

## Defeat RSS-BJP to Save Constitution, Democracy: CPI



CPI general secretary D Raja delivering Parwana memorial lecture

“Com Parwana was a source of inspiration for generations of trade union workers while Com A B Bardhan was a great thinker, writer and orator, adored by

all sections of the society,” said D Raja while inaugurating the Com Parwana centenary celebrations on December 4, 2023 at Com Bardhan

Dr Yugal Rayalu

Memorial Auditorium of the Parwana Memorial Complex in Nagpur city. D Raja, general secretary of the Communist Party of India, was the first speaker in the series of Parwana Memorial Oration, started by the Parwana Memorial Trust in the memory of the legendary trade union leader Com. H. L. Parwana. Speaking before a jam packed hall, D Raja paid rich tributes to Com. H L Parwana and Com A B Bardhan and referred to the days when the Constitution

was taking shape under the chairmanship of the drafting committee, Dr B R Ambedkar. There was a tremendous pressure on Dr Ambedkar to declare India a “Hindu Rashtra” or at least to adopt the “Presidential form of Government”. Dr Ambedkar rejected both with a caution that any effort to bring in hero worship in our democratic set up would lead to dictatorship! At the same time India can under no circumstances be made into a theocratic state, warned Dr Ambedkar.

D Raja referred to the famous speech of Dr Ambedkar wherein he said, “India is entering into a new phase. This new phase is full of contradictions. In politics we have brought equality with the instrument of voting, that goes by the principle, ‘One person- One vote’. But in the sphere of social and economic life we have so much of inequality! Social and economic inequalities must be removed.”

“It is our duty to safeguard our Constitution,

to save our democracy. People’s power is supreme,” said D Raja and added, “We cannot separate the trinity of “Equality-Liberty-Fraternity”. Without equality there can be no social, political and economic justice, opined CPI leader. Being the citizens of a sovereign democratic nation we draw our rights from our Constitution, not by the mercy of our rulers, he said. We are citizens, not subjects. The very essence of democracy is compassion for all, he said.

“Today our democracy is under attack. The fourth pillar of democracy, our media is under the total control of the corporate giants, that is directly and indirectly conditioning the minds of the people in a particular way to suit their own political and economic interests.

Coming down heavily on the Central government for its handling of the Elgar Parishad, D Raja asked, “How long would professors and intellectuals be kept

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### CPI Wins Kothagudem

Communist Party of India candidate Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao wins the Kothagudem seat in Telangana with a majority of 26,547 votes. He got 80,336 votes while his opponent candidate from AIFB J Venkat Rao got 53,789 votes. BRS candidate V Venkateswara Rao was pushed to third position. Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, who is at present the Telangana state council secretary, represented the same assembly constituency in 2009.

In Chhattisgarh CPI candidate Manish Kunjam, who contested from Konta assembly constituency was defeated by a small margin.

Responding to the election verdict, CPI general secretary D Raja said: “Only through unity and alternative vision can the RSS-BJP be defeated and our Republic saved. All secular and democratic parties, including Indian National Congress must engage in introspection to have mutual accommodation.”



View of the participants



## Essence of Capitalism

It was Narayan Murthy, the software icon who had said in 2020 that working hours for the toilers should be stretched up to sixty hours. In 2023, he went further and said the working hours must be taken to seventy hours. And now he has come up with an idea that nothing should be given free. Murthy suggested that since India is still in development process, to get financial assistance to move further, it is imperative to have higher taxation compared to developed countries.

"In order to create efficient, corruption-free and effective public goods in our country, the taxation will have to be obviously higher than what you see in developed countries. So, I personally would not at all grudge, if I have to pay a higher level of taxation," he said and pointed out that the per capita GDP of an average Indian is today hardly 2,300 US Dollars. Quoting UN he said what the UN has called "low income group countries", is about twice of that.

Murthy has also claimed to be a hard core leftist earlier and now he believes in compassionate capitalism.

Perhaps his scientific outlook, which must have been his instrument to understand the world as leftist, would have pointed out to him that irrespective of its being compassionate or barbaric, capitalist system always prospers and evolves on uncompensated labor, the produce of which is called surplus. Capitalism cannot be itself if it does not have capital, which generates more capital in the process of capitalist production. Out of this production process, the output gets its value, which in turn makes it a commodity. The labour time is the creator of the specific difference, of the value-form and consequently the commodity-form. As Marx had pointed out in his famous book

"Capital, A critical analysis of Capitalist Production", that the use value of a product is a quality that serves the need of people, but what does belong to a commodity is its value which is realised in exchange. This is the foundational truth of capitalism. Hence, the labor is already producing without compensation, and the capitalist system thrives on that. Being an important part of the system one cannot deny the fact that the entire structure of the society stands on unpaid labour, it would amount to self negation, which in turn amounts to demagoguery.

Coming back to freebies. Let us not go by pieces, since they make the entirety. It is a

### Editorial

dialectical existence. It was decided in the 18<sup>th</sup> century itself that in the mode of production, the three components were imperative and among them, apart from raw material and the production tools, is labor, which comes from human being, and needs regularisation. It has a limit, that should never go beyond eight hours. After that, it is not the normal energy that is employed. It is the reserve energy that is spent. If a worker toils for sixty or seventy hours every week, reserve energy is sold to the capitalist master, underpriced, in fact absolutely free. Worker is today struggling even for minimum wages, if at all s/he is employed. The famous quote of NR Narayana Murthy says, "Nothing should be given free." In return, the worker is asked to sacrifice even the breathing space, which is Sunday.

Speaking at the 26th edition of Bengaluru Tech Summit 2023, here, Murthy stressed that every

bit the state does for its people must be compensated, that there should be a contribution "When you provide those services, when you provide those subsidies, there must be something in return that they're willing to do. For example, if you say, I will give you free electricity, then it would have been a very nice thing for the government to have said, but we want to see the percentage attendance in primary schools and middle schools go up by 20 per cent, then only we will give you that." First it is conditional, not free. And then when a child stops going to school, or does badly in studies, there are factors that have to be taken into consideration. There are loads of research work done on it. The families go half starved. Jobs are rare. Wages are highly insufficient. Even as citizens, we do not have the right to question the child's inefficiency, without assessing in depth the atmosphere we have created for our human wealth.

Finally, he suggested"....Ask people what are the requirements they need to work three shifts and complete the work in time and provide them that." Compassion becomes a superfluous expression here as capitalism bares all its fangs to force humanity to go beyond. It is not the people who are to slog for three shifts, it is their blood soaked starving existence that would run the machine just to keep alive!

Narayan Murthy said he believes that capitalism is based on the twin pillars of free market and entrepreneurship and that are the only solution for any country to solve its problem of poverty. But poverty is not a financial deprivation alone, it surpasses humanity too some time, history is witness to that.

## Defeat RSS-BJP...

### From Front Page

behind bars?" He said intentionally the government is targeting the intellectuals because the government has no answers to the questions raised by them.

BJP under the guidance of RSS is trying to undermine the secular Constitution because they want to bring the rule of Manusmriti, opined D Raja. The RSS since its inception has been anti-Dalit and anti-women. They believe in the theocratic

practices where only the upper caste men have the right to rule and decide. Very systematically the Modi regime has brought in Monopoly Capitalism using all the means of democracy. Today the gap between the haves and the have nots is too big to be covered in near future, he said. The very people who voted the BJP to power have the right to remove them also from power to save their own rights.

Coming to the issue of

patriotism, D Raja said that the communists are great patriots. Ho chi Minh had said famously that his patriotism had taken him to Marxism. Communists in India have made the supreme sacrifices during the freedom struggle. The irony is that the people who did not participate in the freedom struggle ask others to prove their patriotism, said D Raja.

Ending his lecture, D Raja exhorted the assembly to mobilise the common men and women to fight against

the fascist regime. "Because we love the country and her people, we should come together and struggle to save the Constitution to save the democracy. Defeat of the BJP in 2024 is the most important task at the moment".

At the beginning of the programme, the managing trustee of Parwana Memorial, D S Buche made the introductory remarks and introduced the guest speaker. C H Venkatachalam gave brief introduction to the life and struggle of Com H L Parwana. He said that the

Parwana Oration is an attempt to bring the best speakers of the country face to face with the working class. President of Eastern Maharashtra Bank Employees Association (EMBEA) presented the vote of thanks.

General Secretary of EMBEA J S Gurway coordinated the facilitation programme of D Raja by the various trade unions and other organisations. Members of the Parwana memorial trust, Ramkumar Gupta, Ram Nerkar, BN J Sharma were present on the dais for the programme.



# CTU-SKM Jointly Hold Mahadharna in Odisha

The joint platform of Central Trade Unions (CTU), independent sectoral federations/associations and Sanjukta Kishan Morcha (SKM) staged three days and night Mahadharna at Bhubaneswar from November 26 to 28, 2023, pressing issues as per the charter of demands and the action programme adopted in the historic All India Joint Convention of Workers and Farmers on August 24 at Talkatora Stadium, New Delhi.

Demands of the convention included the fixation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) on farmer's produce on the formula given by Dr Swaminathan Commission, withdrawal of cases on farmers during 13 month-long sitting at Delhi borders, compensation to the martyred farmers during agitation, punishment to the culprits of Lakhimpur Kheri killings, resignation of Minister of state for home, withdrawal of Electricity Amendment Bill 2020, withdrawal of four labour codes, stopping of privatisation of Public Sector enterprises, end to corporate loot, filling of sanctioned posts in the government establishments, address the unemployment issue, withdraw the raised prices on essential commodities, withdraw NEP-2020, provide affordable education and health services, water and basic civic facilities to all.

