely 90 km away from the capital.

The Haryana police were earlier accused of complicity in allowing a religious procession by activists of the Bajrang Dal and the VHP on July 31 that led to communal violence in Nuh in which six people, including a cleric and two home guards, were killed.

### Editorial

“It is an open secret that if the administration wants, no violence will ever take place. What we witnessed in Nuh today is the rule of law, which was surprisingly missing when the violence had broken out last month,” a former Haryana director-general of police reportedly had said.

The administration, he said, was strict this time and a strong message was sent that those violating the law would be dealt with iron hands.

“The administration swung into action this time as there was clear instruction from the top leadership that they did not want a repeat of what happened on July 31. Any violence would have caused serious damage to the reputation ahead of the G20 meet,” he said.

On Sunday, August 27, the VHP had announced that a religious procession would be taken out in Nuh district on August 28.

Later that day, a Haryana police official said everything passed off peacefully as the entire area was turned into a fortress ahead of the proposed

rally.

Outsiders were barred from entering Nuh, with security personnel being deployed at all entry points of the district. According to officials, 1,900 Haryana police personnel and 24 companies of paramilitary forces were deployed to keep a strict vigil. Multiple layers of barricades had been erected by the police and anti-riot vehicles and drones were also pressed into service.

There was peace, suppressed and significant in its own way.

Yet again, there is the mug shot of Tripta Tyagi in a class room of a school in UP laughing and asking the kids to slap the boy in tears before he leaves the school. She asked the kids to repeat it every day. UP police, instead of taking action against the principal who issued her order to torture the kids, have filed an FIR against fact-checker Mohammed Zubair for sharing the video of a headmistress ordering children to slap a Muslim child in her school.

Zubair has been charged with the juvenile justice act for sharing a video that other news channels and Twitter users also shared. While the teacher who actually got the Muslim boy thrashed is charged with non-cognisable offences.

Zubair has been indicted for the illegal act of revealing the boy's identity.

The lodging of the FIR raises several questions about the way a well-meaning law is being selectively invoked with the suspected motive of intimidating information gatherers and verifiers who are filling a yawning vacuum. Several of the legacy media outlets have been seeking to play down initially such gut-wrenching events that confirm the worst fears about the state of the nation.

Both the Muzaffarnagar atrocity and the Manipur savagery on two women, events that made large sections of Indians gasp in disbelief were taken note of because of videos on social media, not because of reporting by the so-called mainstream media.

## Promote Harmony and Peace in Haryana: CPI MP

Communist Party of India (CPI) national secretary and Rajya Sabha MP Binoy Viswam wrote a letter to Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar on August 28, 2023, demanding his government intervention for restoring peace and harmony in the riot-ridden areas.

I write to you to raise my serious concerns regarding the prevailing situation in certain districts of Haryana and your government's handling of it. Communal riots erupted in Haryana following the announcement of Braj Mandal Yatra by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) last month.

The communal situation has remained tense since then in the districts of Gurugram and Nuh. The Haryana government led by you was apparently caught sleeping as accepted by Home Minister Anil Vij that he did not have any intelligence input on the buildup of violence and tension in the area. Further, your government has failed in arresting infamous cow vigilante Monu Manesar, whose provocations resulted in violence and you have accepted that government has no information on his location.

After violence claimed 6 lives and made peace and

normalcy a thing of the past in the affected region, your government resorted to bulldozers and harassment instead of engaging in dialogue or peacebuilding. When a delegation of the Communist Party of India (CPI), consisting of myself, AITUC General Secretary Amarjit Kaur, Rajya Sabha MP P. Sandosh Kumar, and CPI Haryana Secretary Dariyao Singh reached Gurugram and Nuh to meet with the victims of violence and make efforts for the restoration of normalcy and harmony in the region, we were stopped by the police before entering Nuh on 6th

August 2023. Similarly, a delegation of the Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee was stopped on 8th August 2023. These steps were undemocratic and aimed at hiding the truth behind communal riots.

Today itself, your government has allowed an 11-member team of Vishwa Hindu Parishad to perform puja at a temple in Nuh. It is reported that several groups are also planning to enter Nuh. 1,900 Haryana Police personnel and 24 companies of paramilitary forces have to be deployed as a precautionary measure while

mobile internet services have been suspended in Nuh, due to this move. The permission to VHP after your repeated announcements on not allowing any procession in Nuh is prima facie biased and provocative. When elected representatives of the people and citizens with bonafide credentials were not allowed, allowing a group whose complicity in violence has been flagged by many is only going to deteriorate the communal atmosphere. In this light, I urge you to retract the permission and take steps to promote communal harmony, instead of abetting its deterioration.

# Appropriate Policy Vital for Prescribing Generic Medicines

The latest notification of the Board of Ethics of the National Medical Commission (NMC) has asked the doctors to prescribe medicines with pharmacological names. Earlier too The Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette & Ethics) Regulations, 2002, clause 1.5 mentioned use of generic names of drugs: "Every physician should, as far as possible, prescribe drugs with generic names and he/she shall ensure that there is a rational prescription and use of drugs". But the difference is that the NMC notification has warned punitive action including fine even cancellation of licence.

This has generated debate among the medical professionals. It has been a long standing demand of the public health activists that medicines should be prescribed with their pharmacological names. This will exclude the branded drugs and bring down the cost.

The concept of generic medicines arose because the branded medicines had high cost.

The pharmaceutical companies spend huge amount of money for promotion of their products. The high cost of drugs seriously affects the healthcare of our population. As nearly 67 per cent of out of pocket health expenditure in our country is on drugs. High out of pocket expenditure pushes 6.3 crore population below poverty line every year, a fact admitted in the National Health Policy document 2017. On the other hand the generic drugs are non-branded so they save the money used in promotional

activities.

Having sensed this, our first Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru took initiative to produce the drugs in the public sector with the purpose to produce cheap bulk drugs. While inaugurating the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd (IDPL) in 1961 he



said: "The drug industry must be in the public sector.... I think an industry of the nature of the drug industry should not be in the private sector anyhow. There are far too much exploitations of the public in this industry". With this vision, public sector unit Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd (IDPL) was incorporated in April, 1961. IDPL played a pioneering infra-structural role in the growth of Indian drug industry base and produced cheap bulk drugs. It played a major role in the strategic National Health Programmes like Family Welfare Programme and Population Control (Mala-D & Mala-N) anti-malarial (Chloroquine) and prevention of dehydration (ORS) by providing quality medicines. Similarly the Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd (HAL), Central Research Institute (CRI) Kasauli were founded.

In addition to the actual generic drugs which are produced and sold solely by the pharmacological name,

**Dr Arun Mitra**

several companies have come out with brand names of low cost product; they are branded generics. They are cheaper than the branded drugs but more expensive than the actual bulk non branded generic drugs.

One of the contentions of those opposing this is that the generic drugs are low in quality. It is therefore important that these drugs should meet the criteria of bio-equivalence and efficacy. These criteria need to be regulated by the competent authorities in a similar way as for the

branded drugs.

To make doctors prescribe only the generic names it is important that the branded drugs have to be banned. Otherwise doctors will write generic names but the patients will be left to the mercy of the chemists who will give the brand of his choice. This will obviously be the one which has high profit margin.

To check the high trade margins, a committee was formed to look into high trade margins in the sale of drugs on September 16, 2015. This committee took serious note of the excess trade margins. They pointed out that in some cases the trade margin is as high as 5,000 per cent. This committee submitted its report on December 9, 2015. But it is now almost eight years that the government has been sleeping over it.

There has to be evolved a method to calculate the cost of drugs. It is important that the cost of the drugs be calculated as per the cost of

production with a defined trade margin.

There is a big flaw in the price of the many generic drugs. The difference between the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) and the actual purchase price of the drug is exorbitant. This has to be corrected.

To curtail the profit margin in the drugs a powerful regulatory mechanism has to be made. The public sector units which produced cheap drugs should be encouraged. It is sad to note that the government has been pushing the drug production in the private sector. The public sector units like the IDPL have been made virtually non-functional. The Union Cabinet's recommendation in its meeting on December 28, 2016 to close down and sell the pharmaceutical PSUs is a big blow to the concept of the state ensuring affordable, and possibly free-of-cost, medicines for millions.

## Medical Panel Puts on Hold Proposed 'Generics only' Regulations

Medical Panel Puts on Hold Proposed 'Generics only' Regulations Medical Panel Puts on Hold Proposed 'Generics only' Regulations Medical Panel Puts on Hold Proposed 'Generics only' Regulations The National Medical Commission (NMC) has put on hold the newly proposed regulations with immediate effect, it said in a notification. "National Medical Commission Registered Medical Practitioner (Professional Conduct) Regulations, 2023, are hereby held in

abeyance with immediate effect," the new notification said.

"For the removal of doubts, it is clarified that the National Medical Commission Registered Medical Practitioner (Professional Conduct) Regulations, 2023, shall not be operative and effective till further gazette notification on the subject by the National Medical Commission," it added.

The NMC's regulations were issued earlier this month. They stated that all doctors must prescribe

generic drugs, failing which they will be penalised, and even their licence to practise may be suspended for a period. This has not gone down well with the Indian Medical Association (IMA) which urged the government to withdraw it till the quality assurance of all drugs could be ensured.

Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya had held a meeting earlier this week and asked the NMC to make appropriate changes and take the decision "in the interest of all".

## Launch Militant Struggles to Save PSUs: AITUC

All India Trade Union Congress general secretary Amarjeet Kaur urged the workers to launch united militant struggles to protect the public sector. She was addressing a huge workers' meeting on the occasion of the three-day 16<sup>th</sup> conference of Singareni Collieries Workers Union affiliated to AITUC. She was addressing as chief guest the meeting held at Godavari Khani, on August 25, 2023.

