

# New Age

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*CPI general secretary D Raja addressing the protest rally at Chennai*

## CPI Observes Defend Federalism Day on Dec 29

# Demand to Abolish Post of Governor

Communist Party of India units all over the country observed December 29, 2022 as Defend Federalism Day. This is in response to the call given by national executive of the party which met in New Delhi on December 3 and 4. The national executive has appealed to all the democratic forces to rally together to defend the federal structure of the country. The meeting had alerted the nation about the move of the RSS-controlled government at the Centre to undermine the constitutional foundations. It also pointed out that the office of the governor is being misused for this purpose, guided by the RSS ideology of centralization.

The national executive meeting also underlined the fact that in states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, etc, Raj Bhavans are made to act as camp office of the BJP. The meeting came to the conclusion that the time has come to demand the abolition of the office of the governor. The fol-

lowing are reports from various states on the Defend Federalism Day.

### Tamil Nadu

In a spectacular procession swelling on the streets that led to the Raj Bhavan in Chennai, about 50,000 cadres of the party from across the state of Tamil Nadu marched towards Raj Bhavan demanding the recall of governor R N Ravi. They were, however, arrested and detained by police and later released.

The procession was flagged off by veteran CPI leader R Nallakannu and was led by party general secretary D Raja and state secretary R Mutharasan. Members of Parliament K Subbarayan, M Selvaraj, members of the Legislative Assembly T Ramachandran, K Marimuthu and former MLA M Arumugam addressed the mammoth gathering before the procession was flagged off. N Periasamy former MLA and state council assistant secretary coordinated the opening event.

### Our Special Correspondent

Tamil Nadu state council had decided to organise a protest march to Raj Bhavan on December 29, 2022, condemning governor R N Ravi's behaviour against the spirit of the Constitution and demanding his recall. This coincided with the call of the national executive to observe December 29 as 'Defend Federalism Day'.

BJP's trend of maneuvering through the governors in the states ruled by parties other than BJP and its allies is replicated in Tamil Nadu too as in Kerala and Puducherry. R N Ravi is used as a political tool to usher in the Hindutva agenda into the state. Undermining the elected government in the state R N Ravi is almost running a parallel government and is sitting on bills passed by the state assembly. MPs from Tamil Nadu have earlier given a representation to the President to recall R N Ravi as his

activities are in violation to the Constitution. Abusing the gubernatorial position, R N Ravi vitiates the secular credentials of the Constitution.

Party general secretary D Raja addressing the huge gathering made a remonstrating challenge to the governor that he should step down himself after seeing the anger spilling on the streets. The governor has no business to propagate divisive, communal and casteist ideology in his pleasure while holding office. He might quit and carry on his political campaign, lambasted D Raja. As a party responsible to uphold constitutional values, D Raja announced CPI shall not allow the abuse of the constitutional position to damage and destroy the secular ethos and the federal structure which is the fulcrum of Indian democracy. CPI will intensify its campaign and agitation till R N Ravi is withdrawn, proclaimed D Raja.

Hauling BJP for continuing the trend of

misuse of the offices of governors in many states D Raja went on to say that BJP is now pursuing to push in its next agenda of 'one country, one election'. This is the most odious to the pluralistic social and political structure of the very idea of India. The BJP has to be defeated in order to save democracy D Raja said exhorting the gathering to prepare to play the responsible political role in the general elections of 2024.

R Mutharasan, secretary Tamil Nadu state council addressed the protesters sending his revolutionary greetings to all those who had gathered with commitment and zeal. He recalled with pride the 'red rally' held in Tiruppur followed by this one within a very short period of a few months. Making a very strong criticism of the governor's disrespect to the state assembly, R Mutharasan said R N Ravi for deliberate political reasons is delaying to give his as-

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## Editorial

## Looking Back at the Years Gone

One journey has come to an end to make way for the new one. Every page of it has its sufferings that strengthen the hopes...for a break, that offer reason to believe that night is not there for all the time. There is the glimmer of morning, at the threshold.

In 1947, when we attained freedom, our dream was to build a country for ourselves without any inequality. There was to be fundamental rights ensured in the Constitution. Directive principles of the state policy in the Constitution promised us all that only a socialist democracy offers. Our preamble says that we, the people of India having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a sovereign democratic republic and to secure to all its citizens, justice, social, economic and political, liberty, of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship, equality of status and of opportunity, and to promote them all, fraternity ensuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. "...In our Constituent Assembly, this twentysixth day of November, 1949, do hereby adopt, enact, and give ourselves this Constitution." Constitution came into force on January 26, 1950. Later in 1970s, two more words were added, and that were "Socialist" and "Secular". We had felt the need to pronounce these two words that we had earlier found in built. When the first election (1952) results were declared, our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had sent letters to all chief ministers saying that it was not the victory of any party, it was the victory of secularism.

Perhaps we would take stock of things now, after so many decades.

We had promised equality for ourselves in the Constitution, but the resources had all dried up. The country

had been 'bleached white' by the British Imperialism. Draining our economy to enrich their own, 'British steam and science had uprooted the whole surface of Hindustan.' (Karl Marx) We had to start rebuilding from the scratches. Our polity strengthened with constitutional commitments, greater share of infrastructural blueprint for foundation of heavy industries was prepared under the authority of state, not any individual. In super structure, education, science, health, progress and peace were all the pillars that stood to guard our democracy and freedom. It was also true that state was dominated by entire capitalist class, and monopolies also had their own way, but the communists kept up their fight against every conservative step. We had liberated Pondicherry and Goa despite resistance. We had been instrumental in nationalising banks, mines and fought and gained rights for working class. All India Kisan Sabha had also its achievements. But for every such move, within Parliament and without, there were the challenges from the forces of right, eroding the system. Their assertions are seen in the rise of finance capital, a new stage that capitalism has evolved into. Power in hand, they are busy in privatising every sector. With prices hiking, essentials have gone beyond common citizen's reach. We stand in front of a wall, the wall of depravity, and deprivation. According to Global Hunger Index (GHI), the score shows consistent fall since 2015. The data comes only from either the GHI or the government itself. The ruling regime has not accepted the charge since its own data shows otherwise. Government has even questioned the reliability of the survey. GHI has shown a regular fall in figures, especially in urban areas. Hunger is generally characterised with quantity and the quality consumed. The government also has argued that three out of every four re-

spondents are children, hence it cannot represent the entire population. But if the children are hungry, the country loses its human capital, the real treasure of a society. If the issue is not taken into account, the undernourishment may cause the growth in mortality rate. In fact children are the future and hope, for us, for the country, to keep alive the optimism.

The other face of the right reaction is seen in eco-politics flows. There is loss of investment, as the industrial capital has been merging with the banking capital. Last month unemployment rate surged to 8.3 percent as employment sequentially fell by two million to 394.6 million. The government at the Centre is not concerned about either the jobless growth from 2014 to 2022 or the great employment crisis in the informal sector. There is no attempt made to recover from the fall. But workers want results. They need jobs, and hence, there is simmering opposition to it. AITUC has been taking steps to organise agitations and movements against such injustices. In the rural sector too, agrarian labour and the farmers are launching movements. It is people's unity getting organised for agitation.

Against this unity, Hindutva has been used to play the divisive role. Its communal fascist role comes alive in the book 'Hindutva, Who is a Hindu' by VD Savarkar, where he defines it, "...for though Hindusthan to them is Fatherland as to any other Hindu, yet it is not to them a Holyland too. Their Holyland is far off in Arabia or Palestine. Their mythology and Godmen are not the children of this soil." The formulation seems familiar when we go through the role of fascists in Germany. Savarkar had praised the role of Hitler for his barbaric act of elimination of Jews.

### CPI Demands White Paper on Demonetization

## Supreme Court Verdict on Demonetization

*The National Secretariat of the Communist Party of India issued the following statement on January 2, 2023:*

The National Secretariat of the Communist Party of India expresses its concern about the adverse impact of

demonetization and points out that the Supreme Court judgment is a split judgment of four versus one which does not take into consideration about false claims made by the government during demonetization. It only touches upon the

legal aspect of the decision making. It does not touch upon the adverse impact of demonetization on the people.

After four years of the decision taken on demonetisation, people need to know the facts about claims made by

the government which have been proved to be false. Money in circulation has increased, black money component has not come down and adverse impact of the decision on MSMEs not recorded. Along with all this, terrorism also not coming down.

Hence a detailed white paper is needed on this issue.

The Supreme Court majority judgment merely upholds the right of the government to take such a decision and in no way endorses the consequences of such a decision.

## Flood Commission Report from Nagpur

# Vidarbha Farmers take brunt of Rains: AIKS

It was a major initiative by AIKS in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra to form a commission to study and document the problem of flood affected farmers in few districts and Vidarbha was formed by the All India Kisan Sabha. This commission included eminent personalities like economist Prof. Srinivas Khandewale (President), water distribution consultant Pradeep Purandare and few other experts like Shubhada Deshmukh, Kaustubh Pandharpande, Omprakash Kutemate. Gunwant Wadpalliwar, activists and union leader Ashok Thule, Ashok Dagade, Vilas Bhongade, Vijay Paranjape, Manish Rajankar and Prabhakar Kondbattunwar.

In the year 2022 during rainy season farmers in Gondiya, Bhandara, Nagpur, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur and Yavatmal were severely affected by sudden floods. It was an initiative by AIKS to study the ground realities and assess the damage done and submit the report to government. Those who helped the Project to take shape were Dr. Mahesh Kopulwar an activist of AIKS and his other colleagues in helping us and also thank my co-panelists who helped me to complete the report and gave invaluable suggestion to strengthen it, particularly Pradeep Purandare and Vijay Paranjape.

### Background of the report

In the year 2022 Vidarbha received abnormal rainfall which was 18 per cent more than normal. There are rivers flowing from North to South in Eastern Vidarbha, which originate from Satpura hills and from Gadchiroli district enter Telangana.