The mahadharna also stressed the other demands of the convention including Scheme workers being provided with worker status, minimum wages being raised to Rs 26,000 per month, 240 annual working days for MGNREGA job card holder workers, MGNREGA wages being raised to Rs 750

per Day and at least two lakh crore rupees be allocated from Union Budget every year. Demands were raised to restore the Old Pension

**Bijay Jena**

AIUTUC leader Jaysen Meher, AICCTU leader

leader Pramila Behera. The second day of Mahadharna was conducted by AIKS state president Shashibhusan Swain, AIKS

Mishra, AIKMS leader Ashok Pradhan, AIKMS leader Raghunath Das, AIKS leader Purna Chandra Padhy, AIKMS leader Bhala Ch Sarangi, AIKMS leader Srikanta Mohanty, AIKMS leader Shankar, POKSS leader Ashok Pradhan, NAPM leader Prafulla Samantra, NUGCMS leader Satyabrata Nayak, Lohia Academy representative Debaray Mohapatra, INSAF leader Narendra Mohanty.

On the third day, AITUC national secretary Rama Krishna Panda, INTUC president Dr Ram Ch Khuntia, AIKS (Canning lane) general secretary Hannan Molla, AIKS vice president Ashis Kanungo, AITUC state general secretary Bijaya Jena, state vice president Prasant Patto Joshy, state secretaries Jayanta Das, Kishore Jena, Namita Sahu, Satyabadi Bagh, Mayadhar Nayak, Harapriya Swain, Bidyadhar Mahanta, Abakash Sahu, AIKS state secretary Kshirod Singhdeo, Manoj Parida, AIKS Odisha secretary Suresh Panigrahi, POKSS leader Lingaraj Pradhan, Saroj Mohanty; AIBEA leader Manoranjan Das, Sanjib Pati, AILICWF leader Bipin Mohanty, GIEAIA leader Manoj Ratha, AIFUCTO president Dr Amiya Kumar Mohanty, Nikhila Odisha Shikshak Maha Sangha president Dusmanta Nayak, Women leaders Puspa Dash, Pramila Behera, NFIW state secretary Chinmayee Sahani and Isani Satpathy addressed the protest.

They elaborated how the RSS - BJP led Union government has on all counts made the lives of people miserable, working mainly against the interest of the



Scheme, EPF Pension be fixed at nine thousand Rupees per month with VDA linkages. Resolutions were moved to stop Israel's war on Palestine, rescue workers trapped in Uttarkashi tunnel, working hours should be fixed at six hours per day and 36 hours per month, and rejection of EDSA. Thousands participated in Mahadharna from across the state.

The Mahadharana conducted by CTUs and Kishan Morcha on first day was led by presidium consisting of All India Trade Union Congress Orissa state president Ashok Dash, INTUC state president Dr Ram Chandra Khuntia, HMS leader B N Mahapatra, CITU state president Janardan Pati,

Bansidhar Das, TUCCI Odisha president Jagannath

## Palestine Solidarity Day by WFTU Stop War & Destruction in Palestine

In accordance with the call given by the World Federation of Trade Union (WFTU) its affiliates led by the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) staged a demonstration at Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bhubaneswar. AITUC national secretary Rama Krishna Panda addressed the solidarity demonstration. He condemned the US-supported genocide in Gaza killing thousands of children, women, and Palestinian people, and demanded the cease of war.

CITU leader Dushmanta Das and AICCTU state working president Radhakanta Sathy have addressed the occasion. Other leaders Jayanta Das, Ramesh Jena, Puspa Panda, Pradip Nayak, Sura Jena, Shankar Barik, Bhramarbar Rout, Panchanan Sahu, Balaram Jali, Akuli Natha, Bansidhar Parida, Chhetambar Bhoi joined with the agitators expressing their solidarity with Palestine and demanding complete stopping of war. The agitators demanded that the Union government should not send workers from India to Israel.



## Govt Bent Rules to Allow Mining in Forested Areas: CPI MP

Communist Party of India national council secretary Binoy Viswam MP issued the following statement on December 4, 2023 saying that the government bent rules and ignored the opinion of environment ministry to allow mining in forested areas:

In response to a parliamentary question raised by CPI parliamentary party leader Binoy Viswam, it was revealed that the coal ministry ignored the apprehensions raised by the environment ministry, Central Mine Planning and Design Institute and allowed for auction of coal mines in densely forested areas of MP and Chhattisgarh.

Coal minister Pralhad Joshi in a written reply stated that the ministry of environment, forests and

climate change institute. (MoEF&CC) in August, 2018 had informed that 15 coal blocks fall in the area which needs to be conserved. He also added that after a meeting with the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute, it was decided mining would be not possible due to the fragility of the region and "It was decided that it may not be possible to carve out some portion from the blocks. Therefore, these 15 blocks may not be considered for allocation."

However, in a complete U-turn, clearances for mining were issued in 2022, without any justification for the loss of biodiversity and reservations of environment ministry and the CMPDI, overruling the coal ministry's own expert scientific

institute.

Coal blocks were put for commercial auction and single bids were received from the Adani Group after intense lobbying. Mines could not be allotted to the Adani Group due to technical reasons but overruling all opinions and opening country's forests for destruction to favour the Adani Group shows that government's love for Adani knows no bounds.

Binoy Viswam, in response to the answer stated: "The government has no concern for the natural wealth of the country or for the people whose livelihood depends on forests. Enabling biodiversity loss of this magnitude, completely overruling the view of environment ministry, shows that how far greed has

entered the system. For Adani, government's own expert opinion can be disregarded, and rules changed drastically to open the country's forests for Adani to exploit."

### No AIIMS Made Fully Functional under Modi

Binoy Viswam in another press release issued on December 5 said that the government's own data exposed the hollowness of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tall claims on building new All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) institutions across the country.

He was quoting from the written reply given by the minister of state for health and family welfare Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar to a question raised by him in Rajya Sabha relating to the

functioning of AIIMS. The strength of faculties in AIIMS across the country remains much lower than the sanctioned strength. The government data also revealed the huge burden on the medical education system in India as the number of students in AIIMS across the country is far more than the sanctioned number of seats.

Dismal student-faculty ratio is resulting in poor health services. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently claimed that his government has tripled the number AIIMS in the country, but none of them became functional and some of his announcements remain on paper.

Out of the total 5,672 sanctioned faculty positions, 2,134, that is nearly 38 per

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## What the Others Say...

### The Crime Story

The latest edition of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report reveals disturbing trends. The recorded crimes against women, children, senior citizens, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes show a steep increase, 468 people took their lives every day in 2022 and cyber crimes went up by nearly 25 per cent.

The NCRB does not claim that these figures represent an accurate count of criminal offences across the country. The agency has underlined that its data record the incidence of registered crime, not the actual numbers. The report should, therefore, be read to understand the big picture in terms of crime registration.

The NCRB has flagged a caveat: An increase in crime numbers in state or city-level police data — in Delhi, for instance — could be on account of greater awareness, increased presence of law enforcement agencies or citizen-centric initiatives. But policymakers also need to be alert to under-reporting. As the NCRB points out, the perpetrators of violence are often acquaintances of those at the receiving end. Women, for example, find it very difficult to report abusers in their close circles — husbands, fathers, partners, family members, friends.

For the same reason, the true extent of violence against children is likely to be greater than that estimated by the bureau. An earlier NCRB report, in fact, acknowledged that it did not "capture the socio-economic causative factors". The agency's data can, no doubt, be read along with studies that shine a light on the structural impediments faced by the underprivileged — for instance, NFHS reports or recent studies that show that women find it difficult to register FIRs. There is also a growing body of scholarship which shows that people from marginalised social groups are often pressured into not reporting crimes against them. The NCRB must sharpen its methodologies and make its reports more nuanced.

The growing incidents of cybercrime — the NCRB report underlines the seriousness of this threat — call for law enforcers to stay ahead of the curve. Across the world, data is becoming an important tool for ensuring public safety.

The NCRB cannot be impervious to conversations on the use of digital systems for crime prevention and investigation. It must step up to new challenges, and find ways to effectively address old ones.

*Courtesy: The Indian Express*

### Looming Threat of Urban Floods

Cyclone Michaung has thrown life in Chennai out of gear. An unusually heavy downpour (151 mm in 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on December 4, the third highest in a 24-hour period; and the 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on December 5 will likely be worse) has forced the government to call in the army for rescue and relief. The airport is closed and many trains have been cancelled. Schools are shut as memories of the 2015 floods return to haunt the city residents. Two record-breaking downpours on November 16 and December 2 and mismanagement of reservoirs had caused havoc in the city that year. These extreme weather events are no longer once-a-century events. Delhi, this year, Bengaluru last year and Mumbai in 2005 saw devastating floods. There are both local reasons and global factors for these events. The infrastructure has not kept up with the pressures of population explosion. Lakes, tanks and floodplains of rivers have been encroached, leading to impediments in drainage of flood waters. The climate crisis has accentuated these disasters. Rainfall that was spread across the monsoon season often falls in a day or two. An already creaking urban drainage system is stretched even further, leading to a breakdown: In coastal cities like Chennai, the tide complicates matters.

In September, Mediterranean storm Daniel affected Libya, Greece and Turkey, with 11,000 persons killed in Libya alone. Rising global temperatures are making cyclonic storms frequent — this phenomenon is increasing on India's west coast. We need to heed the warning. Dubai COP28 has just launched the loss and damage fund, meant to help vulnerable countries cope with climate crisis disasters. Indian cities too need to be ready for frequent extreme events. From ensuring better upkeep and expansion of public infrastructure to protecting natural drainage systems to putting disaster management plans in place, the task is cut out.

