



6.564 Million Names Dropped from Bihar Voters' List

Massive Voters' Rights March against Alleged Removal of Names

PATNA: On September 1, a huge crowd gathered in Patna for the "Voter Rights March", led by the INDIA alliance, to protest against the removal of 6.564 million names from Bihar's voter list.

These names were removed during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll conducted by the Election Commission.

The march began at the historic Gandhi Maidan and

passed through several key routes before returning into a public meeting at Dak Bungalow Chowk. People waved red, green, and Indian tricolour flags, and the slogans like "Vote thieves,

Kiranesh Kumar

step down!" echoed throughout the city.

There was strong participation from students, youth, and women. The massive crowd sent a clear message: "The ruling NDA government in Bihar may face defeat in

the upcoming Assembly elections".

Political temperature has started rising. INDIA alliance succeeds in organizing the large-scale protest just in 1.5 months before the 2025 Bihar Assembly Elections. The show was quite impressive. The activists were enthused. The 16-day-long

Voters' Rights Yatra started on August 17 from Sasaram and covered 1,300 km, focusing on problems faced by people.

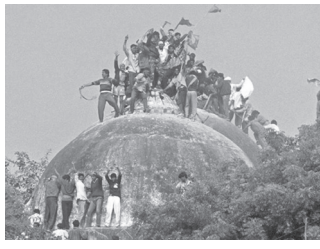
The issues were soon in the limelight. They were mainly centered around manipulation of voters' list (SIR process). The nagging issues

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Towards 25th Party Congress of CPI, Chandigarh, Sept 21–25, 2025

Getting Away with Crime



Concluding his three day lecture series in Delhi, RSS Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat made it clear that he would continue with his long held policy of letting his men keep hitting at the very roots of Indian democracy. He declared that while the RSS would not take up the issue of demanding that the sites of the Gyanvapi Mosque in Varanasi and the Eidgah at Mathura be given to Hindus, he would not stop the Sangh cadres from associating themselves with any movement for these sites. He then added that “the other side”, meaning Muslims, could respond by giving up their claims as it was a “matter of just three”, which includes Ayodhya.

Thus, what Bhagwat did was to reassert, though indirectly, the same old demand of RSS that Muslims must surrender their sacred sites, at Ayodhya, Mathura and Kashi. He did not leave any option for them. The challenge was ominous. It came like a request, steeled with threat, of demolition of sites demanded, and if opposed, violence. Memories of riots and barbaric attacks are still not dead.

What happened with Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is no longer a secret. First the Hindu communalists planted an idol in Babri Masjid in 1949, thus desecrating the mosque and turning it into a disputed site. Their move was based on Vinayak Damodar Savarkar’s thesis that Hindu religious places which had been under occupation of ‘foreigners’ must be liberated. Then in 1980s, the RSS launched a movement to bring down Babri Masjid. Culmination came when on December 6, 1992, Babri Masjid was razed to the ground. Judiciary recognised it as “egregious violation of rule of law”.

Even the Supreme Court accepted the fact that Mosque was desecrated when the idols were placed in the main hall and a puja was performed in 1949. Finally illegally, the Mosque was demolished in 1992. No one paid any attention to the grieving minority. Thus the Babri Mosque demolition could not be called a dispute over a place of worship. It was also declared that a temple would be built where the mosque was demolished. By this very act the apex court has pointed towards the ineligibility of the minority to be equal to the majority.

But Ayodhya case was not about one single place of worship. Had it been so it would not have mattered much because there are so many places of worship for peoples of all faiths in India and one less, of any community, would not have been of much consequence. In real sense, this was a test case for the rule of law. A place of worship had been desecrated and turned into a disputed site and then it was demolished in broad daylight in view of

everyone in flagrant violation of the rule of law. The question central to the case, therefore, was this: would the aggressors be allowed to get away with their crime? The court’s decision is for all to see.

And yet, instead of letting the wound heal, Bhagwat is now trying to create the ground for inflicting more injuries, amounting to sacrilege. What he said in his nationally televised press conference was that he wanted Ayodhya to be repeated at two more places in the country. He might call them a “matter of just three” sites. But what it would mean is violation of the rule of law two more times. Legal proceedings are still on with regard to the disputes in Varanasi and Mathura.

And all this is happening despite the presence of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, a landmark Indian legislation designed to prohibit the conversion of any place of worship and to maintain the religious character of these sites as they existed on August 15, 1947. Enacted to curb communal tension and promote religious harmony, it mandates that no legal proceedings can be initiated or continued to challenge the religious status of any such place.