'Wainganga' is the main river, Bawantadi, Kanhan and other rivers join it and is called as "Pranhita River" when it enters Gadchiroli district and at Sironcha, it meets Godavari river in Telangana. Some districts of Vidarbha get rains twice in a year among whom are eastern districts. Easterly rain is sometimes abnormal. There are about 10,000 small lakes in the region which are main source of water for irrigation as well as fisheries. However, as most of these lakes are not constructed through government grants, it is unfortunate that their repairs and maintenance of canals etc were neglected by the government.

This region of Vidarbha is rich in minerals and forest wealth. 80 per cent of minerals of the state comes from this region and is being exploited. Sand and stones removed during mining is dumped indiscriminately changing the waterflow or blocking it. This has aggravated the flood situation. The development model of the state and the nation has neglected environment and destroyed forests and traditional agriculture support, affecting the farmers adversely. The excess rainfall in 2022 as well as lack of planning to regulate river flow and management of flood water has hit the farmers hard. Hence Kisan Sabha has sponsored this report.

It is worthy noting that during Rajiv Gandhi regime, big dam 'Gosikhurd' was planned and inaugurated but after 40 years it is still not completed and though storage is ready, canal and irrigation facilities are not ready yet.

After a detailed study the commission has arrived at certain conclusion.

*Prof. Srinivas Khandewale*

1. Due to heavy rain in Madhya Pradesh water was released from the Sanjay Gandhi Sarovar aggravating flood situation in Vidarbha. Most of the river beds are facing encroachments and the capacity of rivers to carry water has been compromised due to neglect. This aggravated the flood situation as excess water released from dam, spread in the fields, damaging crops, houses, roads, etc.

2. Though district Gadchiroli did not have excess rain, water released from Gosikhurd dam of more than 20,000 cusecs affected the whole district.

3. After gathering all report from newspapers and other sources the commission came to the conclusion that lack of coordination or delayed information shared by government departments also is responsible for loss and hence has proposed an improved mechanism to overcome the deficiencies in coordination. It has also proposed use of drones and satellite surveys. It has also proposed that mining owners must be held responsible if proper

disposal of sand and stones, etc is not done.

4. The Commission has also proposed that proper planning to utilise 10,000 lakes must be made.

5. Rivers flow from one state to other. All three states i.e. Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Telangana must co-ordinate and share regular information about water flow, discharges from dams etc. for better flood regulation.

Along with recommendation a detailed report about damages is also submitted by the Commission. This exercise was very much appreciated by farmers and people of the region.

A long march from Wani in Yavatmal district to Nagpur was organised and a massive morcha of 5000 farmers reached Nagpur on December 26, 2022 to demonstrate before the assembly and the report was submitted to the concern minister who has promised to call a meeting of the concerned in Mumbai in January 2023.

### Main Demands of People

■ The State government should constitute an inquiry commission to take stock of the damage oc-

curred due to the repeated floods of the year 2022, and the inaction of the concerned officers.

■ A compensation based on the objective analysis of the damages sustained by the farmers during 2022.

■ An integrated mechanism for the coordination between the departments of Madhya Pradesh- Vidarbha and Telangana- Vidarbha should be constituted to take proper action in future.

■ The owners of the mines should take responsibility of the water released by their mines and the embankments created during the mining operations.

■ State government should immediately take over the 10,000 ponds of East Vidarbha and create a proper mechanism for their preservation and management.

■ An interstate tribunal must be created to take care of all emergencies along the river Godavari basin, from the foot of Satpuda Hills to the borders of Telangana. (This is the region of East Vidarbha)

(Author is President of the Commission)

## Remembering Com. A B Bardhan



CPI national council secretary Dr B K Kango garlanding Comrade Bardhan's portrait on his death anniversary

# Scrap New Marketing Models Introduced by SBI

Inaugurating a state-level dharna in front of the local head office of State Bank of India, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on January 4, Binoy Viswam, Rajya Sabha MP, and national Working President of AITUC stated that public sector Banks like SBI must not abdicate their role and responsibility as a mass-banking service provider to the common citizens of the country. The dharna was organized by the Travancore State Bank Employees Association-TSBEA affiliated with AIBEA.

Binoy Viswam said that certain concepts and moves of the SBI management which is in total disregard for the needs of customers and the working situation of the employees were alarming. Questions were raised about how the



country's largest bank that provides banking services to every Indian could disregard common customers and their entitled service at the branches. The CPI leader said, "Business and service must move together. Banking itself is a service. Denigrating transaction banking, creating artificial situations to reduce footfalls, and weeding out common customers do not suit any public sector bank in India. There is a moral hazard in indirectly passing on the burden of loss

of income and profits caused by the bad-debts-NPAs-write-offs, created by the big corporates, to the common customers either by increasing service charges or avoiding them."

Binoy Viswam said that the urgent necessity now is need-based recruitment of permanent employees for filling up all vacancies under clerical and subordinate cadre. While existing vacancies number more than 30000 in the bank, the requirements are

higher considering into account the increase in business volume and the number of customers. In Kerala alone, vacancies and requirements will exceed 3000.

In Kerala, SBI has created multi-product sales teams with their clerical employees, and one-fifth of the clerical staff strength that has been deployed for field marketing. Apart from that bank is focusing on outsourcing the banking services through private business correspondents and loan distribution through contractual workers under specially formed subsidiaries.

"At a time when branches of SBI in Kerala were reeling under severe staff shortages, MPSF would neither benefit customers coming to the branches nor field-marketing programs. Sufferers are the

customers visiting the branches. Employees remaining in the branches apart from bearing the extra-burden consequent to staff reduction are facing the ire of the customers already confronted the recurring system issues. Those deployed for marketing have been identified at random without considering their disposition vis-à-vis. marketing, health, aptitude, etc. They are also under stress," Binoy Viswam pointed out.

TSBEA-AIBEA is demanding to scrap the proposed unscientific and impractical MPSF, the filling up of all vacancies through recruitment to ensure better service to the customers, dignified work-life for the staff, and value-based, workforce-friendly HR policies.

## What the Others Say...

### Growth challenge

The New Year begins on a slightly more optimistic note for India. Global crude and food prices are roughly 38 per cent and 15 per cent down respectively from their highs in March, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The rupee has stabilised at 82-83 to the dollar after dropping from 74.5 levels at the start of 2022. With the prospects for the upcoming rabi crop looking good one can expect consumer inflation to ease further. This is, after falling below the RBI's six per cent upper ceiling target in November for the first time in 11 months.

The challenge for India this year is likely to be more on the growth than on the inflation front. The Narendra Modi government's focus on improving the country's physical as well as digital infrastructure — plus schemes such as production-linked incentive to attract investments in specific sectors, from solar photovoltaic modules and drones to specialty steels — ought to have given added impetus to this process. But on the ground, neither domestic nor foreign companies are really investing. The biggest drag on investment during the last decade was over-leveraged corporates and bad loans-saddled banks. That "twin balance sheet" problem has more or less resolved itself. Today's problem has mainly to do with strained government and household balance sheets. That, coupled with a deepening global slowdown constricting export demand, could have a bearing on India's economic growth.

The Modi government should certainly refrain from any fiscal stimulus to kick-start investment or drive growth. Far from stimulus, what the country needs is macroeconomic stability and policy certainty. The current fiscal deficit and public debt levels are far too high to allow any new populist schemes in the name of putting money in people's hands or sharp tax cuts to supposedly revive investor sentiment. Large government deficits will invariably spill over into current account deficits. The coming budget must prioritise fiscal consolidation. This will enable the RBI to also pause interest rate hikes and further monetary tightening, which is probably not the best thing for an economy already facing multiple growth headwinds. Policy stability and credibility should be the mantra that will ultimately work for India.

*Courtesy: The Indian express*

### Finally, end notes

Demonetisation has achieved judicial closure. The 4-1 Supreme Court constitution bench verdict termed the November 8, 2016 announcement as an executive decision, where the judiciary does not have the expertise to supplant economic policies, unless manifest arbitrariness requires intervention. The bench majority also refrained from identifying an alternative measure that would have constrained citizens' rights less, saying these are "areas purely within the domain of experts and beyond the arena of judicial review".

This is a principle SC needs to consistently uphold, given the number of frivolous PILs it entertains and the intrusion into policy they entail. But the diversity of public opinions on demonetisation was mirrored in SC too. Justice B V Nagarathna in the minority ruled the exercise unlawful but said the status quo ante can't be restored as the event happened in 2016. She ruled that the Constitution empowers Centre to demonetise currency but the exercise should have been implemented through a law of Parliament. She faulted its implementation by a gazette notification saying that route is available only when RBI is proposing demonetisation under Section 26(2) RBI Act. Additionally, she faulted RBI for lacking "independent application of mind" while "recommending" what Centre desired.

Neither the majority nor minority verdicts examined whether demonetisation met its stated objectives — because that wasn't the bench's job. Demonetisation is hard to support in terms of economic policy logic. The economic impact was negative, even if subsequent research showed that the quantum was less than initially feared. It's doubtful whether it dealt a body blow to the black economy or to the cash-based transactions that support such activities. Cash in hand of the public now is double that of 2016. Even if only for some weeks, it put a lot of people through immense hardship. One positive consequence was that digital payments got a big boost, and the habit stayed with Indians even after new currency notes became plentiful. But an economic shock is not the best way to encourage digital payments. The considerable economic slowdown in 2018 and 2019 was probably a combination of demonetisation, GST introduction, which unlike demonetisation was a necessary reform, and the NBFC meltdown.

None of that matters for SC, of course. But the successful conclusion of the demonetisation hearings should act as an incentive to set up more constitution benches for other long pending matters.

*Courtesy: The Times of India*

## Glorifying Myths for Facts Bode Ill for Knowledge

A few days ago, while addressing the 75th Amrit Utsav of Swami Narayan Gurukul Rajkot Sansthan, prime minister Narendra Modi said that education has been completely neglected after independence. Therefore, it has become necessary that the government should bring forward the importance of ancient educational system. When previous governments faltered, he said, saints came forward and Swami Narayan Sansthan is an example. He said that in ancient times our education system was exemplary which gave importance to knowledge. "Our Gurukuls have been representing equity, equality, care and a sense of service for centuries".