Amarjeet Kaur stated that recently the trade unions and farmers' organisations had met and decided to intensify the agitation to implement the decisions of the meeting. Modi government is handing over even assets and natural resources of the nation to his corporate friends like Adanis and Ambanis. She also



vehemently criticised the Narendra Modi regime saying that under the regime inequalities between the poor and rich are widening day by day, rights of working class are being undermined and laws are being amended in favour of exploiters. Finally, she appealed to the workers to be in the forefront to dethrone the BJP government headed by

### Ram Narsimha Rao

Narendra Modi in the forthcoming general elections.

The meeting was also addressed by Chada Venkata Reddy, national executive member of CPI, Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, CPI Telangana state council secretary, Mohd Yousuf and

S Balraj state president and general secretary of AITUC, Vasireddy Seetharamaiah, general secretary, Singareni Collieries Workers Union, Vujjini Ratnakar Rao, Miriyala Rangaiah, Kalaveni Shankar, Joseph, Thandra Sadanandam, K Saraiah, K Rajkumar, L Prakash, Y V Rao, K Sunil, Merugu Rajaiah, Maddi Yellaiah and

Arelli Posham.

Prior to public meeting a huge procession was taken out in which workers of coal mines of Godavari mines RG1, RG2, RG3, Srirampur, Mandamarri, Ramakrishnapuram, Bellampalli, Bhoopalapally, Kothagudem, Illandu and Manuguru participated in big numbers.

### What the Others Say...

#### Teaching Hate

The video from the classroom of Neha Public School, Khubbapur village, district Muzaffarnagar, in which, last week, a teacher instructed students to hit and slap a Muslim classmate, one by one, as punishment for a mistake in his schoolwork, calls for a moment of pause. Admittedly, the incident is set in a larger backdrop. An increasing political polarisation is steadily trickling into public and private spaces, giving electoral contests a new edge, and circumscribing debates in between elections. In the social media age, there are many more incentives for views that veer to the extremes and stay there, than for positions that reflect reason and sobriety, much less openness and tolerance. Yet, the bigotry in the classroom captured by the Muzaffarnagar video is especially shocking — and it should be a special cause for concern, because for any society and democracy, the classroom is a sacred space. What is taught and what is learnt in it reaches into the future. The incident in Kathua, also last week, in which a Muslim teacher in a government higher secondary school beat up a student for writing “Jai Shri Ram” on the blackboard does not cancel out the Muzaffarnagar outrage — it only adds to it.

The incidents in Muzaffarnagar and Kathua call for a larger reckoning. The responsibility to counter the brutalisation of the classroom must be owned by civil society, of course, but the onus is primarily on the political leadership, and especially the government. A message must be sent out by the powerful that there will be no more climate of impunity for hate speech and action. They must signal that they will act on the anguished directions of the apex court which has, more than once, urged greater vigilance and stricter action against those who violate the guiding principle of “fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the country” enshrined in the Preamble of

the Constitution. There is too much at stake.

*Courtesy: The Indian Express*

#### Punish Those Making a Spectacle of Caste

Caste is insidious and often invisible in its machinations. But it can also be made into a spectacle. This is why when Dalit people transgress the bounds that social dogma has drawn for them, the response is swift and brutal — a warning to other people to respect caste orthodoxy. Punishments meted out in cases involving caste are especially cruel and unusual because they need to be such for some sections of society to hold on to caste prejudices and prevent rationality from dispelling their bias. So, whether it be a Dalit student who dies after being allegedly harassed by teachers over caste, a Dalit teen beaten to death by a mob enraged that his sister filed a sexual harassment complaint or four Dalit men hung upside down from a tree and beaten with sticks over suspicion they stole a goat or some pigeons, the trigger (or the allegation) is almost immaterial. What matters is the caste of the victims, and the overwhelming need to show them their place.

The Constitution abolished untouchability, dealing a severe blow to the foundation of caste structure. Yet, discrimination found new ways to germinate in India's cities and villages, prompting the government to bring in new legislation outlawing a multitude of actions that were keeping vulnerable communities out of public life, schools, and offices. The 1990s brought still newer forms of bias and separation, forcing authorities to pass the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act — among the strongest anti-discrimination statutes in the world - and define precise offences for better prosecution. Yet, as the rash of caste-based crimes in recent years shows, a tough law is not a firm enough deterrent. What is needed is more proactive police action, stringent judicial monitoring, and political will that doesn't stop at exploiting wounds for electoral gains. Those trying to make a spectacle of caste-based harassment must be thwarted at any cost.

*Courtesy: Hindustan Times*

# CTUs, SKM Declare: Let Us March on Together

**The following is the text of the declaration adopted at the All India Joint Convention of Workers and Peasants held at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi on August 24, 2023:**

This All India Joint Convention of Workers and Farmers being held on August 24, 2023, at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi at the call of the Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions/ Federations/ Associations and Samyukta Kisan Morcha representing large sections of the working people of our country, takes stock of the alarming situation before the workers, farmers and all sections of common people of our country created by the destructive and disastrous pro-corporate policies being aggressively pursued by the government at the Centre since 2014. These policies are anti-worker, anti-farmer, anti-people and anti-national. They have proved to be disastrous for our national economy and for the unity of the people and integrity of the nation. This convention has met here on this day to decide the future course of joint and coordinated actions to 'Save the people and their livelihood' from these disastrous policies.

The platform of the CTUs/ Federations/ Associations represents workers from almost all sectors of our national economy—formal/organized and informal/unorganised, and the Samyukta Kisan Morcha represents large sections of farmers, including marginal, small and medium.

## Farmers' Experience

Farmers, driven to suicides due to unending problems from cultivation to marketing, were saddled

with the hated three farm laws that were openly pro-corporate. All the big corporates had started acquiring huge tracts of land to build warehouses, to replace government-owned godowns. It was only the tenacious struggle of the farmers, under the banner of Samyukta Kisan Morcha, sitting on Delhi borders for 13 months, facing all odds, harsh weather, even Covid pandemic, oppression and worst defamatory abuses (we will never forget Lakhimpur Kheri incident), that compelled the Union government to back track to save their skin. But even the written assurances given by the Union government to the farmers on MSP and Electricity (Amendment) Bill, etc, have not been honoured. Due to the government policies, the indebtedness of farmers has increased and all the promises made to the farmers to double their income have fallen flat. Lack of adequate irrigation, non-functioning crop insurance scheme and replacing Public Distribution Scheme with Direct Benefit Scheme only add to the woes of the farmers. Agrarian economy is continuing to face a crisis, despite their contribution in enhanced production level.

## Workers' Experience

The workers are faced with rising unemployment, job losses and spiralling prices of all essentials. All their hard-won rights are being watered down through Labour Codes, "for ease of doing business". Permanent jobs are declining sharply; outsourcing, contract work in various formats, fixed term employment, gig work, etc, along with drastic decline in real wage level on the whole is becoming the new normal. The agricultural workers, a major component of the country's agricultural population, are the worst-

hit and pushed into absolute poverty and destitution, being forced to migrate to towns and cities in big number, devoid of any social security.

The Indian government has been one of the founding members of the International Labour Organisation. But the government, since 2014, is simply not observing even the ratified conventions. The very first convention enjoins the government to limit working hours per day to eight, but the government at the Centre as well as its state governments are increasing it to 12 hours at the behest of foreign multinationals. Convention 144 requires the government to convene tripartite meeting (Govt-Employer-Worker) at least once a year. This government has not convened such a meeting since 2015, in spite of several reminders. All Labour Codes have been passed without such consultation. While the ILO is moving towards ensuring Occupational Health and Safety for the workers (unanimous Convention 189, adopted in International Labour Conference, in June, 2023), this government has stopped even inspections of establishments. The struggle for Old Pension Scheme (OPS) and against National Pension Scheme (NPS, brought by the previous NDA government from 1999 to 2004) by government employees—both Central and state—has assumed a nation-wide proportion, with some of the states restoring the OPS, while the Centre tries to find escape route promising "Pension Committees" to look into it.

## Government's Policies

Privatisation is central to

the policies of this government. When sale of cash cows like BPCL, CEL, Air India, Pawan Hans, etc, was not picking up at the pace they wanted, the government came up with National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) project, handing over various public sector assets, built with people's money, to big corporates to make money without any investments! Everything is up for grabs—airports, highways, ports, railway tracks, stations Education is being privatised.

PSU banks are being merged and being prepared for privatisation. LIC, GIC are targeted for privatisation. Even 41 Ordnance Factories, producing defence equipment, have been turned into seven corporations, prior to their privatisation, a patently anti-national move, affecting 80,000 workers. The government is eyeing huge tracts of land with defence, railways and so on. Pompous display of G-20 presidency, (which India got by rotation) as a world recognition of the prime minister, is sickening to say the least. Despite opposition from CTUs and ITUC, the government went ahead to nominate its favoured union to head Labour 20 India.

While the corporate taxes are being reduced, common people are being saddled with higher GST burden and higher user charges of almost all public utility services. The state governments ruled by parties other than that at the Centre, are being starved of their share of funds, leading to non-payment of MNREGS wages, scheme workers' dues, etc. Wilful bank defaulters and fraudsters are being invited for "negotiated settlements" while insuring only Rs 5 lakhs

of the depositors. Rs 14.56 lakh crore have been written off by the PSU banks during last nine years but this government is not ready to write off the debts of peasants or to provide C2+50% MSP rates of their agricultural produce. National debt has climbed to Rs 153 lakh crores.