*Courtesy: The Hindustan Times*



# Oil Giants Subvert COP28 Agenda

COP28, that is Conference of Parties, is the United Nation's climate Summit being held in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from November 30 to December 12, 2023. Some 200 government representatives, the signatories of the Climate Agreement in 1992 will take stock of the measures to limit global warming pledged in the 2015 Paris Agreement. Also, daily sessions are being held dedicated to fast-tracking energy resources, net zero loss for damage, health, and sustainable agriculture affected by climate change.

It is hoped that COP28 will help to limit long-term global temperature rise to 1.5 C and attainment of net zero for phasing out fossil fuel use by 2050. However, 2023 has been the warmest year in human history, with temperatures rising by 2.4 to 2.7 C, recorded in some major world cities. Hence the task before the summit participants is enormous in planning measures to reduce toxic gas emissions by phasing out (not phasing down as suggested by some developed countries) very shortly.

Burning fossil fuels that is coal, petrol, gas, and diesel which are chiefly responsible for global warming, they are responsible for the emission of 40 percent toxic gases into our atmosphere. These gases blanket around the earth and block the heat into the outer sky.

Thus, heated earth and oceans change the wind flow and alter the regular monsoon pattern. Apart from the loss of hundreds of plants, birds, and animal species annually high temperatures are melting ice in the ice-covered continent Antarctica and the Himalayan mountains,

resulting in flash floods and inundation of coastal islands and cities. The altered monsoon pattern is causing long drought spells followed by untimely heavy rains and floods thus causing enormous damage to standing crops and population.

## Controversial host

Phasing out fossil fuel production and use should be the major theme of the Summit. Reaching net zero means stopping to add greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. However, the

## Soma Marla

assistance to affected poor countries, deforestation, conservation of biodiversity, rivers, oceans, and other global commons in nature. Interestingly, leaked reports from BBC (December 2, 2023) reveal that several oil-producing countries are planning to expand production capacity. UAE is planning to use its role to strike new oil and gas deals. Also, ADNOC, the Arab Emirates oil company, the third largest oil producing

Nearly 100 countries promised to treble world renewable energy use by 2030 and 50 oil and gas companies including Saudi giant Aramco pledged to stop adding to planet-warming gases by 2050. This only covers emissions from production, not the burning of fossil fuels and critics said it would not meaningfully tackle climate change. Despite loud announcements made by Narendra Modi, India alone during the last two years doubled coal production and increased coal imports

most of the CO<sub>2</sub> produced from burning fossil fuels in power stations from being released into the atmosphere, and either re-uses it or stores it underground. But it is expensive and still in its infancy.

## Clean Energy is Big Bossiness

Carbon capture is nothing but trapping most of the CO<sub>2</sub> produced from burning fossil fuels in power stations from being released into the atmosphere, either re-using it or storing it underground. But this is very expensive. Some critics say fossil fuel producers hope to use the technology to allow them to continue relying on oil and gas forever. Do much publicised Electric vehicles and brown Hydrogen production come under clean energy is questionable. For carbon sequestration or EV or solar battery production for electrical vehicles or electrolysis underlying production of brown hydrogen need an enormous quantity of fossil fuels. These technologies are very capital-intensive and only large MNCs can handle their production.

The world's entire clean energy investments are estimated at 1.8 trillion US dollars according to the IEA. Despite the cacophony of claims from oil and gas producers, the actual levels of investment in the transition to net zero are negligible and the industry is not doing anywhere near enough. This is during a period when oil and gas companies have been recording record profits. Energy transition and production of clean energy are big businesses with major players General Electricals (GE), NextEra Energy, Total, and Gautam Adani investing nearly 1.3 trillion dollars.

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present host UAE is one of the top oil-producing countries and Sultan al-Jaber is the president of the COP28 summit. As noted above, oil and gas are the main culprits for climate change. Ironically developed West and major global oil and coal-producing corporations are currently changing the Summit agenda to suit their corporate interests. Issues like green credits for carbon requesting, industrial production of brown hydrogen, and corporate farming are suggested instead of measures for a gradual reduction in toxic gas emissions and decarbonization, loss of damage climate fund

company announced in 2022, its plans for new drilling, making the second-largest expansion of oil and gas production globally. The real challenge for COP28 is to put pressure on the oil and gas sector to move away from producing oil and gas. Presently the fossil fuel industry reported record-high revenues of 5 trillion US dollars in 2022. British Petroleum (BP) and Exxon Mobil have announced their plans to increase their production by 15 percent by 2030.

## Green Washing and Capitalism

Nations and oil companies at the climate summit made certain energy pledges on December 2, 2023.

instead of cutting consumption of fossil fuels. In previous COP summits held at Glasgow and Egypt, governments took pledges to decarbonize the planet by arriving at net zero gradually by 2050. However, in reality, none of the promises have been implemented on the ground. Instead of reduction, the proportion of released toxic GH gases is estimated to increase by 15 percent by 2030. They keep changing the goalposts and time limits by postponing the pledged reduction limits from 2030 to further away.

Instead of Phasing out the fossil fuels, they are now resorting to greenwashing.

Carbon capture stops



# CPI Opposes Adding Secrecy to Post Office System

Communist Party of India national executive member Sandosh Kumar P participating in the discussion on the Post Office Bill, 2023 on December 4, 2023 said that he is thankful to him for retaining the English name which is understandable to each and every Indian and not replacing it with the Hindi translation of the name. He observed that all initiatives to modernize the post office system, which is the largest in the world, are welcome. But, we are not in a position to support the Bill in the existing form, especially, with the provisions of Clause 9 and its sub-clauses.

The Clause 9 and its sub-clauses will turn our post office into Pegasus offices. He wanted to know why each and every aspect of life, each and every institution is being linked with the security of the nation. The interest of security of the nation is a concept which can be misused. The government has misused it many times. He requested the minister to delete this particular provision.

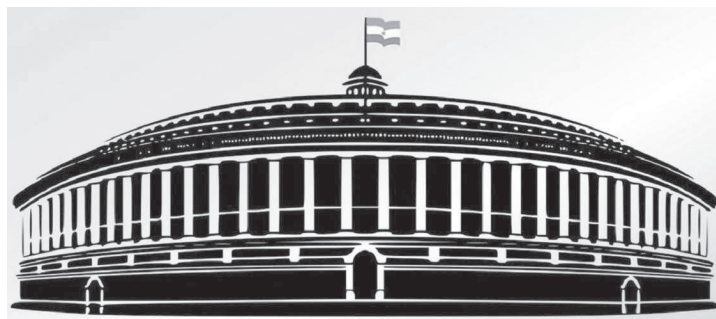
Secondly, while working on modernizing the postal system, we have to think of the unused postal land also. The department is having acres of land in various parts of the country. For example, in Kochi, they have more than one acre of land which is unused. There must be provisions and plans to make use of this unused postal land.

Thirdly, the India Post is having just 15 percentage of business in this area. The remaining 85 percentage is in the hands of private players. He wanted to know whether the government

He concluded by saying that even though, we are in favour of modernizing our postal system, the government has to take into account all those concerns. As far as the postal workers are concerned, hundreds of posts are still vacant. The government has to take steps to fill up the vacancies as early as possible. Moreover, the wages of these grassroots level workers must be enhanced.

## Address Financial Crisis in Kerala

Raising the issue of financial crisis in Kerala



CPI IN PARLIAMENT- RAJYA SABHA

has any provision to control the private players. Otherwise secrecy has no value and privacy has no value. Obviously, these customers will go towards private players. There must be something to control the private players also.

during zero hour, Sandosh Kumar P demanded immediate release of Rs 5,352 crores Central aid which is due to the state. It is the genuine share of the people of Kerala and it is not anybody's generosity. This

amount includes Rs 790 crores in the form of UGC pay revision, another Rs 700 crores for paddy procurement and Rs 220 crores for health care. Altogether, it comes to Rs 5,352 crores. Kerala has submitted all the documents and made certain changes suggested by the central government. But, till now, this huge amount is pending.

He pointed out that the existing Centre-state financial relations must be redefined. According to the Fifteenth Finance Commission, as rightly observed, states account for more than 62 per cent of total national expenditure. The states are playing a major role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, whereas, their income share is just 37 per cent. This huge and glaring disparity must be addressed urgently.

He concluded by saying that after the implementation of the GST, states are suffering due to shortage of funds. So, there is an immediate need for revisiting or restructuring or redefining the Centre-State financial relations. Otherwise, we cannot achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. He urged the Union government to take note of that. Also, Kerala is a state which is the worst sufferer. The Fifteenth Finance Commission provided for just 1.9 per cent of the Central taxes to Kerala, whereas, at the time of Tenth Finance Commission, it was 3.9 per cent of the Central taxes.

## Provide Decent Wages to Scheme Workers

Communist Party of India national council secretary Binoy Viswam during zero

hour demanded on December 5, 2023 that the government must provide decent wages along with meaningful engagement terms to government-sponsored scheme workers. They are ASHA workers, Aanganwadi workers and mid-day meal workers in lakhs.

He said the government and the House have the duty to look deep into their living conditions. They are simply surviving on paltry wages. We use lofty words for them like 'global health leaders' and warriors of the country. We gave them such names during Covid days. But when it comes to ensuring them proper livelihood, we always forget them. It is high time that we thought about them. The ASHA workers, the accredited social health activists, are doing immense service to the nation. In every walk of life, they are the first point of healthcare and social security but their concerns are not always addressed.

Aanganwadi workers form the first meeting point for the children of our country. They teach them, feed them and open their eyes to the world but they are not taken care of. Similar is the case with the mid-day meal scheme workers. The mid-day meal scheme workers work towards ensuring food security also, but lakhs of them are deprived of even decent wages. It is high time that the government paid attention to them. We call them volunteers and deny the right due to workers. We have to treat them as workers. We have to ensure that their wages are fixed paid decent wages, treated well and provided decent working conditions to them.