Educational system in a particular period depends on the social and economic conditions prevailing at that time. It is well known that in ancient times education was reserved for a special type of caste and the so-called upper class. A large section of the society did not have the right to education. When Eklavya mastered the art of archery on his own, Guru Dronacharya asked for his Thumb in Dakshinabecause his caste people did not have the right to education. There are also examples that even if a so-called low caste person overheard any educational talk, his ears were filled with lead so that he would not be able to hear any more.

The modern society spread education even among the economically and socially backward sections of the society by breaking these obscurantist ideas and breaking those bonds of religion and caste which prohibit right to education to all. Although there are many weaknesses and shortcomings in the education system of our country, but one thing is clear that after independence, due to the persistence of campaigns by the progressive movements, government high schools were opened on a

*Dr Arun Mitra*

large scale in many parts of the country where it became possible for the children of low socio-economic groups to get education under one roof along with others. In 1968, the Kothari Commission gave specific recommendations for common school system to end disparity in education. Unfortunately, these have not been implemented till date.

We hardly find mention of education among women in the ancient history. Even in the last century, Savitri Bai Phule, who was born in 1931 and who was encouraged by her husband Jyotiba Phule to study, she had to face many hardships. She was ridiculed and even stones were thrown so as to stop her from pursuing education. Social reformers, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Swami Dayananda Saratwati did a lot for the education of women. After independence, many girls' schools and colleges were opened in the government sector to encourage education among women.

In the same speech, the prime minister goes on to say that the new education policy will produce new type of ideal citizens. But when we take a look at the new education policy, we find that this will lead to complete privatization of education further increasing inequality in education. This will also deprive large part of the society of quality education. Presently only about two percent of the GDP is spent on education as against the required ten percent. Such type of education is intended to prepare a class of specially educated persons to serve the corporate sector as was done by the education system introduced by the British in our country to produce 'Bhadra Lok' to serve the masters.

Similar is the story of health services. India has to its credit the contribution in medical science by Charaka,

a great physician of the time around 300BC. Accordingly, the Charaka Samhita mandates the physician to lead a life of celibacy, grow beard and hair, pray for cows and Brahmins. It forbids the doctor from treating those who are in opposition to the King or whom the physician or society may despise. But that was the period of Kings where Brahmins were at the top in the social hierarchy. The modern oaths, belonging to the present, with tremendous advances in modern science bind that every human shall be treated equally and the physicians must be committed to the best of their abilities under any circumstances.

The health policy 2017 promotes insurance-based healthcare system. This far from universal healthcare system as envisaged by several health experts. Because of exorbitant cost, quality health care is getting out of reach of people. Government expenditure on health is only 1.28 percent of GDP, while according to the World Health Organization it should be five per cent. Ironically health and education are taken as liability not as an asset by our policy makers. Both health and education should be fundamental right of every Indian citizen. No wonder we are at a rank of 107 out of 121 in Hunger Index as a result of the exclusive policies. Our dismal performance in managing COVID Pandemic is not an old story.

I have given these two examples because there is persistent attack not only in the political and economic sphere but all the aspects of life. There has developed strong linkage between forces of obscurantism and the corporate sector. There is concentration of wealth in few hands while vast majority is deprived of basic needs. The ruling clique use coercion, oppress people and try to divide the people through false propaganda. The prime

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## Celebrate Birth Centenary of Com Geeta Mukherjee

January 8, 2023 marks the beginning of the birth centenary of Com. Geeta Mukerjee, an outstanding communist leader and an able parliamentarian. She was fondly called as Geetadi all over the country.



Com Geetadi was born on January 8, 1924 in Kolkata (Calcutta). She was married to Com. Biswanath Mukherjee on November 8, 1942 who was a legendary communist leader and remained secretary of the West Bengal state unit of CPI for several years.

Com. Geetadi was student activist and leader of All India Students Federation, while studying in Ashutosh College, Calcutta. She joined the Communist Party of India at the age of 15. She was elected to the state council of the Party in 1946. She rose to be a member of the national council, national executive and secretariat of the party. Com Geetadi was imprisoned several times during the freedom struggle and also during the post-independence period.

Com Geetadi was a great fighter for the empowerment of women. She was the president of National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW). She became the symbol of struggle for one third reservation for women in all legislative bodies including the Parliament.

Com Geetadi was elected to the West Bengal Assembly in 1967 and 1977. Later she was elected to Lok Sabha seven times from Panskura Constituency from 1980 to 2000. She was an able Parliamentarian who used the Parliament as an effective forum to articulate the cause of the working people and empowerment of women.

Com Geetadi died on March 4, 2000. Entire country mourned her death. She was an ideal communist who fought with dedication and determination for the liberation of the country not only from the colonial rule but from all forms of exploitation and enslavements in the post-independence period. She was and is a pride of the Indian communist movement and CPI.

Let our party units begin to celebrate her birth centenary.

(D Raja)

*General Secretary*

## CPI MP on SC Demonetization Verdict

Rajya Sabha member and CPI national council secretary Binoy Viswam issued the following statement on January 2, 2023 on the verdict of the Supreme Court on demonetization:

Supreme Court judgment on demonetization stated that Justice Nagaratna's observations in the case reflected the pulse of the nation and that the majority voice reflected the voice of the Modi government. He also stated that the demonetization stroke in the night was a blow to the foundations of the Indian economy and was proven to be a futile exercise. He questioned the government on the mellow promises made by the prime minister on the ending of black money, eradication

of terrorism, and the shift to digital transactions and said that none were realised.

"Thousands of industries and businesses were closed, crores of people were laid off, and nearly all of the notes were returned. However, the majority of the judges on the bench refused to see this truth. For the poor and affected, life is the truth," he further stated.

He also went on to criticise the government for keeping the Parliament in the dark about ending black money, terrorism and going digital. "Nothing happens! Industries and shops were closed, resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs. SC was least concerned about these factors," he continued to criticise.

## CPI Celebrates 98<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day in Manipur

Manipur state council unit of the Communist Party of India organised a celebration at Gandhi Memorial Hall, Imphal on the occasion of the 98<sup>th</sup> Foundation day of our Party in India. The CPI unit of Manipur also announced that "From the day of December 26, 2022, the birth centenary commences."

On December 26, since morning, the youths and students of our party arranged the decoration of the hall and also the surroundings, including BT Road and National Highway 39 with Party Red flags.

The celebrations began at almost mid day, at 11:30, with revolutionary songs of our party - "Thangol Adu Maya Thanguthou na" (Sharpen the sickle more and more). In the group song there were twelve young members of Indian Peoples Theatre Association (IPTA) paying revolutionary tributes with the song and flowers to the departed party leaders.

In the photographs,

M Joykumar Luwang

among the departed great leaders were Gangadhar Adhikari, Dr PC Joshi, Sohansing Josh, Ajoy Ghosh, Rajeshwar Rao,

most of the forerunners were killed. We remembered several conspiracy cases against our revolutionaries who fought for the freedom and emancipation of tortured people of India.



Safdar Hashmi, Munshi Premchand, Hijam Irawat, Moirangthem Ibohal, Thokchom Bira, Ng. Mohendra, Ph. Parijat among others.

Many revolutionary leaders were present on the first day of Party formation on December 26, 1925 at Kanpur. While we were paying tributes with flowers to their photographs, we remembered their contributions at the time of formation periods. British tortured them and

Langollboyaima, Chairman of Control Commission, CPI, Manipur, Dr. M. Nara, member of Central Control Commission and L Thoiren, state secretary, MSC/CPI and Lamja Tomba, vice president of IPTA/Manipur were on the dais in the Presidium and along with them nine mass front leaders were also there with them. Each one sitting on dais received a book which gave the outline of Party history.

M Joykumar, assistant secretary, CPI/Manipur delivered the welcome address which highlighted on the book on History of the Party, that included the period upto the present time. In the inaugural address, delivered by the party state secretary, the topics like history of the Communist Party, the environment of the Communist International, success of October Revolution, Indian freedom movement and role of Communist in India were highlighted. He pointed out that our heroic movement was our achievement.

Langollboyaima spoke regarding the history of Communist in India, about the revolutionaries who fought against British by sacrificing their blood. He mentioned the peasant movement at Telangana, Kerala, West Bengal, and also in Manipur. These were the struggles on land and agricultural policies. In

electoral system. He also highlighted the present problems of Indian politics which is caused by the RSS-BJP combined government through Neo-liberal Economic Policies.

"The RSS-BJP combination of the government has been trampling all democratic institutions and dividing the society, the agenda of RSS implemented through BJP. A sentiment of victimhood has been constructed among the majority through elaborate symbolism to unite them against the minorities. Hollowness of development claims made by the BJP are not being discussed even by the BJP itself. Instead of giving jobs, RSS/BJP is spreading hatred and anxieties to the youth.

Dr Nara also spoke regarding the public sectors which had been the pillars of our economy. But this government is dismantling the public sector through Neo-liberalism. Crony capitalism has been



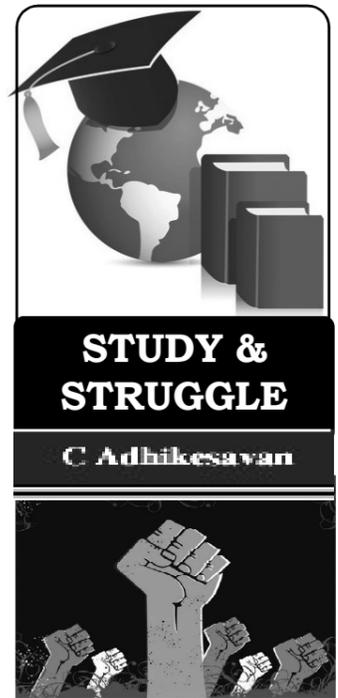
Manipur, Jananeta Irawat, a founder of the communist movement in Manipur, led the peasant movement. He also spoke about the present political system in Manipur.