## The Results

As a result of these policies, mass-poverty has aggravated to a menacing extent, contracting demand, continuously slowing down of the national economy, de-industrialisation and destruction of the country's industrial base, destruction of MSMEs, loss of self-reliance, increasing burdens on the overwhelming majority of our people. There is phenomenal increase of wealth and incomes of the big corporate class and impoverishment of the mass of the toiling people: Top 10 per cent and top one per cent in India hold 72 per cent and 40.5 per cent of the total national income respectively while the share of bottom 50 per cent has gone down to mere three per cent. India is falling in all indices like hunger, poverty, child care, women safety, freedom of expression, human rights, etc.

We are worried that our children are not getting jobs. Even government vacancies are not filled up, which is within their ambit. Many PSUs are being closed or sold to private parties, who immediately start "downsizing", throwing several thousand workers out of employment. The contract workers have become major victims of job-loss and retrenchment. The health sector contract workers employed in government hospitals for fighting Covid

*On Page 6 ...*

# CTUs, SKM Declare: Let Us March on ...

*From Page 5...*

are now being thrown out of their jobs even after promise of permanency. After Covid, when jobs are desperately needed to bring life back on track, factories are being allowed to close down even illegally, resulting in large scale unemployment. Under the pretext of Covid, railway concessions to senior citizens, women, differently-abled persons, sports persons were withdrawn. The rural economy, based on the farming activity, animal husbandry, etc, are big contributors to the sustenance of vast majority of our rural population, is being systematically crushed through price instability and uncertainty of sales.

The informality in the labour market of the country is increasing. Workers, predominantly women, take to self-employment and home-based trades to make two ends meet. Women comprise 33 per cent of the agriculture labour force and 48 per cent of the self-employed farmers in India. There are no laws/policies for facilitating, protecting and regulating self-employed workers and their trades. The condition of the migrant workers is deteriorating. There is no portable social security for them despite big claims of digitalization. The construction workers cannot avail of the social security despite huge cess collected in BOCW. To make social security more effective, off-line registration and renewal of construction workers should be allowed and ESIC should be made applicable to them from cess amount. Even those registered under E-SHRAM portal are not provided any social security. All these sections rightfully deserve basic social security

schemes like health care, life and disability insurance, old age benefit, maternity, child care and educational benefits. The state governments should be tasked with trade specific schemes to improve the trades and skill of the workers. This will ensure formalization of informal trades.

## Federal Structure and Rule of Law in Danger

The actions of the government at the Centre are against the federal structure of our nation: Governors, appointed by the Centre, openly act as agents of the Centre, making it difficult for the elected state governments to function, many elected state governments are overturned to install their own party governments, GST funds collected at the Centre are not shared with the state governments, prompting them to go to the Supreme Court to claim their rightful dues. The party ruling at the

Centre, is using its brute majority to overturn Supreme Court Orders (Case of National Capital Service Matter), reconstituting the three-member committee that decides the Chief Election Commissioner and the other Election Commissioners by replacing the Chief Justice of India by a minister of the ruling party and the prime minister and the leader of the Opposition being the other two. Replacing IPC, CrPC and Evidence Act, ostensibly to do away with British era laws, is in fact to make them even more stringent and increasing the jurisdiction of BSF in border areas from 5 km to 50 km. The list is long.

## Divisive Communal Policies

But there is something even more ominous taking place: this government and other state governments led by this party ruling in the Centre, in order to sustain their regime of loot and plunder, have been overactive to cultivate poisonous communal-divisive polarisation in the society and divide the workers, farmers and the people in general to divert their attention from their burning issues and weaken united struggles to benefit the corporates. This is being carried out with the active support of the corporate owned mainstream media and social media troll armies.

The continuing ethnic clash in Manipur leading to huge loss of lives and atrocities on women, recent communal clashes in Haryana (Nuh) and similar provocations in other parts of the country as well are all engineered by the same divisive-polarisation oriented policy regime. Continuing atrocities on the most downtrodden sections of the society (incident of urinating on an tribal person in MP and two dalit boys in UP) and atrocities on internationally acclaimed women wrestlers, who raised their voice against their tormentor, the then President of Wrestling Federation of India, the premature release of Bilkis Bano's rapists last year are also brutal expressions of same divisive machinations on the society being engineered by the ruling-clique. And all those are aimed at tearing out and disrupting common peoples' united struggle against exploitation. What is

shocking is that the Prime Minister keeps mum on all these incidents that shock the collective conscience of the Nation.

Writers, intellectuals, journalists, social activists and members of the opposition are being targeted on flimsy grounds only for criticising this government with the help of government agencies such as the ED, CBI, NIA and through misuse of nefarious laws such as UAPA and Sedition Act, etc. This is aimed to create an atmosphere of terror, to silence all opposition and dissent, and sabotage democratic processes.

The entire system of governance that promotes and sustains the loot and plunder of the people as well as the national economy stands exposed.

## Determined United Struggle Can Stand UP To This Ruling Clique

The struggle of Samyukta Kisan Morcha has no parallel in the world. The government had to take back their farm laws. Through our united struggles, the privatisation process in several PSUs like BPCL, CEL, some steel plants, etc, could be stalled, though only for the time being. Saving Vizag Steel Plant from privatisation has become people's struggle. The united struggle of the electricity employees in Maharashtra, UP, Puducherry, J&K, Chandigarh and Haryana forced the governments to retreat. Through their militant united struggles, the scheme workers in various states achieved many of their demands including increase in their remuneration. We

must note here that all the so-called reforms in electricity sector being pushed through desperately by the government are aimed at ending the very concept of cross subsidy and role of the State in electricity sector to establish a regime of cost-reflective tariff regime which will spell doom in agriculture, MSMEs and make electricity unaffordable by mass of the common people.

## What we are required to do

The national economy should be protected from the malice of the systemic crisis of the neoliberal policies by putting more money in the hands of the common people who create our national wealth and keep the national economy running, by increasing the statutory minimum wages and expanding and universalising social security measures with government funding and other such measures, such as subsidy to farmers including agricultural inputs, the state-owned mandies, appropriate MSP, etc, are the measures necessary to address the distress among the farming community. This can be done by increasing taxes on corporates, rich and the super rich, restoring wealth tax, and succession tax. Even the Nobel laureates are advising this.

What is required is to make the workers, farmers and the people aware that their real enemy, the cause for their miseries and the miseries of the nation, is the anti-national destructive policy regime being operated by the corporate-communal nexus in the governance at the Centre. They cannot be expected to change their pro-corporate policies. They have to be ousted from

*On Page 10...*

# BJP-RSS Destroying Universities, Civil Society

Educational Institutions particularly Universities have been turned into killing fields for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS). Almost all the Institutions are infiltrated with fascist RSS elements to lead the institutions. At this low level of stooping politically, could it be possible for self-reliance when effectively destroyed and reduced an RSS shakas? A recent instance is the Ashoka University to reveal the truth, which reflects the ascendancy of a fascist state. The transition from school to college or university is a critical phase in the life of students, many of whom — like the first-year JU student — come from small towns and rural areas. Their excitement at entering the portals of institutions that promise social mobility is often tempered by nervousness in an unfamiliar milieu. It's up to the universities to make sure that this experience is not overwhelming. But they have not always been up to this task.

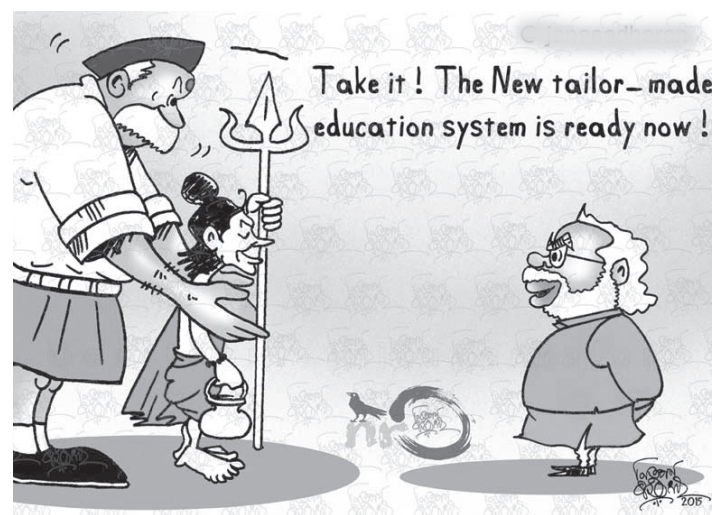
Already a good deal of the damage it has caused to the Indian society, polity and economy will no doubt be reversed. But there are at least two areas where such reversal will be difficult: one is the architectural vandalism it has perpetrated. This vandalism began with the destruction of the Babri Masjid, which, quite apart from stoking communal animosity, was an instance of barbarism: no civilised and sensitive group would wantonly destroy a 400-year-old structure.

The other area where the damage inflicted by the BJP government has been massive and whose reversal will be as difficult is the destruction of universities; and it is this which concerns us here.

A university is not just a set of buildings where teaching takes place; any coaching centre can have these. A university, above all, is a space which values thought, and creating an ethos where thought is valued, takes time. Such spaces are especially difficult to create in a Third World society, and it is to India's credit that it had managed to create a few such spaces. Fascistic outfits, which are themselves devoid of any serious thought, also lack respect for serious thought. It is little wonder then that the BJP government is hell-bent on systematically destroying the few spaces that exist in the country for serious thought. Its assault on universities will do incalculable damage to the country.