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# Hike Income Cap for EWS School Admission: Delhi HC

Picking up the threads from the November 16, 1992 OBC “creamy layer” ruling — which put an income cap on OBC quotas — the Narendra Modi government, via the 103rd amendment, sought to get around caste-based reservations by pushing welfarism among the poor who are outside the purview of Mandal.

Over the last eight years, the Narendra Modi-led BJP, both in government and party, has built a key plank of its politics around the labharthi, the beneficiary of a welfare scheme, who is framed, not by her social identity but by individual, quantifiable, criteria that aim to define a need-based architecture. The Supreme Court’s imprimatur on the 103rd amendment, allowing 10 per cent quota for the poorest of the poor among upper castes, both strengthens — and affirms — this plank.

The majority verdict by the five-judge Supreme Court bench endorsing the 103rd Amendment offers an expansive view of the affirmative action vision offered by the Constitution. The 103rd Amendment, passed by Parliament in 2019, had inserted clauses in Articles 15 and 16, which allowed the government to introduce quotas for economically weaker sections of the society that did not avail of other reservation verticals. The majority verdict has rejected a challenge against the amendment, which argued that it violated the basic structure of the Constitution. The dissenting judgment by Justice S Ravindra Bhat has held that while an economic quota is justified for accessing public goods including subsidies (Article 15), it can’t be extended to reservation (Article 16), which seeks

representation of the community. So far, legal and policy debates on structural discrimination in India have focussed mostly on the social category of caste: Instruments such as scholarships were mooted to alleviate economic inequalities whereas reservations in education and employment were instituted to end discrimination rooted in caste.

Saying that the criteria must be scientific and based

Saying that the criteria must be scientific and based on actual data, the single-judge bench of Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav asked the Delhi government to assess prevailing economic conditions and other relevant factors.

“Till the aforesaid exercise is done and appropriate amendment is made in the scheme, the required income... shall be considered to be increased to Rs 5 lakh

Sections and Disadvantage Group) Order, 2011, all schools are required to admit at least 25 per cent children from the EWS category at the entry level. No fee is charged from these students. The court directed the Delhi government’s Directorate of Education (DoE) to frame a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for income verification and regular monitoring of the eligibility criteria.

The court was hearing a



on actual data, the single-judge bench of Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav asked the Delhi government to assess prevailing economic conditions and other relevant factors.

The Delhi High Court ordered the Delhi government to increase the cap on annual family income for admission to schools under the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) category from Rs 1 lakh (Rs 8,333 per month) to Rs 5 lakh (Rs 41,667 per month) “with immediate effect”.

Asking the Delhi government to decide expeditiously on increasing the threshold income to a “commensurate amount which corresponds to the living standards of the intended beneficiaries”, the HC said Rs 5 lakh would be the new cap till a decision is taken.

instead of Rs 1 lakh as all the other states have the threshold amount in question to the tune of almost Rs 8 lakh. The aforesaid directions are made operational with immediate effect,” Justice Kaurav said.

Delhi’s per capita income, as per the latest Economic Survey, was Rs 4.44 lakh in 2022-23.

The court said the Rs 1 lakh cap did not reflect the “economic hardships faced by the families in contemporary times”. “It is deeply agonising to see the complete apathy and lackadaisical attitude of the state authorities which is at the helm of protecting the educational rights of the economically weaker sections of the society, which flow from the fundamental Right to Education,” it said.

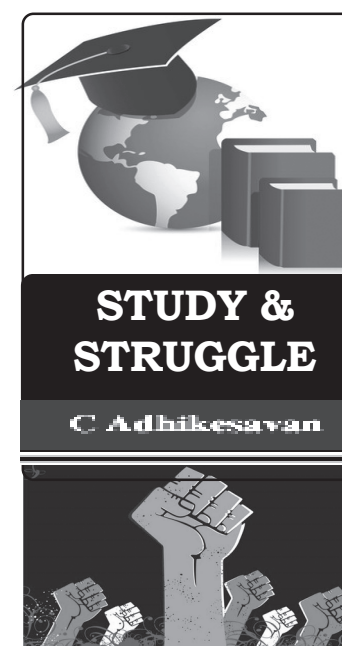
According to the Delhi School Education (free seats for students belonging to Economically Weaker

plea against the cancellation of a student’s admission under the EWS category, for allegedly submitting false income and birth certificates. Dismissing the plea, the HC observed that admission was secured in a “mala fide manner and by playing a fraud upon the institutions”. While it permitted the student to remain in school under the general category, the HC asked the father to deposit Rs 10 lakh within six months, failing which admission would be deemed to be cancelled.

The case reflects a “tormenting state of affairs where the opulent class is putting in blood, sweat and tears to reap the benefits of EWS reservation at the expense of the economically marginalised candidates,” the court said.

**Academicians question DU’s decision to introduce dual degrees**

The Democratic



Teachers’ Front, Delhi University highlights the flip side of the proposal. The proposal by the AC was met with resistance from a few members who felt that this might burden the students. Allowing the students to pursue two degrees simultaneously is not in their academic interest as they will not be able to pay desired attention to their studies. Moreover, they will also not get adequate time for self-study and it will not have any qualitative outcomes,” say DU professors. For each course at DU, there are a lot of different lectures that are conducted for a course and every subject has multiple readings that require undivided attention. “DU students generally do reasonably well in their careers, hence, there is no need for them to simultaneously pursue another degree from a different university in an ODL mode for qualitative career progression. Instead, the students should be encouraged to take up internships and summer projects related to their main degree which enhance their practical knowledge and provide them with hands-on learning and experience. This will be a better way to broaden their academic base instead of giving them an option to simultaneously pursue another degree.

Calling the dual degree “total farce”, DUTA says that it undermines the value of a full-time degree.



## BJP Hatao, Desh Bachao, Beti Bachao

# NFIW Holds State-Wide Rallies in Bihar

**N**ational Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) organised three marches covering 38 districts of Bihar raising the slogan “BJP Hatao, Desh Bachao, Beti Bachao.” The rallies were held successfully from November 21 to December 3, 2023. Thousands of women participated in the rallies and more than hundreds of public meetings were all over the state.

The marches were flagged off by NFIW general secretary Annie Raja on November 21. Ram Naresh Pandey, secretary of the Communist Party of India (CPI) Bihar state council was also present on the occasion. The rallies covered cities and villages, and small meetings and public programmes were held. The rallies concluded on December 3, 2023. Prior to the rally, a meeting was held at Jansakti Bhavan. NFIW Bihar state working president Nivedita Jha presided over the meeting.

In her address, Annie Raja said that BJP is the greatest enemy of the common people and marginalized sections of our country. While Narendra Modi was the chief minister of Gujarat, pre-planned gang rapes happened and no steps were taken to stop it. In his speech



*NFIW general secretary Annie Raja addressing the rally*

on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> Indian Independence Day, Narendra Modi praised the “double-engine government” of Gujarat. The same government had released the culprits of Bilkis Banu gang rape case by stating that they were pious, saintly, and great Brahmins with high morals. It is to be remembered that these people the three-year-old daughter of Bilkis Banu and her family members were massacred by these criminals.

In the BJP rule, the daughters of Dalits, and other backward sections of the country are unsafe. Wherever they are brutally assaulted or raped BJP leaders of that places would

**Kirnesh Kumar**

come forward in support of the culprits. In earlier days

criminals who attack or assault women. Today, BJP is readily giving help and resort rapists and those persons who attack the



there used to be intensified anger in society towards the

modesty of women. Brij Bhushan, Gurmit Ram Rahim, and Swami Chinmayanand, etc are all examples of this. RSS is an anti-women organization. The government led by BJP-RSS has implemented the Women Reservation Bill all of a sudden because of the continuous struggle led by NFIW and our leader Gita Mukherjee and pressure from the judiciary. Annie Raja said.

The three rallies were led by NFIW Bihar state secretary Rajsree Kiran, former MLC Usha Sahni, Prof. Chandana Jha and Bharati Sinha. Other

leaders, Lalita Kumari, Rinku Kumari, Anita Sharma, and Sabina were at the helm of the rallies. The rallies received warm reception throughout the state. Public meetings were held at different places. Working women, students, and women from all spheres attended the meeting. The rally led by state secretary Rajsree Kiran and young women leader Sabina covered Bhojpur, Buxar, Kaimur, Rohtas, Aurangabad, Arwal, Jehanabad, Gaya, Nawada, Sheikhpura, Jamui, Munger and Nalanda districts. The leaders in their address to the public called for ousting BJP from power in the 2024 general elections. They also spoke about the relevance of the struggle against all the

evils against women in the country and urged women masses to join hands with NFIW to strengthen the struggle to safeguard women's rights.

The second rally led by Prof. Bharati Sinha, Chandana Jha and Rinku Kumari covered the areas near to Nepal border and West Champaran. The rally received warm and vibrant reception throughout the journey. This rally also covered Vaishali, Muzzafarpur, East Champaran, Madhubani, Darbhanga, Samastipur, Begusarai, Khagaria,

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# Conquer the Destiny of the Country, the People and Yourself

Keeping in view the call of Safeguarding Socialist Secular Democracy Marching to Defeat Patriarchy, Religious Majoritarianism, the 22<sup>nd</sup> national conference of the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) is scheduled to be held on December 8 to 10, 2023 at Kharagpur, West Bengal. This organization was founded 70 years ago on June 4, 1954 in Kolkata. An important similarity between the situation then and the current state of the country and the world is being observed today.

The decade around the formative stage of NFIW was turbulent. The “Rao Committee” was formed in 1941 because of the enlightenment in subjugated India by the initiative of individual thinkers in the country to introduce reformatory laws. For women to gain equal rights in their family laws, discussions on British law reform and new legislation towards the “Uniform Civil Code” were the call of the time.