Dr M Nara highlighted on the important events in the history of the party and pointed to our young party members to fight against the present electoral system. Which should change immediately toward a new electoral system that should be proportionate

threatening our economic sovereignty and defeating the idea of social justice while the multinational corporate giants are plundering our natural resources."

In the concluding part of the meeting, IPTA artists performed revolutionary songs that enthused all the participants. In growing enthusiasm, the slogan was shouted by the assembled together, "Inqilab Jindabad Communist Party Jindabad".

# India's Forgotten Feminist Savitribai Phule



*"Be self-reliant, be industrious  
Work, gather wisdom and  
riches,*

*All gets lost without knowledge  
We become animal without wis-  
dom,*

*Sit idle no more, go, get educa-  
tion*

*End misery of the oppressed and  
forsaken,*

*You've got a golden chance to  
learn*

*So learn and break the chains of  
caste.*

*Throw away the Brahman's  
scriptures fast."*

*- Savitribai Phule (Kavya  
Phule, 1854)*

All feel proud and pride in remembering and celebrating Savitribai Phule on her 192<sup>nd</sup> Birth Anniversary. She stands forgotten feminist. The Union government should declare her birthday as "Teachers' Day". A woman pioneer who challenged oppressive social norms in her quest for women's education, equality and justice, Savitribai Phule is formally recognised as India's first woman teacher. The above poem titled Go, Get Education, is among the many Phule wrote to make a clarion call to the downtrodden to pursue education, and break free from the shackles of the caste system.

A Dalit woman from the Mali community, Savitribai was born on January 3, 1831, in Maharashtra's Naigaon village. Married off at the tender age of 10, her husband Jyotirao Phule is said to have educated her at home. Later, Jyotirao admitted Savitribai to a teachers' training institution in Pune. Throughout their life, the couple supported each other and in doing so, broke many social barriers.

At a time when it was considered unacceptable for women to even attain education, the couple went on to open a school for girls in Bhidewada, Pune, in 1848. This became the country's first girls' school.

The couple faced loud opposition against their opening schools. The Phules opened more such schools for girls, Shudras and Ati-Shudras (the backward castes and Dalits, respectively) in Pune, leading to discontent among Indian nationalists like

Bal Gangadhar Tilak. They opposed the setting up of schools for girls and non-Brahmins, citing a "loss of nationality", and believing not following the caste rules would mean a loss of nationality itself.

The opposition to the couple was so hostile that eventually Jyotirao's father Govindrao was forced to kick them out of his house.

Savitribai herself faced great animosity from the upper castes, including instances of physical violence.

## DU ad-hoc teachers from the frying pan into the fire

After serving for years as 'ad-hoc' teachers working under adverse conditions, many such



Delhi University faculty members are now finding themselves shunted out of their jobs.

Thousands of teachers, for no fault of theirs and in conditions not of their own making, have been employed for years on end, at colleges of Delhi University – together with a few more at some university departments – in exploitative 'ad-hoc' conditions of hyper-precariousness, humiliation and unequal benefits for doing the same, regular, perennial work necessary to the functioning of the university as permanent teachers. This, despite the intent and spirit to the contrary, of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act (CLRA Act), 1970, and the clear provisions spelt out in DU's own Executive Council (EC) Resolution No. 120 (8) of 27.12. 2007 that

In case there is a sudden, unexpected and short vacancy,

arising out of a sudden sickness or death, on medical grounds (including maternity leave), abrupt leave or any other situation that may disrupt the normal process of teaching-learning, an ad hoc appointment may be made....

■ The ad hoc appointment shall only be made for a period of more than one month and up to four months (120 days) in accordance with the provisions contained in clause 3(1) of Ordinance XII.

■ v) Whenever the vacancy arises for the duration of more than four months, the same may be filled up on temporary basis as per due process and procedure that is through a duly constituted Selection Committee."

Acknowledging the wrongs they have suffered and the invaluable contributions they have made through the intellectual and administrative labour they have put in towards the survival and daily making of DU colleges and departments as theatres of the possible and as sites for critical thought, social relationships and practice for all – including for permanent employees – teachers working in 'ad-hoc' capacity should, in all fairness and through appropriate mechanisms that respect the framework of the 200-Point DoPT Roster, be retained as permanent faculty. This would, by any norms and standards of natural justice, be the only dignified and just measure of recognising the well-deserved claim to their jobs that has accrued through dint of long histories of work done by them in the adverse, if not hostile, working conditions and environments thrust upon them.

## The declining learning outcomes of students

Lockdowns to contain the spread of Covid-19 impacted millions of children through much of 2020 and 2021. While schools had started reopening intermittently in 2021, it was only this year that schools across the country opened up fully and welcomed children back to classrooms. When they did so, they were not simply picking up where they had left in 2020: they were on a backfoot.

There had been concerns about the impact of school closures on learning outcomes right from the

early days of the pandemic. In May, findings of the government's National Achievement Survey 2021 were released. The previous round of the survey was conducted in 2017, on the other side of the pandemic.

The survey is a national-level large-scale assessment tool. It tests students of Classes 3, 5, 8 and 10 on their learning outcomes related to language, mathematics, environmental studies (Classes 3 and 5), language, mathematics, science and social science for Class 8 and modern Indian language, mathematics, science, social science and English for Class 10.

Compared to the scores from 2017, National Achievement Survey 2021 reported lower mean scores for students across grades and subjects. Almost a quarter of surveyed students (24%) said they did not have a digital device at home, 38% said they faced difficulty in learning at home during the pandemic and 78% said they found learning at home burdensome.

The survey also found a decline in the learning outcomes of students for older students. While the average score for mathematics was 306 on 500 (61.2%) for Class 3, the corresponding scores for Classes 5, 8 and 10 were 284, 255, and 220 respectively. The trends were similar for other subjects as well.

Another survey released in 2022 highlighted the huge learning losses of the pandemic years. In the survey conducted in schools of Jharkhand by a civil society organisation, a large share of teachers reported that many students of Class 3-5 had almost forgotten to read and write by the time they were back to the classroom in 2022

# Kedar Das: Builder of Powerful

*The name of Kedar Das is inextricably linked with working class and trade union movement of Bihar and India. He went into pages of history for the famous and historic Jamshedpur struggle of 1958.*

Kedar Lal Das was born on January 4, 1913 in Gurmaha (Pachari) village in the then Darbhanga district (presently Madhubani district) of Bihar, in a lower middle class rural family. His father was ShHarinanadan Das and mother Smt Sugawati. Their economic condition was deplorable. Consequently, Kedar had to take up a job with his cousin brother Shyam Behari Lal Das in Jamshedpur in 1934. He worked there in the Tinsplate Company as a clerk. Kedar could study only up to Matric.

## In Trade Union movement

The management of Tinsplate Company was intensely anti-worker. Kedar Das came into contact with the famous trade union leader Prof Abdul Bari, who was a Congressman. Kedar too joined the Congress. To drive a wedge, they raised the wages of Kedar compared to other workers. Kedar did not accept it, thus enraging the British management and was dismissed. After that, Kedar Das became a full-time functionary of trade union movement.

Hazara Singh was a great revolutionary of a poor family of Hoshiyarpur, Punjab. He was sentenced to 'Kalapani'. After release, he came to Jamshedpur, organising the workers. Strike had been going on for nine months in

Jamshedpur, culminating in events of July 1, 1939. Hazara Singh and Pyara Singh lay down on the ground in front of the factory gate to prevent breaking strike. The company truck ran over both of them and killed them. They died in the Tata Main Hospital on July 2, 1939. This peaceful picketing took place at Wire Products Company. After the tragic event, Kedar Das decided to dedicate his whole life to the cause of the workers, and would remain unmarried.

## In 1942 movement

Mahatma Gandhi went on hunger strike in 1942. There was country-wide solidarity movement in his support. Kedar Das too joined the movement. Consequently, he was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. After release, he was elected secretary of Tinsplate Workers' Union, with Dr Abdul Bari as the president.

## Joining CPI

Kedar Das joined the Communist Party of India in 1943. He did active party work in Jamshedpur and all over Bihar.

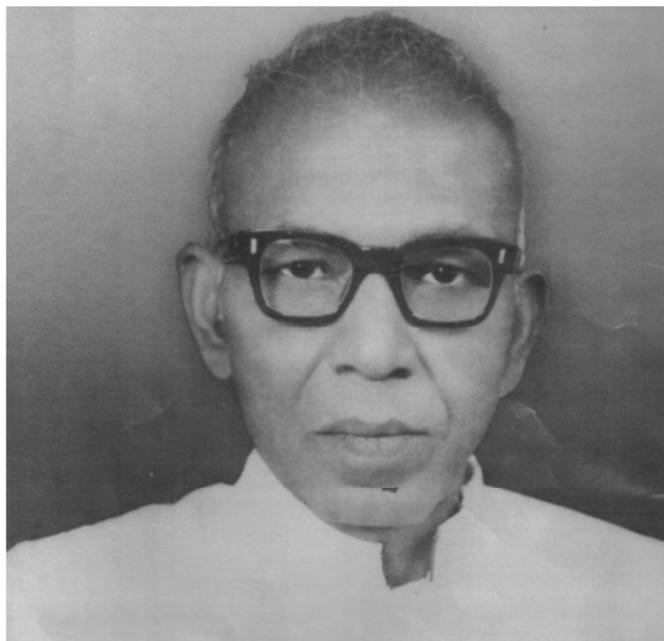
## In TU movement

Kedar Das founded the Jamshedpur Mazdoor Union (JMU) in 1952. It was affiliated to AITUC in 1957. Sunil Mukherjee was elected its president and Kedar Das general

secretary. Thousands of Tatanagar Foundry Company workers were led by Kedar Das. Management dismissed TU activist Suresh Prasad. Kedar Das sat on an indefinite hunger strike, after the negotiations failed, at Golmuri Maidan in Jamshedpur. Management was forced to take Suresh back on the job.