This assault, which had begun with public universities, has now extended even to private universities. Central universities, such as the University of Delhi which arguably had among the best undergraduate teaching programmes in the world, the Jawaharlal Nehru University, which pioneered an academic discourse in the social sciences in India that challenged the hegemony of the metropolis, and Viswa Bharati, which was infused with the vision of Rabindranath Tagore, are now reduced to mere shadows of their former selves.

By appointing as vice chancellors persons whose primary qualification is loyalty to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh or RSS, by making sub-standard appointments to faculty positions in the desire to "take-over" universities by filling them with their loyalists, by doing exactly the same with respect to student intake, by ensuring that the various academic bodies are filled with "yes-men" by making out-of-turn appointments as deans and chairpersons and giving numerous extensions to them in these positions, the



BJP establishment has not only destroyed the vibrant democratic ethos that prevailed in these universities earlier. It has not only let its favoured goons terrorise opponents with impunity, but has inevitably lowered the academic standards in these once-prestigious centres of learning. And to cap it all these universities are also being starved of funds.

Now its reach has even extended to private universities, which had come up during the decline of public universities. What Ashoka University has reportedly done must be quite unparalleled anywhere. A member of its economics faculty had written an

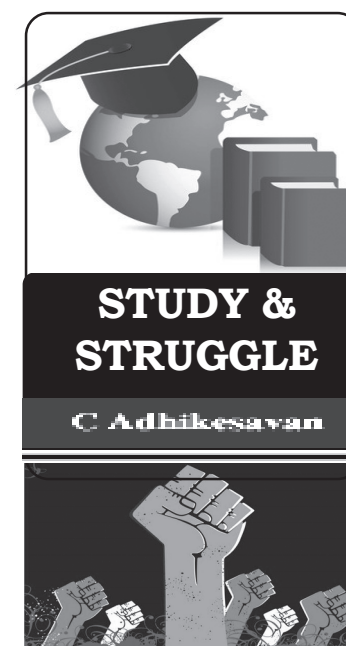
academic paper suggesting on the basis of a careful analysis of data that there might have been manipulation of election results in some constituencies in the 2019 Parliament election.

Universities are precisely the places where papers like this get written; but not only did the BJP army of trolls come down like a tonne of bricks on the faculty member, but the university quite gratuitously put out a statement dissociating itself from the paper.

Further, it turns out that

the university's governing body, where its donors are represented, sat in judgement over this purely academic paper and even suggested some modifications in it. The faculty member has submitted his resignation, and his department has objected to the university's behaviour and threatened protest action if the faculty member is not reinstated.

A bunch of businessmen, which is what the donors of private universities typically tend to be, sitting in judgement over an academic paper is completely unheard of. And it is not as if the authorities of Ashoka University, and even the donors themselves, are



unaware of it. But they chose to intervene in academic matters because of their fear of the government.

It is the Central government's hostility to any criticism, even in the form of an academic paper, that is being relayed through the governing body and the university authorities, to the academic faculty.

It is patently obvious that no university worth its name can function under these conditions. At this rate if an academic paper, for instance, argues that poverty in India, instead of declining, as claimed, has actually increased during a certain period that overlaps with BJP rule.

Research under these conditions will become synonymous with simply publicising the BJP government's hand-outs about its own achievements; and since teaching in a university is invariably nourished by research, the death of research will also mean the atrophy of teaching, and hence the death of the university.

The Narendra Modi government is given too much drum-beating about its vision for India as an *atmanirbhar* (self-reliant) country; but no country can be self-reliant if its universities have been effectively destroyed.

# Balraj Sahni: People's Artist

Balraj Sahni was an outstanding People's artist. A leading communist, he was the builder of IPTA, and a close associate of Com PC Joshi. He was also in films.

He was born in Rawalpindi (present-day Pakistan) on May 1, 1913. His father Lala Harbans Lal Sahni was a devout Arya Samajist, who started his life as a poor man, who through hard work and personal integrity became a well-established businessman, yet they lived like an ordinary middle class family.

Balraj was first named Yudhishtir but it was changed to Balraj because one of his father's sister could not pronounce the name: Yudhishtir with her always became 'Register'! So, he became Balraj! Their mother had a creative mind even though not educated formally. Later in her life she began to learn Urdu, from Balraj, and also Sanskrit! She had no reservation for anything and had an open mind about the world and about politics.

The younger brother of Balraj was the famous Bhisham Sahni. They spent their childhood following many tenets and practices of Arya Samaj. They were supposed to walk one behind the other, as Ram and Lakshman, and not together! Music was prohibited.

Both of them were sent to the Gurukul for traditional education. It was run by the sanyasis, where sutras of grammar and things like 'laghu kaumudi' etc were taught. But Balraj soon displayed signs of discomfort and dissatisfaction, and one day announced that he was quitting Gurukul and would

join regular school. His father, who was sitting behind a typewriter, said OK. The very next day, both the brothers were attending the DAV School, with Balraj in Class Four.

Balraj learnt Hindi and Sanskrit, in fact, he was to grow into a multi-linguist in future. While in school he brought out handwritten one-sheet magazine *Haqiqat*, which was widely copied and circulated.

The early years of Balraj were spent in Rawalpindi, where he did his Matric,

songs of Punjab. He also tried to bring out a literary magazine. He met Mahjoor, the famous Kashmiri poet. Years later he was to make a film on the life of Mahjoor with the assistance of Kashmir state government.

## Marriage

Balraj got married in 1936 to Damayanti, sister of their college teacher's friend Jaswant Rai. Both the families had known each other. Damyanti was affectionately called 'Dammo' and was as unconventional as Balraj.

Santiniketan. At one of the book exhibitions, he got to know of a journal 'Nai Talim' from Sewagram, and they both went Sewagram in 1939. There they stayed in a mud hut outside Gandhiji's Ashram, without electricity and modern amenities. They got an opportunity of several walks and interactions with Gandhiji. The place was a whirlpool of all India activities.

Lionel Feldon of BBC had come to Sewagram on way to Britain. He offered a job to Balraj in the Indian section of the BBC, London,

that one place throughout his entire stay in Britain.

During his stint in BBC he worked alongside George Orwell.

## Meeting British Communists

While in Britain Balraj deeply studied the original works of Marx and Lenin. Both he and Damayanti came in contact with the leaders of CPGB. Ben Bradley used to look after the Indian comrades in Britain. He wrote to PC Joshi that Damayanti was a sound and steady comrade while Balraj was a vigorous enthusiast. In fact, Damayanti joined the party first, even without Balraj's knowledge, as she thought he was too bohemian! Bradley asked her to bring him in the next meeting and thus Balraj was also enrolled.

## Return to India

Balraj and Damayanti returned to Rawalpindi in 1944. Balraj was now a very different man, more confident and clearer. He began attending public meetings of various parties. Soon he received the offer of a good post from All India Radio (AIR).

A chance of arrival of Chetan Anand, his old friend, became a decisive turn, who wanted to produce a film based on Gorky's *Lower Depths*. Balraj immediately left for Bombay with Damayanti and their two kids. They lived in the same house as Chetan, Dev Anand, Goldy and others.

Balraj and Damayanti with their credentials went to meet PC Joshi through his

## Biographies of Communist Leaders-93

*Anil Rajimwale*

stood second in the district, getting a scholarship.

Balraj wrote a poem when Bhagat Singh was sent to the gallows.

For his graduation he went to Lahore. Father wanted him to study commerce but Balraj wanted to study English literature. He joined the Government College there. He did his Masters' degree in English literature.

Balraj took part in literary activities and also became the secretary of the University Students' Union in his final year. He wrote extensively in the college student magazine 'Ravi'.

He returned from Lahore in 1934 and helped his father in business. But he did more 'extra-curricular' activities than business. For example, he went round collecting folk

They would go out on bicycles or in the open wagons of a goods train, etc!

## Into a new world

Suddenly both of them decided to leave Rawalpindi for Lahore despite stiff resistance from father, but mother was more conciliatory: "Let the boy go." Balraj explained some of the business matters to Bhisham and left the next day, September 21, 1937, for Lahore with Damayanti. They began publication of a weekly 'Monday Morning', along with BPL Bedi, Freda Bedi and Jag Pravesh Chander, but it flopped. Then he turned to play acting and writing.

Soon they left for Calcutta, and a month later got a job as a teacher under Hazari Prasad Dwivedi in

which he was going to start. Gandhiji approved of it. Soon after they came to Rawalpindi to prepare for England. Their little son Parikshat was there.

## In London

Hitler threatened to bomb London anytime. In fact, the first bombs fell on the city the very day Balraj and Damayanti arrived there. Their family was dead against their going. Balraj wanted to go and work for BBC not so much for earning as to get a feel of Europe.

His mother sat by radio to get news and hear his voice amidst bombing. From that day on till his last day in London, his mother sat by the radio set to get his voice, though he was scheduled to speak only twice a week. They were shifted to Coventry due to War. The needle on the radio stood at



# and Leading Communist

secretary Parvati (Krishnan). On being asked about how would they earn, Damayanti replied that she had already joined Prithvi Theatres of Prithvi Raj Kapoor. She donated her first cheque to the Communist Party.

Soon Balraj got into contact with KA Abbas, a giant of productions of IPTA, such as Zubaida. Balraj soon became a whole-time worker of the IPTA. In Bombay alone, there were more than 300 performances of 'Main Kaun Hun' (Who am I?). in various localities. Once when his father came to persuade him to leave, he was so impressed by IPTA programs that he gave up the idea of contradicting Balraj.