On rejection of such demand, the movement for the “Hindu Code Bill” came into force. The joint committee consisting of progressive women’s organizations of the country including AIWC (All India Women’s Conference), Bhagini Samaj of Maharashtra, WSDC of Punjab, Mahila Atma Raksha Samity of Bengal, Assam, and Orissa Committee, convened by Kamla Chatterjee, leader of the Bengali Provincial Mahila Atma Raksha Samiti, conducted nationwide campaign through meetings, gathering signatures.

As part of this, a joint meeting was organized at Kolkata University Institute Hall. The chairperson of the meeting was Sarojini Naidu. When all over the country women were coming forward with a progressive movement for their rights.

RSS took their usual negative role in breaking the movement by forming ‘Hindu Nari Sangh.’ They even vandalised the meeting in Kolkata.

On the other hand, in the post-World War II phenomenon, WIDF (Women’s International Democratic Federation) was formed in 1945 for the war-affected women and children.

There, Ella Reed, the secretary of the Samity of Bengal, and Vidya Kanuga (Munshi), along with one from AIWC and another—four participated as delegates. At that time, women were taking an important role in the struggle of Tebhaga-Telangana across the country. Left-wing women’s organizations were fighting for legislation to demand women’s rights in independent India.

Due to the partition of the country, women were taking an important role in fighting the refugee problem, their residence, and livelihood in Bengal and Punjab provinces. As a result of the struggle to live with dignity, various women’s organizations were formed with participation of refugee women.

To give a national form to all these struggles, it was necessary to lead the movement by bringing women from among those engaged as agri workers, labour, and home maker to

*Shyamasree Das*

the front line. It became necessary to build an all-India organization at the national level—which would have a global outlook.

Within the AIWC, it was not possible to enforce the demand for the inclusion of women from farmer and labour classes. Until 1948, communist women played a significant role within the AIWC. In 1954, on June 4, NFIW was founded in Kolkata after WIDF’s 2<sup>nd</sup> World Conference in Copenhagen in 1953. With 1,29,267 members from 14 provinces of the country, various women’s organizations of the country joined the conference with a larger vision—a sense of world fraternity in favour of peace against war right to work with an anti-imperialist and above all secularist approach.

The poster campaign at NFIW’s first conference called for a “victory song for new life”—“CHILDREN NEED PEACE AS FLOWERS NEED SUNSHINE”.

One of the most important aspects of this organization is its “federal character”—it is not an “authorized” organization of any political party. Another very important aspect is that an individual who is not affiliated with any organization can take the position of “Individual” member of this national organization (NFIW) and he can be engaged in the work of this organization with all the organizational rights and responsibilities.

At present, we are facing new challenges arising from

the pitfalls of past problems during the 22<sup>nd</sup> National Conference of the organization.

Attempts to polarise the world in an attack on Palestine on the backdrop of war.

The government of the country is working in favour of misogynist attitudes, hindering women’s progress. The legal system also appears to be affected by this anti-progressive environment. The cases of Bilkis Begum, Manisha Valmiki and Kamduni are glaring examples. Even the protesting people who have worked against these femicides, in support of the tortured, are being falsely prosecuted by the state. They have been pushed behind bar on false charges. The arrest of Teesta Setalvad is an example of this.

The authoritarian, hegemonic government at the center does not shy away from creating conditions for communal riots to keep the power of the state under its control. Look at the incident in Manipur - there was indiscriminate killing. The state on the other hand is taking legal repressive measures against them who undertook protest action. The state charges brought against our leadership rushing into the Manipur incident including the General Secretary of our organisation, NFIW, is irrefutable proof of this.

Hegemony of the Hindu majority across the country—desperately trying to control over the individual choice of practice, eating, wearing. Today the secular character of our country is facing challenges.

Independent foreign policy of our country is endangered today. The Indian government is supporting the belligerent Israel by abandoning the ideal of non-aggression in its foreign policy.

All these are accompanied by abnormal inflation, unemployment. As a result, the number of starving people is gradually increasing.

During this period, after the 21<sup>st</sup> National Conference of NFIW in Jaipur in 2020, the spread of Covid-19 across the globe posed a grave threat to human society. Not only the health care problem, but the indifference of the country’s government to the helpless condition of the jobless people put the working people in a state of extreme crisis.

The government only creates gimmicks of “Tali Bajao, Thali Bajao, Diya Jalao” sounds. And ordinary people have fought for their lives. Common people appeared next to the helpless people to the best of their ability out of human compassion. The countrymen have seen the positive role of the left-wing government of Kerala amidst this situation.

On the other hand, people have also fought to protect their rights. Farmers’ constant sit-ins against the government’s repressive agriculture laws—our country’s food producers fought to the death. Mass organizations were actively involved with it. As a result, the government was forced to repeal the draconian law. Terrible forms of women abuse have been seen in the

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## Contributions of Working Class

# In Freedom Movement and National Development

*Dr B K Kango*

**W**orking class has played a very important role in the process of human development. Indian independence movement was an important aspect of human development. The biggest contribution of the working-class movement is to bring the concept of empowerment of people to the center stage of development. Today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century there are two models of development. One is GDP that is pure growth model based on increase in productivity and profit (dominance of economic criteria).

The second model is that of the human development index, it should be the basis of development or progress. It is the biggest contribution of the working class that since 20<sup>th</sup> century this human-centric model has been brought to the center stage because of its struggle. On this background, one must analyze contribution of the working class in pre-independence and post-independence India. Indian Independence movement for the working class was always a struggle against colonialism and imperialism, since the country itself was identified with the working class.

For working class independence meant not only the transfer of power from the British to the Indians but empowerment of the Indian people on all fronts. Hence working class continued and continues to play an important role in pre- and post-independence India.

The independence of India was necessary to

defeat imperialism and to bring empowerment of people through democracy based on principles of human rights and equality. For this, a secular country was needed. The newly independent Indian state became democratic, secular and socialist-oriented. The Constitution itself was the greatest achievement of the working-class movement. All those who accuse the working class of having been entrapped in economism are emphasizing only the economic acceptance of the working-class struggle missing the broader picture.

Power is not only about political power, but it comes through wealth, caste and religious hierarchy, and other privileges. Working class fights for equality of all through economic and political struggles, attacks the privileges of the ruling class, and fights for justice. This must be the basis for analyzing the role of the working class in India.

In the early stage of struggle working class fought for changes in the Factory Act to reduce the working hours, weekly off, and restrict child labour. For this, it organized workers beyond religious, caste, language, and colour differences.

Under the influence of Marxism and social reformers like Mahatma Phule in Maharashtra, people like NM Lonkhande and Sahpurjee organized textile workers around 1880 and a charter was submitted to the government demanding changes in the Factory Act. Growing consciousness of the working class in

Mumbai was reflected in the action when it called for a six-day strike against the imprisonment order issued against Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak in 1907. Lenin took note of this development and wrote that this rise in consciousness of Indian working class would make it impossible for the British to rule India for a long time.

After 1917, the Great October Revolution in Russia under the leadership of Lenin, raised the consciousness of workers all over the world. Indian working class was no exception. It decided to organize and form a union. Thus, the first national union of the working class, that was All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), was formed on October 31, 1920 in Mumbai. Since its formation, AITUC has been fighting for socialism and national independence. In 1921 in its conference at Jharia,

AITUC passed a resolution demanding complete independence from the Britishers. Till that time the Congress which was the people's movement demanded only home rule and not complete independence. Hence, from 1921 till 1929, AITUC organized a demonstration before every session of Congress convention demanding that the resolution for complete independence be adopted by the Congress. This was done in the Congress session at Lahore in 1929 in which Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru became the president

of the Congress.

Subsequently, the working class participated with enthusiasm in all the major struggles and calls given by Congress. The working class participated with enthusiasm.

Sacrifices by workers and trade unions for Indian independence. Babu Genu, a mill worker in Mumbai sacrificed his life in the Swadeshi movement. Similarly in 1946 when there was a major mutiny in the Royal Indian Navy, in all the ports the working class organized strikes and supported the striking Naval soldiers.

The leaders of the Mumbai Nursing Federation Kamal Donde and Vimal Ranadive were injured in police firing when they took the morcha to support the Naval mutiny. Kamal Donde died in the firing. This heroic struggle of soldiers and workers hastened the process of independence and departure of British rule in India. After independence the world was divided into two major blocks.

While one was led by USA (Imperialist), the other was led by Soviet Union (Socialist). Because of working-class participation in independence struggle and its growing political influence under the socialist thought process and with the help of socialist countries, the newly independent nation of India adopted a policy of neutrality in foreign affairs and a mixed economy for national development.

The public sector became the most important sector of the economy. All this was because of the

contribution of Indian working class. Any process of development of society has two aspects. One is a rise in productivity and the other is sharing of fruits of this increased productivity. In both these areas, working class played an important role.

Hence, we see from 1930 to 1980 the share of the working class increased with a rise in productivity but the same is not seen from 1990 to 2023.

However, the capitalist system believes in trickle down theory and emphasizes that a rise in productivity and profit will slowly but surely percolate and everyone will benefit. But facts do not support this argument.

Present policy of globalization pursued with privatization and policies against working-class organizations and based on the principle of Liberalization and Privatization and Globalization (LPG) is nothing but a policy of capitalist revival.

Hence, working class is resisting it. In its resistance, the concepts of equality, democracy, human rights, secularism, and social justice are emphasized and hence human-centric development model is the desired result.

In our experience, we have realized the importance of unity of not only the working class but that of all toiling masses. The influence of working class on the state power like that of mid-20th century is the need of the hour to defeat the onslaught of capitalist re-emergence which is now presenting itself as a fascist rule.