## Historic strike of 1958

Jamshedpur Mazdoor Union (JMU) led a mag-



nificent battle to restore the recognition of workers' rights in 1957-58. JMU was a powerful union, having a membership of over 19,000 out of 33,000 in the TISCO alone. It raised the demand for revision of basic pay, increase in DA and recognition. As early as October 1957, Union wrote to the Labour Commissioner for proper reorganization of the works committees (WC), and to allow JMU representatives into the WCs. The 15<sup>th</sup> Indian Labour Conference recommended revised wages for iron and steel industry, and thus the

workers' demand was quite legitimate.

JMU submitted a memorandum on February 26, 1958 to the Prime Minister. AITUC delegation led by SA Dange himself met the PM and labour minister.

Strike became inevitable, and the workers of TISCO (Tata Iron and Steel Company) went on protest strike on May 12, 1958 under the leadership of Kedar Das. Twelve hundred volunteers with JMU badges kept the essential ser-

Satyanarayan Singh and others. Kedar Das was absent at the time. Workers protested. There were lathi charges and police firings in which two workers died.

Beginning with May 18, the management indulged in large scale provocations. On May 21 (1958), there was protest hartal in the whole town. Special cases were instituted against Kedar Das, Amjad Ali, Barin De, Habibur Rehman, Gopalan, Gur Bux Singh, Kartar Singh, Satya Narayan Singh, etc. They were charged with conspiring to blow up the factories, destroy the blast furnace, loot the assets, etc. Some 135 cases were instituted in a Special Court in Sakchi. Kedar Das, Barin De, Amjad Ali and O Gopalan were sentenced to 9 years' imprisonment.

The management began to issue 'pink cards' to some workers. That meant other workers could not enter the premises. But the workers forced the management to withdraw the pink cards. Even military forces were called out on the streets of Jamshedpur.

Kedar Das went underground. The government organised a huge group of police to track him down. Thousands of policemen were deployed to arrest him, accompanied by magistrates, IG, DIG, SP etc. Labour minister Vinodanand Jha himself came to Jamshedpur. The house of Kedar Das's relative Kamalapati Das was raided several times during the night.

# Working Class Movement

## Reaching assembly secretly

Kedar Babu secretly reached Assembly House in Patna, taking asylum there to participate in debate on charges against him and in the no-confidence motion. Hundreds of people came for his 'darshan' for the two days he was there. He was arrested from Assembly Lobby at midnight of May 27<sup>th</sup>.

Working class displayed unprecedented mobilization and unity, and the management and the government had to beat a hasty retreat. Most of their demands were met after facing untold repressions. Around 800 workers were dismissed. The workers vowed to take revenge in the general elections, and they did.

The JMU called upon the workers to resume work from May 29, 1958. AITUC called for nationwide relief for workers' families.

But the 'Jamshedpur Conspiracy Case' against the vanguard leadership dragged on. Police chargesheet dated August 5, 1958 stated that 'CPI-cum-JMU' leaders Kedar Das and others were bent upon 'taking law in their hands resulting into breach of peace' and upon preaching violence. Police crowded the small court with rifles and bayonets. The leaders were sentenced in 1960-61. Kedar Babu could not have contested 1962 elections. Therefore, CPI decided to set up Sunil Mukherjee as its candidate, who achieved a resounding victory,

winning by 7000 votes to the Assembly. CPI won 12 seats in the Assembly. Dr Udaykar Mishra of CPI won the Lok Sabha seat from this constituency.

The wages of Tata workers were increased, as also those of the steel plants all over the country.

## Contesting elections

Kedar Das contested the elections of 1957 to the Bihar Assembly from Jamshedpur on CPI ticket. The working class

to protect Kedar, who also got injured.

In 1969, a joint struggle committee was formed demanding implementation of recommendations of Engineering Wage Board. Kedar Das, Dr Akhouri and Prof Brajnandan Kishore were the main leaders. A big meeting was held in Tinsplate Maidan on November 17, 1969; Kedar Das informed the meeting that the negotiations had failed. An indefinite strike was announced from November 18. Forty

for treatment, being seriously ill. The agreement was reached only on his return. Consequently, about 2600 workers became permanent with effect from January 14, 1980.

## AITUC conference, 1981

30<sup>th</sup> session of AITUC was held in Jamshedpur from October 13, 1970, participated in by more than 7000 delegates and others from all over India and foreign countries. Kedar Das was the leading organiser.

## Struggle of contract laborers, 1981

TISCO management refused to give permanent jobs to 10 thousand contract workers. Consequently, workers went on a lightning strike from February 11, 1981 led by Kedar Das. The management refused to join the tripartite negotiations initiated by the labour commissioner. Consequently, workers came out in a huge procession on February 15, 1981 from Bari Maidan led by Kedar Das. Lathi charge and stoning followed, in which Kedar Das was injured. He announced hunger strike during a meeting on February 18, creating widespread ripples, both among workers and management. He was requested by everybody not to go on the hunger strike, but he was determined to do so.

On February 19, 1981, he suddenly fell down while shaving and suffered brain haemorrhage. He died same day on February 19, 1981 at the age of 71. His body was brought to the CPI office and a massive

procession came out on February 20, participated in by more than a lakh of people.

The blast furnace of TISCO stopped only thrice in its life: when Gandhiji was murdered in 1948, during 1958 struggle, and in the 1981 struggle, both led by Kedar Babu.

Kedar Das was very simple in his daily life, frugal, soft-spoken, speaking very little, but creating mass effect. It was an extremely effective and able working class leadership provided by the galaxy of Kedar Das, Barin De, Ali Amjad, Dr. Udayakar Mishra, O Gopalan and others. An ascetic in the typical Communist mould, Kedar Das or Kedar Babu dressed simply and ate little. He also spoke little but when he spoke, people listened.

Paritosh Bhattacharya, an ardent follower of Kedar Das, wrote in *Motif*, an avantgarde weekly paper: "To be with the people during the storms is an immortal bequest ever renewed by selfless people like Kedar Das for ushering in a happier and nobler life for everyone, everywhere on earth." In that article, Bhattacharya quoted Nikolai Vuptsarov, a young Bulgarian poet who was shot by a Nazi firing squad during World War II. The night before he was shot, Vuptsarov wrote a short poem, which Bhattacharya resurrected in his homage to his much-loved and much-missed Kedar-da: After the firing squad, the worms, / Thus does the simple logic go, / But in the storm I will be with you, / My people, because I loved you so!

*Kedar da lives for ever!!*

## Biographies of Communist Leaders-78

— Anil Rajimwale —

supported him hugely, sending him to the Assembly with record votes. He won the elections again in 1969 and 1972.

Kedar Das continued struggles and work for industrial workers of Jamshedpur and Bihar even after being elected. He led a 7-day strike of Telco and Tinsplate workers in 1957.

CPI split in 1964; Kedar Das remained throughout with CPI.

## Another historic strike, 1969

The Tata workers continued to fight through the 1960s. Kedar Das led the gherao of the general office of the Cable Company in 1967. They were lathi-charged by the security guards. Jwala Singh and Salim took the blows upon themselves

thousand workers struck for 48 days running. Top all India leaders like SA Dange, Indrajit Gupta, Jagannath Sarkar, Chaturanan Mishra, Ratan Roy, Chandrashekar Singh, Ramanand Tiwari, George Fernandes etc met the strikers.

The strike was withdrawn only after PM Indira Gandhi intervened, which was announced on AIR (radio) by labor minister Bhagwat Jha Azad.

Jamshedpur Contract Workers' Union was established on December 29, 1971, whose president was Kedar Das and general secretary Dilip Ghosh. It was agreed on August 17, 1979 that all contract laborers would be permanent. Kedar Dashad gone to Moscow

# Demand to Abolish Post...

*From Front Page*

sent to the Bill to ban online gambling. Citing the ominous misuse of the Raj Bhavan for political activities Mutharasan posed a direct question at R,N Ravi, asking if the Raj Bhavan was the office of the governor or the office of the BJP. "This crowd is only to caution you to say that the CPI shall not remain a mute spectator to the abuse of governor's office" reproached Mutharasan. Struggles, campaigns and agitations, he proclaimed will be intensified till R N Ravi is withdrawn.

RNallakannu, veteran party leader and freedom fighter flagged off the procession. The protesters were stopped and arrested before the procession reached near the Raj Bhavan gates. But the huge crowd of protesters sent a strong message to the Union government and its political tool R N Ravi that their evil deeds and sinister designs shall be fought to finish.

## Delhi

The party Delhi state council marking the day held a demonstration at JantarMantar demanding the abolition of the posts of governors and lieutenant governors so that the federal character of the country can be saved. The meeting was conducted by Delhi state secretariat member Shankarlal. It was addressed by party national council secretary Amarjeet Kaur and state council secretary Prof Dinesh Varshney.

Addressing the meeting Amarjeet Kaur said that the Modi government appointed

governors and lieutenant governors are working against the spirit of the federal character of Indian Constitution. They are acting as if they are the elected governors. Raj Bhavans have become the centres to topple the elected governments of opposition party ruled states, she said. They are making efforts to implement the agenda of RSS-BJP through harnessing communal politics in the states.

In Kerala, Amarjeet Kaur pointed out the governor is halting government's projects for development. The

of states to the elected governments there.

Others who addressed include Thrumalai Raman, general secretary AIYF, Harish Bala, president Karnataka AIYF, Satish, AITUC Delhi state general secretary, Vijay Tiwari, Mukesh Kashyap deputy general secretaries of Delhi AITUC, Sashi Kumar, secretary AIYF Delhi state,

Sharda Devi, Treasurer Delhi state NFIW.

## Andhra Pradesh

In response to call given by the party national executive, Andhra

tary. There was a tussle between police personnel and party ranks for some time. Subsequently police arrested leaders at petrol bunk and shifted them to Governorpet police station.