In the meantime, Damayanti died of wrong medication of diarrhea in 1946. Her performance in Prithvi Raj Kapoor's 'Deewar' was a memorable one.

He acted in 'Dharti ke Lal', 'Gudia' etc. He married a second time, with Santosh, his cousin. With 'Hum Log' and 'Do Bigha Zamin', he shot into fame. Do Bigha Zamin got international award at the Cannes Film Festival. He became very popular in the Soviet Union.

## Work in PHQ

PC Joshi invited him to the Reportings in the PHQ comrades' meetings, which were also sometimes addressed by Dr Adhikari, BTR, Ajoy Ghosh etc. From the PHQ, Balraj used to drive PCJ on motorcycle to the GKU office for meetings etc.

Balraj worked with Prem Dhawan, Anna Bhau, Amar Sheikh and others to prepare stories, kits etc, and go about the city on his

motorcycle.

PCJ named Bhisham Sahni's daughter after Kalpana Joshi, 'Kalpana'. He was 'PCji' to their family. Balraj described his encounter with PCJ as follows: "The warmth and friendliness (in the PHQ-AR) touched one's heart... It was in Raj Bhavan that I first met PC Joshi, and before long our acquaintance blossomed into a beautiful friendship which has lasted to this day."

"I was taken by surprise... I saw before me



a carelessly dressed person... Surely, I said to myself, this could not be PC Joshi... But when he put his hands on my shoulder with a loving glint in his eyes and a radiant smile on his lips, my doubts were dispelled."

## "Dharti ke Lal"

This film, produced in 1946, was a major milestone in the cultural movement, produced by IPTA and written and directed by KA Abbas. Its cast included Shombhu Mitra, Tripti Bhaduri, Damayanti Sahni, Balraj Sahni, Anwar Mirza, Hamid Butt and Zohra Sehgal. Ravi Shankar was the music composer. IPTA got license in difficult conditions. It was based on the Great Bengal Famine,

shot in Shree Sound Studios. The two-room flat of KA Abbas became overcrowded with the participants.

Communist Party, trade unions and others mobilized large number of people from the city and the villages for the scenes of famine etc. The IPTA team also went to villages to work.

The film was an example of how the Communist Party could use the medium of cinema to raise mass consciousness.



For one of his films, 'Hulchul', Balraj actually got himself arrested and remained in jail. He used to be let out in the day for shooting and returned to the jail in the evening. The film had a jailor's role. In Dharti ke Lal, he actually practiced pulling rickshaw for several days.

In the film 'Haqiqat', Balraj played such an effective role as 'Major Ranjeet Singh', that he was long remembered for it. Years later, he was remembered by an army jawan Om Prakash who came sitting in a wheel-chair to meet his 'Major Ranjeet Singh', and who had seen the film several times. He had lost his legs in the war against the Chinese

aggression in 1962.

## BTR period

By the end of December 1947, PCJ lost the majority in the CC and was removed in the second party congress held in 1948, replaced by BTR as general secretary. Already in 1947, signs of things to come were to be seen. IPTA and cultural programs were being seen as wastage of time and money. IPTA groups began to be disbanded. Sectarianism is the enemy of culture.

mass fronts and in party activities. He became general secretary of Bombay IPTA.

## As AIYF president

The foundation conference of All India Youth Federation was held from April 28 to May 3, 1959 in Delhi. Balraj Sahni graced the occasion by his presence, and was elected its first President. PK Vasudevan Nair was elected the working president and Dr Sarada Mitra the general secretary.

Later Balraj joined the Congress after a split in it. But he was not comfortable there.

## JNU Convocation

JNU decided to invite him to deliver its Convocation address in November 1972. SFI students affiliated with CPM opposed on the grounds that a 'film star' could not address a Convocation! But the administration went ahead and PC Joshi told Balraj not to be bothered. There was tension as he was led to the rostrum. But he was given standing ovation and non-stop cheering at the end of his address.

He was very disturbed due to several reasons, the death of his daughter Shabnam being one. He was worried about the state of cultural and other movements. He used to discuss these problems with PC Joshi.

He was awarded Padma Shri in 1969. He also got the Soviet Land Award.

Balraj Sahni passed away on April 13, 1973.

# CTUs, SKM Declare: Let Us March on ...

From Page 6...

power. Our joint and coordinated struggles are to be developed at such a height that no government either at the Centre or states dare to impose anti-worker and anti-farmers policies. Working class and farmers' movement is destined to discharge this task along with the people at large, leading from the front.

It is a stupendous task which will require each and every one of us to work tirelessly to turn our common experience into a message to common masses to turn the tide against those in power who are pushing the nation and its people into unprecedented crises and destruction.

Keeping in view our past experiences of joint and coordinated struggles, of the platform of CTUs/Federations/Associations on the one hand and the united movement of Samyukta Kisan Morcha on the other, as well as our experience of supporting each other in the various programmes in the past, this Joint Convention of Workers and Farmers calls upon toiling people of our country to take joint and coordinated struggles to a higher level. We have to heighten our combat against the destructive policies of this

government, both at the sectoral and national levels. The entire year of 2023 has to be a year of campaigns and combative agitations leading to higher forms of struggle at all levels.

We commit ourselves to work jointly on the following Charter of Demands:

- Control price rise, remove GST on the essential items like food, medicines, agro-inputs and machinery, reduce substantially central excise duty on petroleum products and cooking gas.

- R a i l w a y concessions to senior citizens, women, differently-abled persons, sports persons, withdrawn under the pretext of Covid be restored.

- Guarantee Food Security and Universalize Public Distribution System.

- Guarantee Right to Free Education, Right to Health, Water and Sanitation for All. Scrap New Education Policy, 2020.

- Ensure housing for all.

- S t r i n g e n t implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA); withdraw the amendments to Forest (Conservation) Act, 2023 and Bio-diversity Act and Rules that allow the Union government to permit clearance of a forest without even informing the residents.

Ensure land to the Tiller.

- National Minimum Wage of Rs 26,000 per month.

- Convene Indian Labour Conference regularly.

- Stop privatization of Public Sector Enterprises, government departments and scrap National Monetization Pipeline (NMP). Amend existing law on mining of minerals and metals and ensure 50 per cent share of profit from mines including coal mines for upliftment of local communities, especially adivasis and farmers.

- Withdraw the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2022. No pre-paid smart meters.

- Right to work be made fundamental. Fill sanctioned posts and generate employment for the unemployed. Expand and implement MGNREGS (200 days per year and Rs 600 per day wage). Enact Urban Employment Guarantee Act.

- Increase subsidy to farmers on seed, fertilizers and electricity, legally guarantee MSP at the rate of C-2+50% for farmers' produce and guarantee procurement. Prevent Farmers' suicides at all costs.

- Withdraw the pro-corporate PM Fasal Bima Yojana and establish a

comprehensive Public Sector Crop Insurance Scheme for all crops, to compensate farmers for losses due to climatic change, drought, flood, crop related diseases, etc.

- \* Declare Comprehensive Loan Waiver Scheme to free all the farm households from the trap of indebtedness.

- • Implement written assurances given by the Union government, based on which the historic Kisan Struggle was suspended: Memorial at Singhu Border for all the martyred farmers, pay compensation and rehabilitate their families, withdraw all pending cases, prosecute Ajay Mishra Teni, the Union MoS for Home.

- Withdraw four labour codes, Fixed Term Employment and ensure equality and safety at work. Stop casualization of labour. All categories of unorganized workers, such as home-based workers, hawkers, rag pickers, domestic workers, construction workers, migrant workers, scheme workers, agricultural workers, workers in shop/establishments,

- loading/unloading workers, gig workers, salt-pan workers, beedi workers, toddy-tappers, rikshaw-pullers, auto/rikshaw/ Taxi drivers, expatriate workers, fishing community, etc, be registered and given portability in comprehensive social security, including pension.

- Give ESI coverage to construction workers, with contributions from the Welfare Fund, also give coverage of health schemes, maternity benefits, life and disability insurance to all workers registered on E-Shram Portal.

- Ratify ILO Conventions on Domestic Workers and Home-based

Workers and make appropriate laws. Make comprehensive policy on migrant workers, strengthen existing Inter-state Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment) Act, 1979 providing portability of their social security cover.

- Scrap NPS, restore OPS and provide social security to all.

- Tax the super rich; enhance corporate tax; re-introduce wealth tax and succession tax.

- Stop attack on core values of the Constitution—freedom of expression, right to dissent, freedom of religion, diverse cultures, languages, equality before law and federal structure of the country, etc.

## Nationwide Call of Action

Apart from working for the above demands, we resolve to appeal to all the workers and farmers across the country to come forward and participate in the following joint and coordinated actions in the coming days:

- Observe October 3, 2023 (Lakhimpur Kheri massacre of farmers in 2021) as Black Day, demanding dismissal and prosecution of the alleged conspirator, the minister of state for home affairs Ajay Mishra Teni. (The form of action will be declared later.)

- Organise Day and Night Mahapadav Struggle in front of the Raj Bhawans in the state capitals of all the states and UTs, from November 26 to 28, 2023 (November 2020 was the day of the All India General Strike by workers and the first day of the historic March to Parliament by farmers.)

- December 2023-January 2024: Determined and massive united protest actions across the country. (The form of actions will be declared later.)