# Occupational Safety Measures Cannot Have Laxity

*The accident at the Silkyara tunnel where 41 workers got trapped, has exposed not only vulnerability of such happenings but also poor state of emergency preparedness to deal with such accidents. It is generally the poor workers who are affected in such situations. Only in case of large scale hue and cry or when the stakes are very high on some other accounts, such accidents go either unreported or eventually leave the families of workers to keep on running from pillar to post for treatment if the person concerned survives or for compensation if the worker dies.*

**T**he Central Trade Unions have alleged that invariably it is the callous attitude of the government towards the occupational safety measures which leads to such accidents. Accidents at work places occur due to weaknesses of laws in regard to work place safety of workers and also laxity in their implementation and violations of whatever norms exist.

In this particular case of Silkyara, the team to monitor the rescue operation from the Centre was sent very late. The other workers who are outside are telling that the escape routes/tunnels, which are compulsory to meet such emergency situations in construction of long tunnels, were not even planned! The geologists and experts have come forward telling that the companies and agencies involved in tunnel construction in India tend to overlook safety concerns and measures suggested by them for the sake of cutting the costs and getting maximum profits! Principles of New Austrian Tunneling Method, which is both a construction method and a design philosophy, are also not followed in the true sense. There are serious concerns raised by one expert that the toxic gases being generated inside the tunnel are not being channeled out. The workers complained that the Hume pipes which were placed after one of the earlier accidents, had also been

removed even before the completion of work at the tunnel.

Occupational Health and safety has been an issue of serious concern of health personnel as well as the workers' organizations. The 60<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly held in Geneva in 2007 charted out 'Workers' health: global plan of action'. It recognizes that the 'workers represent half the world's population and are the major contributors to economic and social development. But despite the availability of effective facilities there remain large gaps between and within countries with regard to the health status of workers and their exposure to occupational risks. Only a small number of them have access to occupational health services (1).

According to Ecology Global Network 55.3 million deaths occur every year (2). As per the International Labour organization (ILO) estimates 2.02 million 3.6 per cent of total deaths each year occur from work-related accidents or diseases globally. A further 317 million people suffer from work-related diseases, and there are an estimated 337 million fatal and non-fatal work-related accidents per year. The suffering caused by such accidents and illnesses to workers and their families is incalculable. In economic terms, the ILO has estimated that four per cent

**Dr Arun Mitra**

of the world's annual GDP is lost as a consequence of occupational diseases and accidents (3). According to Indian Population Clock (4) in our country 9.7 million deaths occur every year. Out of this nearly 48000 are workers 4.8 per cent of total deaths (5) every year happen due to occupational accidents. The construction sector contributes 24.20 per cent of the fatalities (6). Many of these tragedies are preventable through the implementation of sound prevention, reporting and inspection practices (7).

India has a work force of about 54 crore people. Despite the fact that they are engaged in the productivity and development of the nation, they remain marginalized as far as healthcare services are concerned. Most of them are in unorganized sectors, who are devoid of any social security benefits. Nearly three per cent of them are in government departments and public sector enterprises. Only they are covered under social security. Among the rest work force small number are in informal economy while vast majority, 93 per cent, are in the informal economy. Other than Government and public sector employees, only about 11 per cent of the total work force is covered under the social security schemes. Thus occupational safety is an issue of utmost importance.

The WHO had suggested that the "national policy frameworks for workers health should be formulated taking into account the relevant international labour conventions and enact legislations to the effect.

These should include establishment of mechanisms for inter-sectoral coordination of activities". This is important because the impact on health in different sectors is different. Those engaged in mining are more prone to the diseases related to exposure to particular substance they are surrounded by. Those in nuclear industry face hazard of radiation exposure. The hospital workers are exposed to infections. The construction workers are more likely to meet traumatic injuries. The sewer men are exposed to waste material and poisonous gases. The methods of prevention, treatment and compensation also vary accordingly. Particular attention has to be paid to high-risk sectors of economic activity, and to the under-served and vulnerable working populations, such as younger and older workers, persons with disabilities and migrant workers, taking account the gender aspects (8).

Unfortunately the Labour Code on OSH & WC does not effectively address the concerns of the health safety of the working population. It has failed to address the primary issues of effective enforcement as also coverage of the larger sections of the Indian workforce.

The central trade unions point out that the Labour Code fails to address the universality of coverage. The code should cover all workers irrespective of nature of employment contract. Apprentice / trainee too must also be covered as they too are exposed to various risks as they are part of the work force. Because of little experience they are at a higher risk than regular employees.

The proposed labour code practically over-looks the concerns of workers employed in the non-registered establishments which accounts for over 93% of the total establishments / workers. The OSH concerns all the employees and workers. Exclusion of any group of workers or employees including supervisors and managers from its coverage is unethical.

Other categories of workers, such as agriculture workers, domestic workers, sewerage workers, salt workers, security guards, forest workers, Information Technology (IT) workers, Gig workers, Aanganwadi workers, etc. should also be included. There should be a specific chapter addressing the concerns of women workers.

If the workforce is not provided a clean, hygienic environment, potable drinking water and other such facilities, they cannot be expected to work to their optimum potential. The trade unions further point out that 'an even more serious issue is when the establishments don't show the full workforce on their records and many workers are just not there' on the records maintained by the establishments. A visit to place of work and the accommodation in the industrial areas proves the point. The decision makers must realize that without a healthy workforce working in a conducive environment and guarantee of safety and health, productivity will be hit badly which will be detrimental to the interests of the country, the society and the employers. It must be accepted that occupational safety and health is a human right of all workers.



# Retrenched ESIC Paramedics Take to Street

*The decision by Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) to terminate the services of 120 contractual staffers has set off a flash protest outside the gates of the ESIC office at Panchdeep Bhawan in New Delhi.*

The retrenchment of all of them happened suddenly without any notice, following the end of the ESIC's arrangement with the contracting company which had provided these staffers

## Our Correspondent

to the Corporation's dispensaries. The victims – all paramedical workers – had been working in various ESIC dispensaries across Delhi since 2017.

“On November 30 this year, all 120 of us were informed that our services would no longer be required,” said Shalini Shukla, a retrenched paramedical worker. “We were not given any prior notice. Our salaries of last

two months are also pending. We want our job back,” she added while taking part in the demonstration at ESIC gates.

On December 1, 2023, a delegation of ESIC victims met the AITUC general secretary, Amarjeet Kaur, and sought her intervention in the matter. Acting promptly, Kaur wrote to Union Labour Minister Bhupender Yadav and ESIC Director General Rajendra Kumar and asked them to continue the services of the retrenched staffers.



“Removal of the paramedical staff so suddenly would cause problems of service provision to the IPs (Insured Persons),” the AITUC general secretary wrote in her letter. “Moreover, we have been insisting in the ESIC meetings that the paramedical staff should not be engaged through contracting companies, and that we should have regular para-medical staff. In the

alternative, we have repeatedly suggested that in case the recruitment is taking time, then the contract should be directly with the ESIC or even if the contractor changes, the services of the contractual staff should continue under new contractor, whereby the ESIC will benefit from the experience gained by the concerned para-medical staff,” she added.

## Oil Giants Subvert...

*From Page 05*

Only in the first half of 2023, as high as Breaking 358 billion US dollars was invested in clean energy production. Adani is the one hand actively involved in coal and gas, electricity production and distribution on the other hand is the major producer of solar power, and green hydrogen in the world. He is an active player in both fossil fuels (like coal) and clean energy production. To encourage carbon sequestrating Indian government has announced the Green Credits programme. To encourage the production of green hydrogen government of India is planning a 2.2 billion US dollar incentive programme to private corporations. Not surprising that Adani would be a major beneficiary.

### Price tagging Nature

Under the neoliberal economy government is actively giving away forests, fertile land, and water bodies to major corporations at subsidized rates. Even amended laws like new mining policies and forest acts to help major corporations to mine even inside the reserve forests. Indian banks are liberally doling out cheap loans to major corporations against the pledged community commons. The corporations are actively involved in the destruction

of forests and other resources of nature.

### Climate Fund

The United States with a share of 14 percentage points is one of the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitters and a major contributor to human-caused climate change. While 46 least developing countries with a population of 1.1 billion emit only four percent, the developed west, China, and India emit most of the pollutants. UN climate summit COP16 held in Caracas, 2006 after nauseating negotiations agreed that developed countries will finance 100 billion dollars annually to mitigate climate-caused damages, and energy transitions towards net zero. Due to the melting of Antarctic ice annually sea level increases by 0.9 meter, causing the disappearance of several island countries like Navuta and Mauritius including our coastal cities Mumbai, Cochin, and Visakhapatnam. Recent flash floods in Pakistan caused by the melting of Himalayan glaciers or serious drought in Africa are testimony to climate change. Hence, the developing South is seeking from major polluters, the developed West five trillion dollars by 2030. Despite making tall promises the developed world failed to walk the talk. Only 432 million dollars have been disbursed to the calamity-

affected countries so far. Routinely the developed West renews fund promises but they hardly meet their fund promises or renewable technology transfer for clean energy transition. Many in Africa are extractive economies, where 30 percent of global mineral reserves are located. USA alone imports heavily from Africa large volumes of metals and rare minerals thus destroying large tracks of natural forests and rivers in Africa. While in the absence of promised funds the poor farmers affected by droughts are filling climate adaptation gaps in their income, sometimes this loss runs up to 30 to 40 percent of their crop incomes.