Prior to arrest K Ramakrishna had stated that Modi after coming to power is not honouring the rights of states. He is not granting special status to Andhra Pradesh. More over the central government is stating that it is a closed chapter. Assurances given in Parliament at the time of bifurcation are not being implemented. Though Jaganmohan Reddy had gone to Delhi and made request, Modi is not re-

party will intensify the agitation till the governor system is abolished and federalism is defended. All democratic minded sections have to come forward to strengthen the movement.

Donepudi Shankar, state executive member while addressing stated that nowadays political persons are being appointed as governors which is the most undemocratic one. Impartial intellectuals and political experts accepted by vast section of populace should be made governors.

G Koteswar Rao city secretary also addressed the protesters. The arrested include Nakka Veerabhadra Rao party city assistant secretary, Panchadarla Durgamba, Orsu Bharathi, Tammina Durga, Neelapu,

Bhagyalaxmi, Kitty Ramana Rao, Duggirala Seetharavamma, Lanka Govindarajulu, Padala Kanaka Rao, Ravikumar.

## Telangana

Party national council secretary Syed Azeez Pasha said that if BJP government led by Modi misuses system of governors for their political ends, CPI will intensify agitations throughout the nation in order to dethrone the Modi government. He was addressing a demonstration, at Ambedkar statue, Tankbund, Hyderabad, under the auspices of party Hyderabad council. Demonstration was led by V S Bose and E T Narsimha state secretariat members, Stalin and B Chaayadevi, city party assistant secretaries. Demonstrators wearing black pants and

sponding at all.

BJP government is bent upon dethroning democratically elected non-BJP governments. It is encouraging defections and with the help of governors had destabilised nine non-BJP governments. Ramakrishna explained how governors of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal are utilising the system and interfering in policy matters of state governments. Governors have come to a stage where they are in a position to threaten even democratically elected governments. If BJP continues the same policy,



same is happening in

Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, etc. Raj Bhavans were used to topple the governments in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh. She also explained in detail the composite culture of India. She demanded on behalf of party national council to abolish the posts of governors and lieutenant governors.

Addressing the protesters, Dinesh Varshney said that governors have no right to disturb the unique features of India which are very well enshrined in Indian Constitution. It is better to leave the governance

Pradesh state council of the party took out a Chalo Raj Bhavan march. Party ranks gathered in big numbers at party state headquarters Dasari Bhavan. There was police deployed in huge numbers around the party office. As procession started demanding save federalism, defend democracy and abolish system of governors, police started to take into custody state council secretary K Ramakrishna, Akkineni Vanaja, party national executive member, Donepudi Shankar, state executive member, G Koteswar Rao, Vijayawada city secre-

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# What is Wrong in Labour Codes - V

RS Yadav

1. Disputes relating to termination of individual worker: The worker may apply to the Industrial Tribunal for adjudication of the dispute. The worker may apply to the Tribunal 45 days after the application for the conciliation of the dispute was made. This bars the employees from taking the shelter of civil courts where chances of getting justice are better since the courts decide the cases on the merit of law unlike the tribunals where administrative considerations many a times get more and undue consideration.

Apart from above there is a provision of a Grievance Settlement Authority to which certain individual grievance can be referred (Chapter II B).

Compared to this, the mechanism for resolution of industrial disputes in the Code (chapter VII) is as under:

(i) Conciliation officer,

(ii) Industrial Tribunal (one or more): Two member Tribunal; one a Judicial Member and the other an Administrative Member;

(iii) A bench of the Tribunal: This shall consist of a Judicial Member and a Administrative Member or a single Judicial Member or a single Administrative Member;

(iv) National Tribunal (one or more): Two member Tribunal; one a Judicial Member and the other an Administrative Member.

A Bench consisting of a Judicial Member and an Administrative Member shall entertain and de-

cide the cases only relating to (a) the application and interpretation of Standing Order, (b) discharge or dismissal cases of workers, (c) illegality or otherwise of strike or lockout, (d) retrenchment

(i) judge of a High Court) Tribunal.

A Bench consisting of a Judicial Member and an Administrative Member shall entertain and decide the cases only relating to (a) the application and interpretation of Standing Order, (b) discharge or dismissal cases of workers, (c) illegality or otherwise of strike or lockout, (d) retrenchment and closure, and (d) Trade Union disputes.

And the remaining cases shall be entertained and decided by the bench of the Tribunal consisting of either a Judicial Member or an Administrative Member of the Tribunal.

This shows that a single person (consisting of only an Administrative Member) Tribunal can be there. This mechanism for resolution of industrial disputes in the Code reflects a tendency to give overriding weightage to administrative considerations as compared to legal point of view. This favours employers and harms workers. There is no provision in the Industrial Disputes Act for any Tribunal consisting of Administrative Members.)

Apart from above mechanism, for industrial establishments employing 20 or more workers there is a provision of (1) Work

Committee to promote measures for securing and preserving amity and good relationship between employers and workers, and (2) a Grievance Redressal Committee for resolution of disputes.

The Bill provides that the government can defer the enforcement of the award passed by a Tribunal on public grounds affecting national economy or social justice. The Industrial Dispute Act, 1947 has similar provision. Madras High Court and Andhra Pradesh struck down this provision on constitutional ground and held that the power to the executive to decline enforcing an award or modify it allows the executive to sit in appeal over the decision of the Tribunal, and therefore violates the separation of powers between the executive and judiciary, which forms a part of the basic structure of the Constitution. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour also had recommended removing this provision in view of these judgments.

5 Two years' limitation for industrial disputes: The limitation of two years for an industrial dispute is unreal. Sometimes workers avoid referring a dispute for conciliation for fear of reprisal from the employers. They fear that the employer may terminate the services at this point of time. After getting permanency or getting better unionized they

raise the dispute. So, such a limitation is only a way of defeating the legitimate rights of workers.

## The Code on Social Security, 2020

The Code on Social Security, 2019 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on December 11, 2019. The Code was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour. The report of the Standing Committee was placed before both the Houses of Parliament on September 15, 2020. The Bill was reintroduced as the Code on Social Security, 2020 and has been passed by the Lok Sabha on September 22, 2020, Rajya Sabha on September 23, 2020. It received the assent of the President on 28 September, 2020. The Draft Rules for the Code were published on 13 November, 2020.

The stated objective of the Act is to amend and consolidate the laws relating to social security with the goal to extend social security to all employees and workers either in the organized or unorganized or any other sectors and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The Code on Social Security is to replace and repeal the undernoted Acts:

1. The Employees' Compensation Act, 1923;

2. The Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948;

3. The Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952;

4. The Employment Exchanges (Compulsory Notification of Vacan-

cies) Act, 1959;

5. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961;

6. The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972;

7. The Cine-Workers Welfare Fund Act, 1981;

8. The Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Cess Act, 1996;

9. The Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008.

## Issues of concern

1. The Code does not emphasize social security as a right. What is required for social security is a universal and right-based entitlement with statutory provisions and not the contributory/optional schemes or State largesse based on request by the worker/his family, and discretion by petty officials. The Code does not go in this direction.

2. The Social Security Code looks like a political manifesto than a legal document. Most of its promises are vague and without a roadmap to actualize them. The Code is loaded with phrases like "as may be specified" and "as may be formulated".

3. The Code does not provide universal and comprehensive social security coverage, and it deprives more workers than it covers.

4. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour (2020) had recommended that the Code should provide a framework for achieving universal social security within a definite time frame. It made several

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# Demand to Abolish Post...

From Page 10

shirts and ladies with black sarees raised slogans against system of governors and in defence of Constitution, democracy and federalism.

Azeez Pasha, further stated that Modi is continuously disrupting Centre and state relations and above all snatching away democratic rights of the states. BJP is utilising governors in order to destabilise non-BJP governments in the states. He also expressed anger for utilising Raj Bhavans as their political offices which is most unconstitutional. If Modi government continues to hurdle federal system and democracy, there is no other alternative for CPI except to intensify nationwide agitations in order to dethrone BJP government headed by Modi.

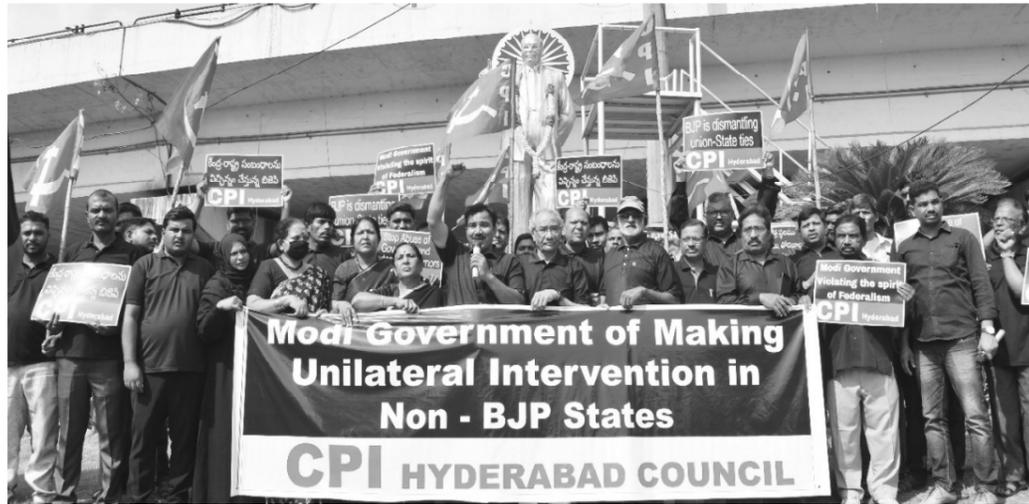
V S Bose, Telangana state secretariat member, CPI, in his address stated that governors contrary to their constitutional duties, are openly criticising policy decisions of state governments and creat-

ing hurdles by not putting signatures on democratically approved bills in legislative bodies.

Others who spoke include ET Narasimha, state secretariat member

Chaithanya, Shahana Anjum and others also participated.

Demonstration was held under the auspices of party district council of Bhadradi K o t h a g u d e m .



and city secretary, Prem Pavani, senior party leader.