Section 3 of the Act strictly forbids anyone from converting a place of worship, whether partially or wholly, from one religious denomination to another, or even to a different sect within the same denomination. Section 4(2) of the Act terminates all existing lawsuits challenging the religious nature of a site and prevents the filing of new cases for this purpose.

However, the Act exempted the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi dispute as it was already a pending legal matter, a subjudice case, at the time of the enactment of the law. The matter was kept out of the Act’s scope to allow the court proceedings to continue and resolve the dispute, thereby avoiding the application of the law to an ongoing complex case.

Despite its intent, the Act has faced numerous challenges in the Supreme Court by various parties. The Supreme Court affirmed in its 2019 Ayodhya judgment that the Places of Worship Act is intrinsically linked to the basic structure of the Indian Constitution, specifically to secularism. But lower courts have, in some instances, permitted inquiries into the religious character of sites, leading to ongoing disputes and controversies.

But the issue is not just about the Act. The preamble of the Constitution has spelt out in no uncertain terms that the foundational values of Indian state are principles of Secularism, Socialism, Republic and Democracy. The court’s decision to allow construction of the temple at the site of Babri Masjid must have made them feel “blessed”. Thus, each of the commitments made in the basic core left the question unreplied – the reason why Mohan Bhagwat feels emboldened to repeat the same act.

Editorial

CPI Greets Vietnam on its 80th Anniversary of National Day

Communist Party of India general secretary D Raja wrote on behalf of the CPI the following letter of its warmest revolutionary greetings to the Central Committee, Communist Party of Vietnam on the historic occasion of the 80th anniversary of the National Day of Vietnam on August 20, 2025:

On behalf of the Communist Party of India, we extend our warmest revolutionary greetings to the Communist Party of Vietnam and the heroic people of Vietnam on the historic occasion of the 80th anniversary of the National Day of Vietnam.

The victorious August Revolution of 1945 and the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh marked a turning point in world history. It not only ushered in a new era for the people of Vietnam in their struggle for independence, but also inspired countless liberation movements across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The Vietnamese Revolution has stood as a beacon of hope and courage for all oppressed peoples, demonstrating

that unity, determination, and sacrifice can defeat colonialism and imperialism.

Over the past eight decades, the people of Vietnam, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, have made tremendous achievements in political, economic, and social development. Vietnam today stands as a symbol of resilience and progress, pursuing the path of socialism while ensuring independence, sovereignty, and national dignity.

India and Vietnam share long-standing historical ties forged in common struggles against colonial domination. These ties have deepened over the decades into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership covering political, economic, cultural, and people-to-people cooperation. Our two Parties—CPI and CPV—have consistently maintained close fraternal relations, contributing to the strengthening of bilateral friendship and solidarity. We value this relationship deeply and are committed to further enhancing it in the years to come.

On this momentous occasion of the 80th anni-

versary of the National Day of Vietnam, the Communist Party of India reaffirms its solidarity with the Communist Party of Vietnam and the people of Vietnam. Together, let us continue to advance the cause of peace, national independence, anti-imperialist solidarity, and socialism.

Long Live the Socialist Republic of Vietnam!
Long Live India-Vietnam Friendship!
Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!



The 21st state conference of the Communist Party of India in Madhya Pradesh took place from August 29 to August 31 at Comrade Shivmohan Nagar in the Dabra district of Gwalior. On the first day of the conference, a large rally was held, attended by representatives from every part of the state, along with numerous locals, party comrades, farm labourers, and women. As the comrades marched through the streets of Dabra city carrying red flags and chanting slogans like “Lal Salaam” and “InquilabZindabad,” the citizens enthusiastically welcomed them.

After the grand rally, the red flag, symbolising the workers’ movement, was hoisted at the conference venue, and the leaders paid floral tributes to a martyr’s memorial.

The three-day state conference commenced with an inaugural session featuring CPI’s National Secretaries, K. Narayana and Dr. Girish, as the chief guests. Dr. Girish Chandra Sharma officially inaugurated the conference, while State Secretary Arvind Srivastava presided over the event. Ratan Verma, the president of the reception committee and a former District Judge, delivered the welcome address. The Secretary of the reception committee, Sanjeev Rajput, expressed gratitude, and Satyam Sagar conducted the proceedings. Jaswinder Singh, the State Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), advocated for leftist unity in a fraternal message, highlighting the rich leftheritage of Gwalior.

During the inaugural session, speakers criticised the Modi government’s fascist, anti-people, and corporate-friendly policies. They argued that the BJP government is dividing society along communal lines to benefit its corporate allies. The Communist Party of India vowed to continue its struggle against

21st MP State Conference of CPI Concludes with Renewed Energy



the government’s anti-people policies, which they claimed are sustained by electoral manipulation. Although CPI may be smaller in numbers, the party’s ideological clarity and fighting spirit make it a significant threat to anti-people parties.