We have arrived at a turning point in human history. Scientists feel that we have a small window until perhaps 2050 before the multiple and massive environmental problems become irreversible. After that, the planet will not support the existing global capitalist civilization. Let us first start phasing out the use of fossil fuels by 2035 and replace them with renewable sources of energy. Technology for transition is already available but it should not become a hostage for huge profits of major western MNCs. This is a logical transmission to arrive at net zero. We should strive to be confident to pass on mother nature safely to our grandchildren.

## CTU-SKM Jointly Hold...

*From Page 03*

people and the country to the advantage of corporates of Indian and foreign brands. The government has resorted to various oppressive measures by misusing government institutions and various laws to suppress the voice of any opposition by the government policies has been the hallmark of this rule. The forces of communal divide and hatred are given tacit support from the ruling circles vitiating the peace and harmony in the society. This ruling regime does not honour the Indian Constitution. They do not deserve to rule a country with diverse beliefs, cultures, languages, and social milieu. The leaders said that after a review of Mahadharana programmes, the next stage of agitations would be planned by the CTUs and SKM independently and in coordination to throw this government out of power. They gave the clarion call to the people of the great country to work together to build a system on a Common Minimum Programme of people as the alternative in the country.

The Trade Union and farmers' leaders said that the RSS-BJP-led Union government has sold out Indian resources to corporates and is attacking, and exploiting workers, farmers, women, youth, students, Dalits, tribals, minorities and intellectuals every day. Narendra Modi is attempting to throw out the Indian Constitution and enforce Manu Smriti. The government's every step is against the unity, integrity, and sovereignty of India. For the precious independence, lives and livelihood the RSS BJP-led government has to be defeated. A government based on certain Common Minimum People's Programme is to be framed by the workers, farmers and mass movement.

Among others Prabina Dash, Alka Mishra, Braja Bandhu Pradhan, Bhramarabar Rout, Panchanan Mohakud, Gitanjali Pradhan, Babaji Dhal, Itee Mansingh, Kamal Sandha, Basanti Pradhan, Pankajini Swain, Soudamini Das, Laxmi Priya Das, Arati Das Mohapatra, Narmada Nahak, Malaya Manjari Jena, Sisira Mallick, Ranjan Mohapatra, Israel Mali, Somanath Giri, Binod Kumar Behera, Surendra Sharma, Madhavi Kulta, Santoshini Pattanaik were also present at the Mahadharana.



# Ground Offensive Across Gaza Leaves Civilians with Few Places to Seek Safety

*Diary of  
International  
Events*

CADHIKESAVAN

Israeli forces attack Hamas militants across Gaza after expanding their ground offensive to its second-largest city, further shrinking the area where Palestinians can seek safety and halting the distribution of vital aid across most of the territory. The assault on the south threatens further mass displacement within the besieged coastal enclave, where the U.N. says some 1.87 million people—over 80 percent of the population—have already fled their homes.

Across the Gaza Strip, almost the entire population—1.9 million people—have been displaced. Nearly two in three homes are now damaged or destroyed. Amid relentless air, land and sea attacks, thousands of families are forced to relocate from one perilous zone to another. The pulverising of Gaza now ranks amongst the worst assaults on any civilian population in our time and age. Each day we see more dead children and new depths of suffering for the innocent people enduring this hell. Today, more than 750,000 people are crowded into just 133 shelters. Tens of thousands live on the streets of southern Gaza, where, under bombardment, they are forced to improvise basic shelters from whatever they can get hold of. The winter rains have arrived and so have infectious diseases, just as public health services have been utterly paralysed.

The killing of thousands of innocent children and women, the siege on an entire civilian population, and the trapping of bombarded civilians behind closed borders in Gaza are also crimes under international law. There must also be accountability for this, from political and military leaders as well as those who provided arms and support. This military

campaign can in no way be described as ‘self-defense.’

Much of the north, including large parts of Gaza City, has been completely destroyed, and Palestinians fear the rest of Gaza could suffer a similar fate as Israel tries to dismantle Hamas, which has deep roots in the territory it has ruled for 16 years. Benjamin Netanyahu has said Israel will maintain open-ended security control over the territory, something opposed by the United States and much of the international community. The Israeli military said that its

a weeklong truce expired, it said.

Without electricity, ventilators would cease to function, blood donations would have to stop, the sterilization of surgical instruments would be impossible, according to reports. The reports also tell that the hospital is also running desperately low on surgical supplies and external fixators to hold broken bones together. Gaza has been without electricity since early October, and Israel has severely limited fuel imports, forcing several

which have leveled entire city blocks.

More than 100 hostages were released during last week’s cease-fire, along with 240 Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. Family members of hostages held a tense meeting with Netanyahu and the war cabinet in which some of them shouted at cabinet members, accusing them of having no plan to bring back the rest.

## War no end in sight

Hamas’ continuing ability to fight in the north, where



troops were “in the heart” of the southern city of Khan Younis after what it described as “the most intense day” of fighting since the start of the ground operation five weeks ago, with heavy battles in the north as well.

For the past three days, aid distribution—mainly just supplies of flour and water—has been possible only in and around the border city of Rafah, at Gaza’s southern edge, because of fighting and road closures by Israeli forces, the U.N.’s humanitarian aid office said. The aid group Doctors Without Borders said fuel and medical supplies have reached “critically low levels” at the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the central town of Deir al-Balah, north of Khan Younis. Up to 200 wounded people have been brought in every day since December 1, when

hospitals to shut down because they cannot operate emergency generators.

The war has killed more than 16,200 people in Gaza—70 per cent of them women and children—and wounded more than 42,000, according to the territory’s Health Ministry, which released new figures late on December 5. The ministry does not differentiate between civilian and combatant deaths, but its overall tally tracks with a figure released by the Israeli military this week.

The ministry says hundreds more have been killed since the cease-fire ended Friday, and many still are trapped under rubble. The military accuses Hamas of using civilians as human shields when the militants operate in residential areas. But Israel has not given detailed accounts of individual strikes, some of

Israel entered with overwhelming force weeks ago, signals that eradicating the group without causing further mass casualties and displacement—as Israel’s top ally, the U.S., has requested—could prove elusive.

The military says 88 of its soldiers have been killed in the Gaza offensive. A military official said this week that at least 15,000 Palestinians have been killed, including 5,000 militants, but did not explain how the army arrived at those figures. Even after weeks of bombardment, Hamas’ top leader in Gaza, Yehya Sinwar—whose location is unknown—was able to conduct complex cease-fire negotiations and orchestrate the release of scores of hostages last week. Palestinian militants have also kept up their rocket fire into Israel.

The war has been an

unprecedented catastrophe for Palestinians civilians, eclipsing all four previous wars between Israel and Hamas, and their suffering is set to worsen as the offensive grinds on. After the full-scale evacuation of northern Gaza ordered by Israel early in the war, most of Gaza’s population was squeezed into 230 square kilometres (90 square miles) of central and southern Gaza.

Since moving into the south, the Israeli military has ordered people out of nearly two dozen neighbourhoods in and around Khan Younis, further reducing the area where civilians can seek refuge by more than a quarter. It was not clear how many people heeded the evacuation orders, as many Palestinians say they don’t feel safe anywhere in Gaza and fear that if they leave their homes they will not be allowed to return.

The Palestinian people make up one of the largest refugee groups in the world, often forced off their land or pushed to flee amid ongoing conflict in the region, according to the United Nations.

They are stateless, their identity not defined by specific borders, but rather tied together by a collective longing for a place to call home. Their existence has long been traded and transferred by different ruling powers throughout their history, leaving their fate hanging in the balance.

Palestinians are a diverse, multi-religious and multicultural group of roughly 14 million people internationally who trace their roots back to what is now known as the Israeli-Palestinian region of the Middle East.

Palestinians have been described as a “young society,” with people between 15 and 29 years old comprising 30% of the population, according to the United Nations Population Fund.



Govt Bent Rules to Allow...

From Page 04

cent remain vacant. On the other hand, on 2,169 seats sanctioned for MBBS, 9,941, or nearly five times more student are pursuing MBBS in AIIMS. Fund utilisation for AIIMS also falls short showing the ministry’s lack of concern in making these institutes functional to serve the people. Also, six out of 15 AIIMS sanctioned under Modi saw no IPD patients and five of them saw no OPD patients, according to the data given in Parliament. The PM’s claim on AIIMS Darbhanga is debunked again as out of the Rs 1,264 crore sanctioned for the project, not a single rupee is spent as yet. AIIMS Madurai, sanctioned in 2018, saw the expenditure of merely Rs 18.37 crores and AIIMS Manheti only Rs 11.03 since its sanction in 2019.

Binoy Viswam said: “It’s high time that the prime minister convert his tall claims into realities. India’s expenditure on public health remains only 2.1 per cent of the GDP. Even after the disastrous and unprecedented crisis of Covid, the government has been complacent and its apathy towards the health infrastructure of the country is appalling. Medical institutions like AIIMS are keys to provide affordable speciality treatment but the government is not serious on developing quality public health infrastructure.

From Page 08

Bhagalpur, and Banka. The gatherings from the public meetings were huge in these districts. The third rally lead by former MLC Usha Sahni and Lalita Kumari covered Patna, Saran, Siwan, Gopalganj, Lakhisarai, Madhepura, Saharsa, Poonnia, Araria and Katihar.

The concluding session was held at Shaheed Jayaprakash Bhavan in Saharsa. The leaders in their addresses reiterated the aims of the slogan and its relevance in society. Even today women are discriminated against and subjected to various exploitations. Modi remained silent when the women wrestler protested against the sexual harassment by an MP who belongs BJP.

NFIW Holds Rallies...

The anti-women essence of Narendra Modi was again revealed through his long silence and inaction in the Manipur violence in which women were brutally attacked and sexually harassed. The culprits of Bilkis Banu case received warm reception from BJP.