In the demonstration, city party executive member, Kamatham Yadagiri, Shankar Nayak, Padala Nalini, Nerlakanti Srikanth, B Venkatesham, Vujjini Ratnakar, (AITUC), Shamshuddin, R Malleesh, Arutla Rajkumar (DHPS), B a l a k r i s h n a , Mahamood, Jangaiah,

Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, Telangana state council secretary, after garlanding the statue of the architect of the Constitution Ambedkar addressed the demonstrators. Demonstrators with black shirts and ladies with black sarees, carrying black flags expressed their protest against system of governors. Mass organisations also took part in the protest.

Sambasiva Rao in his

address demanded that system of governors which has become puppet of central government must be abolished. The system of governors is most outdated which was created during the period of British imperialists. It is

in the country, should be abolished. CPI will launch more militant struggles till that system is abolished, he warned.

## Uttar Pradesh

In Uttar Pradesh, demonstrations were held in different districts for saving the federal structure of the country and sent memorandums to President.

In the memorandum, it has been underlined that RSS-BJP government has been trying to change the structure of the governance from federal to autocratic. To meet the purpose, they are taking steps to weaken the federal character of our system. They are also trying to create disturbances in non- BJP governed states, and it is done through the governors of these states, which is clearly violation of the Constitution.

Hence it has been urged to the President of the country that the federal structure must be protected and the post of governor be abolished.

According to sources, there have been dharna organized in districts and the memorandums have been sent to her through district magistrates.

interfering in the administrative matters of state governments and is harming the very democratic system. CPI will resist these malicious attempts and fight out, Sambasiva Rao said.

Addressing the demonstrators at district collector's office in Siddipet, party national executive member Chada Venkata Reddy said governors system which is being transformed into an anti-constitutional force and diluting democracy

## Comrade Ramkrishna Bhattacharya is No More

In 2022 we lost a noted scholar and philosopher, a great Marxist intellectual Ramkrishna Bhattacharya. Professor Bhattacharya was President of the BPSF (West Bengal State Council of the AISF) in the late sixties. During his academic and political upbringing he came in contact with the then intellectual Mohicans of the West Bengal CPI namely Gopal Halder, Debiprasad Chattopadhyay, Goutam Chattopadhyay, Chinmohan Sehanbish and himself became a stalwart in the field of the discourse of Indology and materialism. His further research on CârvaKa placed him as an authority of international repute in the genre. An undying believer of Marxism, he wrote numerous articles and several

books on aesthetics and classical literature, Indology and epics, razor-sharp polemic against the consumerist intelligentsia and pro-capitalist cultural establishments. As a teacher of masterly qualities along with a unique understanding of literature and philosophy, he approached the literary analysis of several Bengali authors including Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Bibhuti Bhushan Bandopadhyay. He was a well recognised and respected resort of revolutionary academia and undaunted Marxists.



## Glorifying Myths....

From Page 5

minister had in 2014 said that in ancient times science in our country was so much advanced that the head of an elephant could be transplanted on a man's head and also that genetic science was so developed in our country that Karan could be born without mother's womb. Many scientists also started expressing similar views. The Vice Chancellor of Andhra Pradesh University G. Nageswara Rao said in the Indian Science Congress at Jalandhar that the Kauravas who numbered 100 were born due to advanced stem cell research and technology in our country. Recently, the Indian Space Research Organization - ISRO and the Indian Council for Historical Research - ICHR have started working together on how to integrate ancient science with modern science.

When the forces in power fail to act in the interests of the common people, then they try to highlight the achievements of the society in the past in such a way that the people forget the failures of the ruling circles and are obsessed with the glory of the achievements of the past.

It is time we understand how such forces thrive on concocted stories and false propaganda. A lie spoken time and again appears to be truth and becomes part of people's psyche. The struggle against the forces of obscurantism is not only political or economic but there is a need to struggle at every level including developing scientific outlook in education and healthcare based on present day developments in medical science.

# Cuban Revolution's 64<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*Congratulations to the great Cuban people on the 64rd anniversary of the Cuban revolution. Cuba celebrated the 64rd anniversary of its revolutio.*

Reiterating that he visited the country's scientific institutions that contributed to the struggle against the coronavirus pandemic, Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel said on Twitter that he is convinced that Cuban science will develop further in 2022.

Minister of Education, Ena Elsa Velazquez Cobiella, said on Twitter: "Congratulations to all Cubans. We continue working and succeeding."

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and Bolivian President Luis Arce Catacora congratulated the revolution in messages delivered on social media.

The Cuban Revolution on Jan. 1, 1959, brought about the fall of the regime of dictator Fulgencio Batista and the rise to power the leader of the guerrilla rebels Fidel Castro Ruz.

January 1, 2023, we joined the good people of Cuba to celebrate the 64th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution; an event that changed the face of Cuba. The Cuban Revolution was launched on 1 January 1959, and led by the late Commandant Fidel Castro. This historic event of the Cuban Revolution has deeply influenced numerous struggles in many parts of the world.

This year's anniversary is celebrated also in the background of the inauguration of President Lula da Silva of Brazil. Sadly, the event has been robbed of its annual fanfare due to the

death of the King of Soccer, King Pele.

The success of the Cuban Revolution has never been in the good books of the United States government from the beginning. The US saw that the overthrow of its client, the corrupt dictator General Fulgencio Batista posed a threat, even though not the case, to its economic, political and military interests, including the



Guantanamo Bay naval base in Cuba. Batista was a military dictator, who brutalized Cuba from 1952 to 1959.

The US had refused to talk to the leaders of the Cuban Revolution, and instead invented every covert activity to isolate the Caribbean nation, unleash collective punishment, wreck its economy and destabilize the Island's institutions. This policy has continued to this date and the aim remained the same- to force the Cuban people to rise up and overthrow their revolutionary government. But this has failed and the Cuban Revolution is thriving without compromising its underlying values and socialist principles.

In spite all attempts to inflict harm on the revolutionary government Cuba did not abandon other nations and peoples that were fighting to free themselves from the shackles of colonialism and other foreign domination.

Cuba played important role in the liberation struggle of Africa and other nations.

So, National Liberation Movements all over the world saw the Cuban Revolution as a good example to free their countries and peoples from the manipulative mechanism of imperialism. In the process, the Cuban Revolutionary Leader, Fidel Castro had to survive 317 assassina-

tion attempts on his life. Out of its own weak powers, due to the US blockade and undeclared economic war, Cuba accompanied South Africa to obtain its freedom and national sovereign independence from the obnoxious apartheid regime in 1994. Before this time, most countries of Africa had their independence with the support of the revolutionary government of Cuba.

The Cuban people will always celebrate January 1, as the day of freedom and human dignity, thankful to the Cuban Revolution. Despite the unjust blockade and other coercive actions initiated by the US, Cuba has achieved success in areas such as food security, health care, education and amateur sport. As manifested on the ground, in all of these, the Cuban Revolution has continued to extend its solidarity to help poor countries that really need help in na-

tion-building and prosperity.

Although many of the great leaders who led the Cuban Revolution, including unforgettable figures like Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Vilma Espín and many others, are no longer on the scene and have succumbed to the will of God, their living monument, and that of the Cuban Revolution, is to be found in the changed living standards of the Cuban people and in the hearts of struggling people across the world.

On this historic day, we call on the US to have a second look at its policy towards Cuba and to remove all threats and obstacles that hinder the development of that country and people.

We call on the Joe Biden administration in Washington to follow the footpath of its predecessor, former president Barrack Obama and restore a peaceful, harmonious and mutually beneficial relationship with Cuba. This we believe was one of the reasons for US citizens rejected former president Donald Trump's bid for re-election in 2000.

**'Nearly every war has been the result of corporate media lies'**

Julian Assange once observed that, 'Nearly every war has been the result of media lies.' For daring to publish evidence of US war crimes, Assange now sits in the high-security Belmarsh prison in London, at risk of being extradited to the US within the next few weeks. The prospects for a fair trial range from miniscule to zero.

In a recent interview, WikiLeaks Editor-in-

*Diary of  
International  
Events*

*C. Adhikesavan*

Chief Kristinn Hrafnsson told US journalist Glenn Greenwald that legal avenues in London to challenge Assange's unlawful extradition were being exhausted. What is needed now is, not recourse to a legal system that is subservient to power, but a political fight, as Hrafnsson explained.

The Guardian recently joined with the New York Times, Le Monde, El País and Der Spiegel in publishing an open letter calling on US President Joe Biden to end Assange's prosecution. It has been ten years since Assange sought refuge in London's Ecuadorian embassy. After being dragged from the embassy by police in April 2019, Assange has been locked up in the harsh regime of Belmarsh prison, suffering from failing physical and mental health. Indeed, according to then UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Nils Melzer, Assange is literally a victim of torture. In 2020, the prestigious medical journal, The Lancet, published a letter from Doctors for Assange, with 216 signatories from 33 countries, drawing urgent attention to 'the ongoing torture and medical neglect of Julian Assange.'

Political writer Thomas Scripps noted that the open letter from the five newspapers: 'makes clear that Assange has been the victim of a monstrous campaign of state persecution, costing him years of his life and good health, for revealing state criminality, designed to set a chilling example for others.'

## What is Wrong...

From Page 11

recommendations for expanding the coverage of establishments, employees, and type of benefits. These include: (i) reconsidering establishment-size based thresholds and expanding the definition of "establishment" to include other enterprise categories such as agricultural and own account enterprises, (ii) expanding definition of "employees" to include ASHA and Aanganwadi workers and "unorganized workers" to include agricultural workers, (iii) creating a

separate fund for interstate migrant workers, (iv) introducing unemployment insurance for unorganized workers and (v) reintroducing labour welfare funds for workers in certain industries such as iron ore mines and beedi establishments.

5. The Code excludes a large number of workers from the scheme as it includes the workers of only those establishments where there is a minimum number of employees (such as 10 or 20 employees). The other category of workers which include the

unorganized sector workers where minimum workers are less than 10 and self-employed are left to be covered by various discretionary schemes, as and when the government notifies.