## New Age Weekly

Ajoy Bhavan, 15, Com. Indrajit  
Gupta Marg New Delhi-110 002

Single Copy	Rs. 7
Annual Subs.	Rs. 350
Three years	Rs. 1,000
Agency deposit	Rs. 70 per copy

Name of Account: New Age Weekly

Bank – CANARA BANK

Branch – I.P. Estate, New Delhi – 110002

Current Account

No.: - 90171010000130

IFSC Code – CNRB0019017

NB: After remitting the amount in banks,

please inform us the details

# Federalism under Attack from Govt: CPI



Communist Party of India national council secretary Dr K Narayana addressing the public meeting

The practice of having a BJP government at the Center and state both, aimed at dismantling the federal system that the Constitution stands for, through unilateral government decisions, has already proved to be a failure. Though the BJP is in power at the Centre and in Manipur state, it could not control the riots. In his address to a public meeting, Dr K Narayana, Communist Party of India national council secretary, said at Venkateshwara Vignana Mandir in Guntur on August 27, 2023.

Warm welcome was given to Prachara Jatha with the slogan 'Protect the state, Defend the nation' in the outskirts of Guntur city. Jangala Ajoy Kumar, Guntur party district secretary presided over the public meeting.

Dr K Narayana further stated in his address that during Manipur riots, when Narendra Modi was keeping quiet, Amit Shah's speeches added fuel to the fire. In the riots, apart from killing and torturing, two women were paraded without clothes along with a mob, gang raped, and killed in the presence of police. These ghastly incidents exposed the situation in Manipur, he said. Dr Narayana revealed that the government has been trying to create a situation when it would be easier to hand over mineral wealth of the state to corporate friends. The chief minister of

the state himself is promoting the production of narcotic drugs in the state. Certain leaders and parties have the cover of BJP in order to save their seats and assets. Narendra Modi, Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy and KCR are enemies of the people. They should be dethroned from the seats of power at the Centre and in Telugu states, said Dr Narayana.

Andhra Pradesh state council secretary of CPI K Ramakrishna addressing the public meeting stated that state chief Minister Jaganmohan Reddy has set aside development of the state and proceeding with his own agenda. He cannot go to office without security of at least 1,000 police force. Though farmers are agitating for the last 1,349 days for Amaravati, the chief minister is not responding at all. Though the high court has given verdict in favour of Amaravati, the chief minister is rigidly against Amaravati. He has not developed the state. Many industries are going out of the state. There is no creation of employment potentialities. Irrigation projects are not being completed. Farmers' community is keen to leave agriculture and opt for some other means of livelihood.

K Ramakrishna pointed out that in IT exports the share of the state is mere 0.14 per cent. Jagan Mohan Reddy is afraid of Narendra Modi and Amit Shah. He could not achieve special status for the state, not could

### Ram Narsimha Rao

meet bifurcation promises, steel plant for Kadapa and funds for Polavaram project. State debt has reached to nine lakh crores rupees. If people of Andhra Pradesh give again power to Jagan Mohan Reddy, the state will have a disaster. Narendra Modi is utilising Chandrayaan also for his communal propaganda. He has given name of Shiv Shakti to the place where Chandrayaan has landed.

Muppalla Nageshwera Rao, party state assistant secretary while addressing stated that the present government is dismantling

the constitutional bodies and the very Constitution written by Dr B R Ambedkar. He wanted the state government to sanction a pension of Rs 7,000 to the disabled, Rs 6,000 to others and medical insurance to old age people.

Party state secretariat member G Eashwaraiah while addressing stated that Jagan Mohan Reddy had promised to give Rajanna Rajyam but he miserably failed. Whatever the chief minister says, it is becoming law in Andhra Pradesh. He is imposing tax burden on common men.

Jayalaxmi, state president of NFIW, in her address urged that

Manuwaadis must be chased away in the forthcoming elections.

Donepudi Shankar, state executive member of CPI, Siva Reddy state general secretary of AISF, Penchalaiah, state general secretary of IPTA, Ghani, national secretary of IPTA, Velugu Radha Krishnamurthy, state honorary president of AITUC, N Lenin Babu, state general secretary of AIYF, Johnson Babu, state leader of AISF also were present.

Ravula Anjibabu, city CPI leader welcomed the guests while Kota Malyadri party, city secretary, proposed the vote of thanks.

### JMI Should Ensure Safety of Students: CPI MP

Communist Party of India national council secretary Binoy Viswam MP has written the following letter on August 26, 2023 to Dr Najma Akhtar, Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia in New Delhi:

Certain concerned students and teachers informed me that a student of Jamia Millia Islamia in New Delhi was attacked by miscreants in the JMI campus on the evening of August 11, 2023. The victim of this attack is Adil Salah, a third year student of Bachelor of Architecture in JMI, a resident of Kochi in Kerala. The aggressors beat up the student and later threatened him with consequences. The student

received several threatening calls later and he was told to leave the campus.

The aggressors also told him that they will compel him to go back to his home in Kerala. This chain of events indicates towards the unfortunate incident of ragging and harassment in the esteemed campus of JMI.

Ragging and harassment are scourges for educational campuses. Such incidents are extremely detrimental for the educational and mental wellbeing of students. I was informed that when the aggrieved student reached the authorities, he was not given a proper hearing which further emboldened the aggressors. No FIR of the incident has been registered as yet. Ragging and targeting

of students on the basis of their ethnicity or language affects the overall atmosphere of any university. Such incidents act as a deterrent for all the students who aspire to attain education in premier institutes. Inability to resolve these issues at the earliest takes a toll on the entire educational ecosystem of the university.

In the light of the above, as a citizen concerned about healthy environment in university campuses, I urge you to inquire into the incident and do justice with the situation. The aggrieved students are being threatened consistently. I hope necessary steps will be taken to ensure their safety.

# Acute Joblessness Creates Erosion in Economy

On the three pronged strategy of Narendra Modi government, that are Nationalism, Hindutva and Welfare measures, especially for the OBC's, it has become imperative to highlight the colossal failure in dealing with the price rise and acute joblessness. This is the area which is the common talking point of most of the electorate belonging to the lower middle class and the poor.

Let us take up the issue of inflation and price rise first. The common people of the country have been the worst sufferers of the rise in prices in essential commodities in the last four years since 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The headline consumer price index has

jumped to 7.4 percent in July this year as against 4 percent in June this year. For the poorer sections of the people including both unorganized workers and lowly paid staff, this inflationary pressures are at its peak at a time when new jobs are not being generated and the real wages have come down.

In a recent study, it has come out that the real wages of the male agricultural workers, non-agricultural labourers and construction workers grew at less than one per cent between 2014-15 and 2021-22 the first eight years of Narendra Modi's rule. The decline accentuated in 2022-23 when the growth rate of real wages for the first group was

*Nitya Chakraborty*

just 0.2 per cent and the other two sectors recorded a decline. So the Indian economy is witnessing a scenario whereby the real income is declining and household expenditure is rising. The essential food items prices have gone sky high.

The dichotomy of the present functioning of the economy under BJP rule is that the corporates profits have gone up substantially even in the pandemic years and the upper class and the high middle class segments have continued to prosper. The brunt of the economic crisis is being borne by the underprivileged sections of

the population only. In the last nine years, the inequality between the rich and the poor has widened exponentially. Now focusing on the employment sector, what is the real scenario? The latest CMIE report says that the unemployment level stood at .8.16 percent in June 2023 quarter and the biggest challenge is now to provide jobs to the educated youth. For graduates and higher, the crisis is more acute compared to the lowly educated youth. Prime minister Narendra Modi talked of generating two crore jobs in the country every year in his election pledge in 2014. Now he does not mention that in his campaign addresses, he is now creating a hype over the government organized Rozgar Melas where the employment letters are given to few thousands and that is being publicized by the news media and the TV channels. The BJP government is deliberately hiding the disastrous effects of its jobless growth policy framework in the last nine years.

Despite all tall claims, the Narendra Modi government has done precious little for MSMEs, the backbone of the Indian growth story and the dominant employment provider. Even before the pandemic years, there was slowdown and this sector was adversely affected. The bailout schemes implemented after 2020 did little to help 80 percent of the MSMEs.

It is estimated that there are 633.9 lakh MSMEs in the country and the micro sector alone includes 630.5

lakh units. As of August 2 this year the MSMEs employed 12.36 crore persons. This sector can act as the real engine of growth provided proper programmes are adopted. And this is the sector which can play a pioneering role in generating lakhs of jobs and helping the country in reducing the extent of the unemployment problem.

Compared to the organized sector of industries, the potential of the employment generation in the MSME sector can be appreciated. The last sixth economic census mentioned of the employment of 3.14 crore persons in key nine industries which account for 85 per cent of the total employment in organized industries. There is not much possibility of growth in jobs in this area, since both the private sector and the public sector companies are going for high tech upgradation leading to displacement of workers. Further Artificial Intelligence will be increasingly used minimizing the possibility of more human recruitment.

According to the latest estimates, when India's GDP approaches US dollar 5 trillion by 2028, the share of the MSMEs may touch US dollar one trillion.

In the present third decade of the twenty first century, Indians are highly aspirational. The Indian youth from the hills of Arunachal and Nagaland to Jammu and Kashmir are changing in their mental makeup. Understanding this changing Indian youth requires modern mind.

## CPI Leaders Meet President...



From Page 1...

ensured to the people in relief camps and outside. Special needs of women, children and elderly should be prioritized. Special arrangements should be made for patients of diseases like hemophilia, cancer, kidney ailments, diabetes, hypertension, etc.

■ M a n i p u r

government has clamped down heavily on activists, journalists, intellectuals and others who were critical of the handling of the situation by the N Biren Singh administration. All such FIRs, including the FIR against NFIW activists who went to Manipur on a fact-finding mission, should be immediately withdrawn.

The CPI expects that you will take a sympathetic view of the situation and your government will act swiftly to ensure peace, harmony and tranquility in the state of Manipur.