Women should organize against the anti-women BJP government who provide resorts to rapists and assaulters to save the country and women. BJP has economically, socially, and politically sidelined women in this country.

It was decided that Jan Jagaranyatras would be held to remove the BJP from power in the forthcoming election and to counter the political vendetta of the BJP

using the women’s reservation. In her address, Rajsree Kiran said BJP who disrespect women should be taught a lesson. The very ideological basis of BJP is suppressing and silencing women. RSS the mother organization of BJP doesn’t regard women as human beings. Similar attitude is also exhibited towards Dalits, tribals, and minorities by the Sangh. BJP leaders will be on the streets to protect women assaulters and rapists. We have witnessed this in Kathua case, Unnao rape case, Chinmayanand, Ramrahim and Brij Bhushan cases. Women should be given due respect and equality. For this we need to strengthen the movement and NFIW.

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# Conquer the Destiny...

From Page 09

Hathras incident, sexual abuse of wrestlers, and in various other cases of women abuse in different parts of the country. A joint struggle of protest and resistance has also been conducted against it.

In a bad attempt to cover up the struggle of the people, the new parliament building was built without paying attention to the financial crisis and unemployment during the coronavirus pandemic, in the desire to establish Modi's "merit"? By not inviting the constitutional head of the state, President Draupadi Murmu, the government has shown disdain and humiliation towards women and the nation. In the inauguration of that building, have the Hindu religious activities been able to keep the secular character of the country intact? By not inviting the constitutional head of the state, President Draupadi Murmu, the government has shown disdain and humiliation towards women and the tribal people of our country.

Added to this is Narendra Modi's self-proclaimed "angel of God" by suddenly passing the 33% women's seat reservation bill without any discussion. However, the question regarding a timeframe for implementation of this law has been consciously kept under the deep mud water. We have gone through so many negative events and positive protests till 2020-2023. As a result, just as NFIW was formed for a strong commitment to women's struggle on national and international issues, to prepare for the struggle in a wider circle, through a liberal open environment, to walk firmly based on greater unity, this organization has now to take proper roll to strengthen and consolidate the goals of its foundation.

The ultimate defeat of women, in the assessment of Friedrich Engels was – the abolition of maternal rights is a world-historical defeat of womanhood. Men usurped the authority of the household; women were subordinated, chained, slaves to men's lusts, mere instruments of procreation. Engels did not stop at mentioning the defeat of women. He also identified the path of transition from this situation – Women's emancipation and equal rights with men are impossible and will remain impossible as long as women are isolated from the work of social production and confined to the private work of the household. Women's emancipation is only possible when they can participate in production on a large-scale, social scale and when the need for domestic work is secondary. With that aim, NFIW is determined to inspire women to prepare for a united struggle against patriarchal-authoritarian-narrow ideologies.

This conference is an august meeting place for women inspired by the aim of human welfare. Spirited women of various views and paths have come together to identify and adopt programs to include women of all classes with determination for an uncompromising struggle for a liberal open environment. In the words of famous communist thinker and one of the greatest parliamentarians, Hiren Mukherjee, we must strike – "Unfortunate country like ours is again in such a plight that today we are all worried about the way and how the rescue will be done. But the ultimate test of the revolutionary movement is in times of crisis. It goes without saying that in a country like ours, the struggle to wake up after many years of deprivation is difficult. This is why we must

not give up on anything. We must take our movement to the path of success. The role of women is therefore very important today. How long-ago Bengali poet wrote "If the women of India do not awake" the country will not stand up. Especially today women must be the pioneers. Do not forget Bankim Chandra's unforgettable quote "If there are 'people' among Bengalis, they are our women."

Vidyasagar wept to see the plight of the girls and in great sadness, he said that "the damn thick skins" of Bengali should be removed and rebuilt and that girls should not be born in this country! The truth hidden in these words is getting clear day by day - the demonization of humanity is taking place. The incident in Gujarat is proof of that. Women should come forward to save humanity. The skin of the men of this country is comparable to that of a rhinoceros, it will not change easily."

The responsibility imposed on the women by Hiren Mukherjee will one day be fulfilled by the awakened women, full of self-power. In every aspect of life, against inequality, injustice, and human welfare, he must take place through protest resistance and movement. For women to conquer their destiny, to make this world habitable for the weak and children, have to say in the words of the great poet Rabindranath Tagore – "don't leave me speechless, War trumpets sounds in my blood, After the best moment of life, May the best words of life flow to be the voice In the pure stream.

To bring the mass tide in this protest movement, we must look for comrades of different levels, classes, and ages. One should develop herself as a worker and leader with a mentality

## CPI on Election Results of Five States

*The National Secretariat of the Communist Party of India issued on December 4, 2023 the following statement:*

The National Secretariat of the Party met on December 4, 2023 to discuss the results of five state assembly elections. The meeting of National Executive which has been scheduled to be held at Bhubaneswar on December 16, 17, 2023 will have detailed discussion. However, the secretariat is of the view that the result is a lesson to all secular and democratic parties to unite and fight together.

Only through unity and alternative vision can the RSS-BJP be defeated and our Republic saved. All secular-democratic parties, including Indian National Congress, must engage in introspection to have mutual accommodation.

The fascist and anti-people rule of Modi led BJP government is challenging the idea of India established by the Constitution of India and in addition is aggravating the problems and difficulties of people because of rising unemployment and price rise.

The expectations created by the formation of INDIA alliance could not be met in the state elections and this disappointed the people and the result is for everyone to see.

The party welcomed the victory of the state secretary of Telangana from Kothagudem and congratulated the people of Telangana.

worthy of leading a movement with like-minded and goal mates. This should be the main aim and objective of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress of NFIW. Woman is half the sky - woman and man together are complete. All over the world, people are fighting every moment in various ways to protect and secure their livelihood, food, clothing, work, shelter, and above all, to expand the democratic sphere.

Women's liberation is an integral part of this struggle. That fight parallels the fight to end the exploitation of the entire human race. When the plan of unbridled exploitation is hatched in the socio-economic-political system, the democratic, moral values, and range of free spirit are the first to suffer. That decay sometimes even touches the so-called progressive sphere. In this decadence, the woman who has been 'defeated' by the cycle of power for centuries is the most degraded-afflicted. If we look around our country today, we will see those

signs. That is why women's liberation is not a woman's fight alone. The overall progress of society means the progress of all irrespective of men and women. All levels of women and men should join in the struggle that women are fighting for their own and society's progress.

The larger democratic-progressive environment needs to be re-established as a bedrock of the struggling unity of men and women with the main aim of preventing the plan of unbridled exploitation in the socio-economic-political system. But reinstalling alone will not solve all the problems. For that reason, the driving force of restoration must be kept in the hands of struggling men and women of the working class and peasantry. To that end, we must connect with every struggling, working, progressive woman in the villages and cities - their struggle for survival for the goal of a gender-equal, democratic, progressive, free-spirited environment is our future struggle.



## **Massive Protest Rally in Delhi For Dalit Rights, For Agri Workers Land Rights**

**T**housands of people staged a protest March in Delhi from all over the country for Dalit Rights and social justice. Dalits and agricultural workers who had joined hands under one banner demanded strict implementation of the PoA (Prevention of Atrocities) on SC, ST and abolition of bonded labour, for protection of their livelihood as distribution of land for landless, and to stop the privatization of public sector, for proper education and health, for increase in the budget of MGNREGA. They also demanded the daily wages of Rs 600 per day and 200 days of work in a year with alternative work for rural unemployed and stringent punishment for those guilty of assaulting Dalit women and girls, etc.

With posters, flags and signatures in support of their charter of demands in hands, they were marching towards Parliament but were

stopped by the authorities.

As they gathered together to initiate the protest meeting, among those who joined the presidium were N Periyasamy, A Vijay Raghavan, Subhashini Ali, A Ramamurthy, M Luxmaiya and Shri Ram Chaudhary.

Among those addressing the meeting were leaders and activists of Dalit Rights as Binoy Viswam and M Selvaraj, CPI MPs, John Brittas, Sivadasan, CPI (M)



**BKMU general secretary Gulzar Singh Gorla addressing the protesters**

Coming down heavily even after seventy six years of independence, the Dalits against the BJP's Manuvadi policies and its continuing along with Adivasis

have worked under MGNREGA. There is also felt a sense of inhibition against Dalits as they are not given work, their social security pension never goes up to five thousand each.

VS Nirmal, general secretary, AIRDM, said that in coming days these organizations would submit their demand charter to the President of India with one crore signatures and also to the various opposition political parties with a request that they should include Dalits Rights demands in their respective election manifesto in the coming Parliament elections. It would help the issue of marginalized section of the society to come up to the national forefront. Millions of agricultural workers and dalits would be mobilized for this just cause.

Among others who addressed the session were Ram Chander Dome, B Venkat, Shri Ram Chaudhary, Pal Diwalkar, Devi Kumari, Hannan Mullah from SKM and Sukumar Damle from Joint platform of Central Trade Unions, along with Vikram, Dariyao Singh Kashyap.



MPs, and Manoj Jha, attacks on Dalits, they said it is painful to observe that

and others have been facing the same discrimination. Despite the fact that some progress is there, there is still landlessness and poverty along with prejudice and caste discrimination. In last nine years, the situation has worsened.

Gulzar Singh Gorla, general secretary of BKMU, said that MGNREGA has acted like a lifeline for many landless workers but the cut in its budget has badly affected them. MGNREGA is under constant attack from the government. Not only that they have reduced the number of work days but also left unpaid for months a large number of those who



**CPI general secretary D Raja addressing the gathering at Party Hq after garlanding the portrait of Dr BR Ambedkar on his death anniversary. Also seen are national council secretaries B K Kango and Rama Krushna Panda along with national council members and comrades working in CPI headquarters**