6. No particular scheme has been put together for gig and platform workers. The Code only provides space for the Central and State Governments to notify schemes for such workers and mandates that the schemes may be funded through the combined contribution of the centre and state governments. Nobody knows what would be the schemes. Just an outright hollow idea!

7. Acts on gratuity, ESI, EPF and maternity benefits were entirely for organized sector workers. Provisions of these Acts, even after amalgamation into the Social Security Code, 2020, do not cover the informal workers.

8. Therefore, key benefits not available to informal workers in Social Security Code, 2020:

(a) Maternity Benefit: Under the Code, maternity benefit has not been made universal. Maternity benefit is presently applicable for establishments employing 10 or more workers. The definition of "establishment" in the Code does not include the unorganized

sector. Hence women engaged in the unorganized sector would remain out of the purview of maternity benefit.

(b) Employees Provident Fund: The S.S. Code maintains that the EPF Scheme will remain applicable as before, to every establishment in which 20 or more employees are employed. Thus, for formal sector workers, access to EPF remains unfulfilled too in the new Code. The millions of workers in micro and small enterprises are out of the ambit of the Code.

[To be Continued]

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# March of Farmers...

*From Last Page*

Maharashtra government for the damage of crops due to heavy rain this year.

Ram Baheti, vice president of Maharashtra Rajya Kisan Sabha (BKMU) informed about the suo motu cognizance taken by the Mumbai High Court to evict the "Gairan" holders from their land. He also informed about an intervention application filed by the BKMU state unit in the Mumbai High Court against its order of October 6, 2022.

A seven member delegation of AIKS and BKMU met the revenue

minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil in his office near Vidhan Bhavan. The memorandum of demands by BKMU and AIKS were submitted to him. Vikhe Patil discussed with the delegation the problems and demands of the farmer and agricultural labourers. The minister assured the delegation that he will call a meeting of BKMU and AIKS leaders in mantralaya (Vidhan Sabha), Mumbai along with all the concerned officers. Namdeo Chavan, president of Maharashtra Rajya Lal Bawata Shetmajur Union (BKMU), Rajan

Kshirsagar (AIKS state secretary), Hausal Rahangdale (BKMU), Anil Ghate (AIKS) and others were the part of seven member delegation.

Namdeo Chavan informed in the public meeting about the discussion which took place with the minister. State secretary of CPI Subhash Lande addressed the public meeting and told that the CPI state unit fully supports the struggles of AIKS and BKMU. Former state secretary of CPI Tukaram Bhasme who was presiding over this meeting gave concluding remarks, Shivkumar Ganvir, state general secretary of

BKMU, Ganesh Kasbe state joint secretary of BKMU, Anil Ghate of AIKS also spoke on the occasion.

This 140 k.m. long march which started from Wani on December 20, passed through Wani of Yavatmal district, Warora of Chandrapur district, Nanduri and Barbati villages of Wardha districts, Sonegaon Lodhi, Mohagaon Kawatha, Mangli, Dudha, Sukli (Beldar), Butibori villages of Nagpur districts. The arrangement of halt, food and public meetings at villages was made by kisan sabha units in Mohagaon Kawatna and Dudha, Birsa Munda

Sena at Dudha, Jai Jawan - Jai Kisan Sanghna, Nationalist Congress Party, Congress, Prahar, AITUC, Rashtriya OBC Mukti Morcha at various places. The Asha and Anganwadi workers of AITUC made an arrangement of breakfast and tea in Butibori Industrial Area of Nagpur.

This long march from Wani received a good response from villagers, farmers and agricultural labourers. It is one step ahead in building BKMU an important class organisation and also Kisan Sabha. Anil Ghate, Tukaram Bhasme, Rajan Kshirsagar, Arun Wankar made all out efforts to make this long march a success.

## On Record ...

Justice B V Nagarathna said that records show no independent application of mind by RBI. "Notification of November 8, 2018 is unlawful," she noted. When the central government proposes demonetisation of any bank note, it must seek the opinion of the central board of the bank having regard to the fact that the bank is the sole authority to regulate circulation of bank notes and secure monetary stability and generally to operate the currency and credit system of the country and to maintain price stability.

The opinion of the central board of the bank ought to be an independent and frank opinion after a meaningful discussion by the central board of the bank which ought to be given its due weightage having regard to the ramifications it may have on the Indian economy and the citizens of India although it may not be binding on the central government. On receipt of a negative opinion from the central board of the bank, the central government which has initiated the demonetisation process may still intend to go ahead with the said process after weighing the pros and cons only by means of an ordinance and/or parliamentary legislation but not by issuance of a gazette notification.

In other words, the central government in such circumstances cannot resort to

exercise of power under sub-section (2) of Section 26 of the Act by issuing a notification in the Gazette of India as if it were exercising executive powers. Even if the central board of the bank concurs with the proposal of the central government, the central government would have to undertake a legislative process and not carry out the measure by simply issuing a gazette notification. - *The Indian Express*, January 3.



The Supreme Court said it will hear Bilkis Bano's plea along with a batch of other petitions challenging the remission of sentence of 11 convicts who gangraped her and murdered seven members of her family members during the 2002 Godhra

riots in Gujarat.

A bench comprising Justice Ajay Rastogi and Justice Bela M Trivedi was hearing a batch of petitions, including that of CPI (M) leader Subhashini Ali, journalist Revati Laul, former vice-chancellor of the Lucknow University Roop Rekha Verma and Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Mahua Moitra, against the release of the convicts. Trivedi recused herself from hearing the fresh pleas.

Justice Rastogi said now that the victim has approached this court challenging the remission to convicts, her plea will be taken as a lead matter. - *The Indian Express*, January 4.

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Thousands of employees of three state-owned power companies went on a 72-hour strike onto protest the privatisation of power firms, affecting power supply in nine districts of Maharashtra. The affected districts include Pune rural, Wardha, Buldhana, Akola, Shirur, Sangli, Nagpur, Amravati, and Chandrapur.

An additional police force was deployed at Nagpur's Koradi plant to avoid a law and order situation. Pune's Sinhagad road and Manikbaug areas are reporting power cuts since 3 am. Also, around 1,000 industrial firms in Bhosari MIDC and civic areas of Katraj, Wakad, and Vishrantwadi are suffering due to a lack of power supply. - *The Indian Express*, January 4.

- Compiled by C. Adhikesavan

# Long March of Farmers, Agri Workers

Ram Baheti

*"Hit Back the Attacks of RSS controlled Modi Government," said Atul Kumar Anjaan, general secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha as he was addressing the public meeting at the conclusion of the 140 km long march of hundreds of farmers and agricultural labourers under the banner of All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) and Bharatiya Khet Majdoor Union (BKMU) Maharashtra State units on December 26, 2022 at Nagpur.*

The winter session of Maharashtra assembly witnessed the great march that had arrived at Nagpur where several farmers and agricultural labourers from all over the state gathered at the Yashwant Stadium of Nagpur to join the march. From here hundreds of agricultural labourers and farmers marched towards the assembly where the winter session is going on from December 19, 2022.

The long march was started on December 20, 2022 from Wani of Yavatmal district and reached Nagpur on December 26, 2022 where hundreds of others who came from several other districts joined the long march.

Farmers and agricultural labourers, Gairan land holders, forest land holders came on streets with anger against the central and state



*AIKS general secretary Atul Kumar Anjaan addressing the gathering*

government's policies.

Rajan Kshirsagar, the general secretary of Maharashtra Rajya Kisan Sabha and state vice-president of Maharashtra Rajya Lal Bawata Shetmajur Union (BKMU) Anil Ghate of Wani had taken part in the long march from the very first day. Prof Ram Baheti joined the long march on December 23, 2022 at Mohgaon near Wardha District.

Former state secretary and a senior CPI leader Tukaram Bhasme was looking after all the arrangements of long march. State Secretary of CPI Subhash Lande was present on December 20, 2022 when the long march was started from Wani.

The long march reached Nagpur while several farmers and agricultural labourers from all over the state gathered at the Yashwant Stadium of Nagpur to join the march. From here hundreds of agricultural labourers and farmers

marched towards the assembly where the winter session is going on from December 19, 2022.

This march was led by Namdeo Chavan and Shivkumar Ganvir (president and general secretary of BKMU Maharashtra state), Hiralal Pardeshi and Rajan Kshirsagar (president and general secretary of AIKS Maharashtra state), Subhash Lande and Tukaram Bhasme and certain other leaders of both organisations.

The long march culminated in a public meeting near the winter session of Maharashtra Assembly. This public meeting was presided over by Tukaram Bhasme and was conducted by Arun Wankar, Kisan Sabha leader of Nagpur.

While addressing the public meeting the general secretary of All India Kisan Sabha criticised the anti-farmer and anti-labourer policies of Central and state govern-

ments. Atul Kumar Anjaan appealed the farmers and agricultural labourers to intensify the struggle under the banners of AIKS and BKMU. Com. Anjaan heavily came down on the RSS controlled Modi government and said that on one hand the government lands are being handed over to the corporate houses and on the other hand the landless labourers and homeless families belonging to SC/ST/OBC/Minorities and all other castes are being evicted from the land which they have been cultivating for last 30 to 40 years on the pretext of the Mumbai High Court judgement. He also appealed to hit-back the attacks of RSS controlled government.

The Mumbai High Court in its judgement of October 6, 2022 ruled that the "Gairan" land holders who had encroached the government pastures/land and who have been

cultivating the same for last 20-40 years be evicted from their land by December 31, 2022. This is ridiculous, serious and surprising that the Mumbai High Court had taken a suomotu' cognizance of encroachments on government Gairan lands saying that all 2 lakh 22 thousand 159 families be evicted from their land and dwelling placed by the end of this year. In this background, Atul Kumar demanded that not a single family be evicted from the Gairan land. He also demanded in his speech that the minimum support price to the agriculture products as recommended by Swaminathan Commission should be given to all the crops produced by the farmers.

Rajan Kshirsagar criticised the profit making insurance companies who did not give any compensation of crop insurance and also for the non-payment by the

*On Page 15*