People of Manipur are victims of divisions in the society, a political initiative and dialogue will give them the confidence and trust they need for rebuilding the state.

## Peace Loving Countries Must Challenge US Strong-arm Tactics

*Diary of  
International  
Events*

*C. Adhikesavan*

The current war conflict between Ukraine and Russia has been provoked and initiated by the West comprising the NATO countries. Though the war between the two countries was not expected by the people of both countries. The US wants the Ukraine and Russia war to continue, but the pressures are being put from unexpected quarters to the end the Ukraine war.

Corporate media started giving space in the columns calling for peace, diplomacy, negotiations and cooperation among nations. Initially the corporate media has rarely allocated space for negotiation talks between both the warring countries. In the beginning promoted the administration and Congress's wars realise far more columns expecting more profits from the war. Both print media and electronic corporate media throughout the world have been cheering the US invasions of Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and so many more.

The New York Times carried out an "investigative" report that targeted Code Pink and other organisations because they oppose war with China, arguing instead for cooperation and peace. Its article insinuated that peace is not something progressive and democratic-minded people in the US would seek on their own, and that such challenges to US foreign policy must necessarily be receiving direction and funding from the Communist Party of China. The ruling regime in US is pursuing both war profits and constraints on their international business competitors, labels promoting peace with China or Russia or Russia as un-

American. What we have to learn from is that peace initiatives are the work of foreign subversion. The underlining corollary is however that endless war is basic to US foreign policy.

The US goal is to prolong the war in Ukraine till Russia is defeated and destroyed as a major power, even though

from the write-ups in the capitalist media which challenge the pro-war narrative. The NYT carried a story entitled, "The US should a force for peace in the world." It was ironically written by retired US military brass and diplomats, deploring every aspect of the war in Ukraine, stating that

Soviet missiles from Cuba, and US missiles aimed at the USSR from Turkey.

Harper's Magazine article questions, "Why are we in Ukraine?". The US questions the idea that Ukraine resides within Russia's sphere of influence. Washington brandishes the Monroe Doctrine of 1820s,



an overwhelming conventional victory by either could readily unleash the nuclear arsenals held by Russia and NATO in fiery end to 10,000 years of civilisation. If anyone call for a ceasefire in the Ukraine and insisting on a negotiated settlement risks being a mere tool of Putin.

A letter signed by 30 members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus was brought before mid-term elections, that was endorsed by Biden's military and economic undergirding of the Kiev government, but considered the grave danger that escalating the war would lead to a nuclear exchange. It urged the US president to end it using diplomacy. But latter a bipartisan storm of pushback forced its retraction.

There are cracks and differences in US imperialism's ideological armour, which is evident

the immediate cause is the Russian invasion contradicting the idea that the invasion was unprovoked, providing evidence to the contrary.

The author in this article pointing out to 1990 onward events, outlined a long series of US military provocations of Russia, including shredding of international security treaties, installation of missiles on Russia's borders, and US rejection of all Russia's diplomatic overtures for mutual security. Further the write-up questions, would the US do if Russia built bases, laid missiles, and held war rehearsals in Canada and Mexico? In 1962, President John F. Kennedy responded to the nuclear missiles the U.S.S.R. placed in Cuba by moving troops to southern Florida. He threatened all-out nuclear war if they were not removed. Though he negotiated a settlement that included removing both the

the US claimed the Western Hemisphere as a sole sphere of influence, which embraced the whole world.

The US has increased its demand of exceptionalism that other countries must obey the international law, whereas itself has refuses to accept in turn it claims the right to violate it. The US instigated coup overthrew the democratically elected Yanukovich government in 2014, it has encouraged the integration of Nazis into the Kiev government. It has tacitly supported the Kiev's shelling of the ethnically Russian population of Donbass region in eastern Ukraine. It has integrated Kiev's military into NATO, and rejected every Russian request to acknowledge its security concerns and to negotiate. The Kiev military did not stop its shelling of Donbass. The US dismissed Russia's entreaties over its security concerns. In the

initial stages of war various negotiations were held between Ukraine and Russia to end the war but the US squelched them all.

The China's efforts for a peace plan was trashed by the US. Both Ukraine and Russia initially were open to consider at least parts of the plan. Zelensky said that "China historically respects our sovereignty." Biden did not like the idea that China is going to negotiating the outcome of the war... is just not rational.

The Communist Party of USA advocated that the China and South Africa's peace plan provide a framework "for Russia to remove its troops, to stop NATO's expansion and end the flow of arms including from the US which could make Ukraine an independent and sovereign."

The CNN reports has been consistently fanned every US enabled war, sometimes actually contradicted its prior reports. It said, "Ukraine forces have incurred heavy loses, and Kiev's counteroffensive is "highly unlikely" to change the balance of the conflict.

In fact, such pro-peace and war critical articles appearing at this critical hours, is a positive sign that the war in Ukraine could be ended diplomatically. However, the peace forces must take advantage of the movement to challenge and alter US's overt strong-arm equation, "whatever it takes, for as long as it takes." Instead the humanity on the earth must demand justice, diplomacy, negotiations and finally peace on earth instead of imperialistic war.

# Call to Intensify Joint Struggles...

From Page 16...

Hemalata of CITU, Harish Tyagi of AIUTUC, G R Shivshankar of TUCC, Farida Jalis of SEWA, Sucheta De of AICCTU, R S Dagar of UTUC, K Natrajan of LPF and from SKM Buta Singh from Punjab, Satnam Singh Bhere, Tejinder Singh Virk, R Chandrasekhar from Telangana, Suresh Kauth from Haryana, Ranjit Raju from Rajasthan, Purushotam Singh Gill, Harnek Singh Mehru from Punjab, and Jagtar Singh Bajwa from Uttarakhand.

Those who addressed the convention are Amarjeet Kaur, general secretary,



AITUC, Atul Kumar Anjaan, president, All India Kisan Sabha, Ashok Singh of INTUC, Harbhajan Singh Sindhu of HMS, Tapan Das of CITU, Ramesh Parashar

of AIUTUC, G Devarajan of TUCC, Manali Shah of SEWA, Santosh Roy of AICCTU, MShanmugam of LPF, Shatrujeet of UTUC, Joginder Singh Ugraha from

Punjab, Dr Ashok Dhawale from AIKS, Dr Sunilam, Dr Darshan Pal, Mehda Patkar from Maharashtra, Avik Saha from West Bengal, Tajinder Singh Virk from

Uttarkhand, V S Rao from Andhra Pradesh, Rajaram Singh from Bihar, Satywan from Haryana, Raminder from Patiala and Yudhvir Singh from Uttar Pradesh.

## P. P. H. PUBLICATIONS

1	A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CPI THROUGH PARTY CONGRESSES	AUTHOUR - ANIL RAJIMWALE	RS.85.00
2	CRIME AND PUNISHMENT	AUTH.. - FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY	RS.250.00
3	DEFENDING DEMOCRACY	D . RAJA	RS.500.00
4	INDIAN THOUGHT A CRITICAL SURVEY	K. DAMODRAN	RS.250.00
5	STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE	CHRISTOPHER CAUDWELL	RS.100.00
6	FURTHER STUDIES IN A DYING CULTURE	CHRISTOPHER CAUDWELL	RS.75.00
7	COMMUNISTS IN INDIAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT	RENU CHAKRAVARTTY	RS.300.00
8	VICTIMS OF THE WORLD UNITE AGAINST - EXOGENOUS PANDEMICS	AUTHOUR - K.S.CHALAM	RS.100.00
9	WHAT IS TO BE DONE ?	VI LENIN	RS.195.00
10	INDIAN SOCIETY HISTORICAL PROBINGS IN MEMORY OF D D KOSAMBI	Edt. R S SHARMA	RS. 250.00
11	LIVING THOSE TIMES Memoirs & Writings of BURGULA NARSING RAO	Edited-Rama Melkote and others	RS.250.00
12	UNDERSTNDING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION	ALBERT SOBOUL	RS.400.00
13	COMRADE CHANDRAPPAN (MEMOIRS)	BINOY VISWAM	RS.150.00
14	LOKAYATA A STUDY IN ANCIENT INDIAN MATERIALISM	DEBI PRASAD CHATTOPADHYAYA	RS.720.00
15	THE RISE AND GROWTH OF ECONOMIC NATIONALISM IN INDIA	BIPAN CHANDRA	RS.600.00
16	EMERGENCE OF A SLAVE CASTE - PULAYAS OF KERALA	K SARADAMONI	RS.450.00
17	CLASS CASTE RESERVATIONS & STRUGGLE	A B BARDHAN	RS.50.00
18	THE MOPLAH REBELLION AND ITS GENESIS	CONRAD WOOD	RS.250.00
19	HUMANISM A SLOGAN OF LIFE MAANAVA VAADAM - JEEVANA NINAADAM	Prof.DEVARAJU MAHARAJU	RS.340.00
20	ANCIENT INDIA AN INTRODUCTORY OUTLINE	D N JHA	RS.300.00
21	PESHAWAR CONSPIRACY CASES	R S YADAV	RS.135.00
22	THE STUDENT'S MARX AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF KARL MARX'S CAPITAL	Auth.EDWARD AVELING	RS.200.00
23	INDIAN PHILOSOPHY A POPULAR INTRODUCTION	DEBIPRASAD CHATTOPADHYAYA	RS.150.00
24	FIDEL AND RELIGION CONVERSATION WITH FREI BETTO		RS.150.00
25	THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE PURANAS	S MUZAFER ALI	RS.325.00
26	RAMAYANA MYTH OR REALITY ?	H D SANKALIA	RS.230.00
27	MEMORIES OF THE FUTURE	VIJAY KUMAR MARLA	RS.350.00
28	KANPUR BOLSHEVIK CONSPIRACY CASE	R S YADAV	RS.400.00

Please send your order to:

People's Publishing House (P) Limited  
5-E, Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi -110 055  
Phone: 011-23523349, 23529823  
Email: pph5e1947@gmail.com  
Website: <http://www.pphbooks.net>

CPIHQ Showroom: Ajoy Bhavan  
15 Com. Indrajit Gupta Road  
New Delhi-110 002

PPH Showroom JNU  
Near Central Library  
JNU, New Delhi-110 067

PPH Showroom  
22, Qaiser Bagh  
Lucknow (UP)

PPH Showroom, 18 Marina Arcade,  
G-Block, Connaught Place, New  
Delhi-110 001

**BANK DETAILS:**  
**FOR ORDER BOOKS**  
State Bank of India  
A/c. No. 320 746 74 284

In favour of:  
People's Publishing House (P) Ltd

## Inflation to Stay High in Coming Months, Admits Govt

The finance ministry has cautioned that global and regional uncertainties and domestic disruptions may keep inflationary pressures elevated in the coming months, warranting “greater vigilance” by the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

“Russia’s decision to terminate the Black Sea grain deal, along with dry conditions in major wheat-growing areas, caused a price spike in cereals. Domestic factors like whitefly disease and an uneven distribution of monsoon exerted pressure on vegetable prices in India,” the ministry said in its latest Monthly Economic Report for July, released on August 22.

However, the report maintained, the recent price surge in certain food items

“is expected to be transitory”. It said: “Tomato prices are likely to decline with the arrival of fresh stocks by the end of August or early September. Further, enhanced imports of tur dal are expected to moderate pulses inflation. These factors, along with the recent government efforts, can soon lead to a moderation in food inflation in the coming months,” it said.

Retail inflation galloped to a 15-month high of 7.44 per cent in July, mainly due to skyrocketing prices of vegetables, pulses, cereals, and spices.

In its latest monetary policy review, the RBI revised upwards its inflation forecasts — to 6.2 per cent for the September quarter and 5.4 per cent for 2023-24 — while keeping

the policy rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent.

RBI governor Shaktikanta Das in a statement had said that while a substantial increase in headline inflation would occur in the near term, led by the accentuated vegetable prices, “monetary policy can look through high inflation prints caused by such shocks for some time”.

The finance ministry report noted that maintenance of macroeconomic stability was paramount to keep interest rates from rising too much, to underscore the relative attractiveness of India as a zone of performance and promise for domestic and international investors and to maintain steady economic growth.

July’s monthly review also highlighted that the

robustness of domestic investment was the result of the government’s continued emphasis on capital expenditure.” Enhanced provision for capital expenditure by the government is now leading to crowding in of private investment, as evident in the performance of various high-frequency indicators and industry reports, which highlight the emergence of green shoots of a private capex upcycle,” it added.

The Union government in its 2023-24 Budget increased the capital outlay by 33.3 per cent, raising the share of capital expenditure in total expenditure from 12.3 per cent in 2017-18 to 22.4 per cent in 2023-24 Budget estimates.

The monthly report also said the external sector required a closer watch to

strengthen merchandise export growth in the face of slowing global demand. It said persistent geopolitical concerns continued to shadow the world trade growth, which is expected to decline to two per cent in 2023 from 5.2 per cent in 2022.” Services exports continue to do well and are likely to continue doing so as the preference for remote working remains unabated, typically manifested in the proliferation of global capability centres,” it said.

The report said domestic consumption and investment demand might continue to drive growth. “Going forward, increased minimum support prices and prospects of healthy kharif crops will further add strength to the rural demand,” it added.

### On Record ...

The Supreme Court asked Attorney General R Venkata Ramani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to look into the suspension of Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, senior political science lecturer at a government school in Srinagar, after his appearance before the Supreme Court over the abrogation of Article 370.

A five-judge Constitution bench led by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud had assembled to hear the petitions challenging the changes made to Article 370 when Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal raised the issue. Bhat, an advocate, appeared in the Supreme Court on August 23, arguing for the petitioners in the case. The CJI then told Attorney General (AG) R Venkataramani, “Just see what has happened. Somebody who appears in this court is suspended. Have a look into it. Just talk to the Lieutenant Governor.” – The Indian Express, August 29.

\*\*\*

In a recent video that has been winning hearts on the internet, Saroj Devi, Neeraj Chopra’s mother, gracefully answered a question about Arshad Nadeem. When asked about her thoughts on her son defeating Pakistan’s Nadeem at the World Athletic Championships, Saroj Devi chose to emphasize the spirit of sportsmanship over national rivalries. she

responded to the reporter’s question by saying, “Look, everyone has come to play in the field. One or the other will definitely win. So there is no question of being from Pakistan or Haryana. I am happy for the player who won from Pakistan as well.” Her words serve as a reminder that in



the arena of sports, a player’s nationality takes a backseat to their skill and performance.” – indiatoday.in, August 29.

\*\*\*

The suspected suicide of a first-year Jadavpur University (JU) student has cast the spotlight on the culture of torture and abuse that often passes off as a coming-of-age ritual on the country’s campuses. The 18-year old’s family has alleged that he was subjected to ragging — by all accounts,

a mild term to describe the humiliation and coercion senior students inflict on young entrants to colleges and universities.

The university and the police are conducting investigations and 12 people, including JU students and alumni, have been arrested. The law will, of course, take its course in this case. But it’s high time that education administrators and student bodies come together to find ways to end the sadistic practice that has been psychologically scarring youngsters for decades. The transition from school to college or university is a critical phase in the life of students, many of whom — like the first-year JU student — come from small towns and rural areas. – The Indian Express, August 26.

\*\*\*

An undated video of a teacher allegedly encouraging Hindu students to slap a Muslim student went viral with UP’s Muzaffarnagar Police, child rights body NCPCR reacting to it. “I have declared *jitne bhi Mohammedan bachhe hai...*” the teacher said on the camera apparently encouraging Hindu students to thrash a Muslim kid in the class. It is not yet known how the video was shot as the teacher seemed to be engaged in a conversation with the person explaining what she was doing. Police said the kid who was being beaten up in the video could not remember maths tables. – The Hindustan Times, August 26.

Compiled by: C Adhikesavan

**All India Joint Convention of Workers and Farmers**

**Call to Intensify Joint Struggles to Oust Ruling Regime**

The historic All India Joint Convention of Workers and Farmers held on August 24, 2023, at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi was massive and full of determination to raise the pitch of their joint and coordinated agitations in the coming period. Jointly organised by the platform of Central Trade Unions (CTUs)/ Sectoral Federations/Associations and Samyukta Kisan Morcha, the convention assessed the adverse and destructive impact of the Union government policies on the workers, farmers, common people in general and on the democratic, secular, harmonious living of our people.

The convention in its declaration termed the policies of the party ruling in the Centre and some states as anti-worker, anti-farmer, anti-people and against the national interests of our country.

The convention called for ousting this ruling regime which is harming the Indian economy, making the lives of common people miserable with steep price rise of essential commodities, growing job-loss and increased unemployment, expensive education and healthcare, no subsidy on inputs and no MSP for the Farmers produce. None of the promises made to farmers were fulfilled by the



government, which were made to farmers based on which they suspended their 13 month long sit-in at borders facing all odds. The attack on the public sector and government departments for privatisation continues, no recruitments are made, outsourcing, contractorisation and casualisation are rampant, the labour laws are being codified to favour the employers and against workers' interests.

The groups and the forces who spread hatred

for unhealthy divisive polarization, and the vigilante groups, who indulge in violence, get tacit support from the powerful people in the ruling circles. These tactics, meant to divert the attention of the people from the issues of their livelihood, are dangerous as well as poisonous for the social fabric, unity and integrity of the country. Such a ruthless ruling regime is against national interest, does not have the right to occupy the seat of power and must be ousted said the declaration

adopted by the convention.

The convention adopted a charter of demands and has called upon the following action programme in the coming days.

**Nationwide Call of Action**

Apart from working for the above demands, the convention resolved to appeal to all the workers and farmers across the country to come forward and participate in the following joint and coordinated actions

in the coming days:

- Observe October 3, 2023 (Lakhimpur Kheri massacre of farmers in 2021) as Black Day, demanding dismissal and prosecution of the alleged conspirator, the minister of state for home affairs Ajay Mishra Teni.
- Organise Day and Night Mahapadav Struggle in front of the Raj Bhawans in the state capitals of all the states and union territories, from November 26 to 28, 2023, (November 26, 2020 had been the day of the All India General Strike by workers and the first day of the historic March to Parliament by farmers.)
- December 2023-January 2024: Determined and Massive United Protest Actions across the country.

The national convention was conducted by a 20-member presidium consisting of Bant Singh Brar of AITUC, Sanjay Singh of INTUC, Mukesh Galak of HMS, Dr K

On Page 14...



Printed & Published by D. RAJA on behalf of the Communist Party of India at BFL Infotech Ltd (Media Division), C-9, Sector-3, Noida, Dist. Gautam Budh Nagar, UP & Published from Ajoy Bhavan, 15-Com.Indrajit Gupta Marg, New Delhi-110 002. Ph: 011-2323 0762.  
**Editor: BINOY VISWAM, Deputy Editor: KRISHNA JHA** \*E-mail: [newagemukti@gmail.com](mailto:newagemukti@gmail.com) - **Layout: JANARDANAN. R**