The delegate session commenced on the second day, presided over by a presidium that included Ajit Jain, Sagar, VijendraSoni from Anuppur, Sanjay Namdev from

Singrauli, Ashok Pathak, and Anjali Parmar from Gwalior.

State Secretary Arvind Shrivastava presented a political and organisational report, highlighting the political situation in Madhya Pradesh and outlining targets for the organisation’s expansion. This report was discussed by approximately 40 comrades, including DD Vasnik from Seoni, Ramesh Savita from Gwalior, Natwar Singh from Nagda,

Satyam Sagar

Chhannulal from Balaghat, DD Sharma from Bhopal, Vijay Dalal from Indore, PrahladBairagi from Sehore, RajkumarDubey from Singrauli, Rahul Bhaiji from Sagar, RudrapalYadav from Indore, HiralalRathore from Anuppur, Aruna Patel from Rewa, Shailesh Parmar from Gwalior, ManoharMirote from Guna, Jyoti Gore from

Barwani, Gayaprasad Mishra, PK Bose, Vishnu Kol, SS Maurya, Kaushal Sharma, Dinesh Ramteke, Ramesh Jhala, Rajkumar Sharma, Arun Singh, and Ratan Verma from Gwalior. All representatives emphasised the need to strengthen the party and mass organisations within the districts. Arvind Srivastava addressed the concerns raised during the debate, after which the report was passed unanimously.

Several important resolutions were also adopted following discussions at the conference. Rajendra Gupta from Jabalpur presented a resolution opposing the tariff imposed by the U.S. on India. RudrapalYadav from Indore introduced a resolution against anti-labour amendments in the labour laws. Rafiq Khan from Guna proposed a resolution opposing smart electricity meters. Deepak Karosia from Katni

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CPI Welcomes Progress in Cooperation Between India and China

National Secretariat of the Communist Party of India issues on September 1, 2025, the following statement:

The Communist Party of India welcomes the positive outcome of the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping of China. The engagement between the leaders of India and China - two of the most ancient civilizations of the world - reaffirms that our countries are destined to be partners, not rivals.

The dialogue signals a commitment to move towards better understanding at all levels - political, economic, cultural and people-to-people. Such cooperation is of great importance not only to our two nations, but also to the strengthening of the unity of the Global South and to the advancement of multi-polarity in interna-

tional relations.

The CPI notes with satisfaction that both sides have demonstrated political will to address and resolve the long-standing border issues, a legacy of colonial powers, through peaceful and negotiated means. The path of dialogue and mutual respect will contribute to building lasting peace, stability and development in our region.

At a time when imperialist forces seek to divide and dominate, the unity and cooperation of India and China will provide a powerful impetus to an alternative world order based on equality, justice and mutual respect among nations. The CPI calls upon all sections of the people to support this positive momentum in India-China relations.

Massive Voters' Rights March against ...

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were also taken up like Inflation, Unemployment, Education and Healthcare, also Corruption. Leaders from the stage declared that Bihar has always led the nation in difficult times and warned the ruling party, saying: "So far, only atomic bombs have exploded — now a hydrogen bomb is coming. A call was issued to BJP to be prepared to face a stronger enemy."

CPI Leads the March with Thousands of Workers

Before the main march began, thousands of Communist Party of India (CPI) workers arrived with red flags. The march started from Jan Shakti Bhawan at 9 AM and was led by D. Raja, CPI National General Secretary, Annie Raja, National Secretary, Nagendra Nath Ojha, National Secretary, Ram Naresh Pandey (State Secretary).

D. Raja, while addressing the massive gathering, accused the BJP-led central government of aggressively pushing a pro-corporate agenda and now trying to take away people's voting rights. He said, "We will not accept voter suppression or voter fraud." The CPI said the Election Commission's plan to prepare a completely new voter list in just 1–2 months is unrealistic. They alleged that

the removal of over 65 lakh names was done under the Modi government's direction to target migrant workers, the poor, Dalits, minorities, and marginalized communities.

Ram Naresh Pandey called the march historic and claimed that the Nitish Kumar-led government will be removed, and a people-

joined.

Rally Started with Paying Tribute to Mahatma Gandhi

The Voters' Rights March began with floral tributes at Mahatma Gandhi's statue. National leaders who were taking part included general secretary of the CPI D. Raja (CPI), Mallikarjun Kharge (Congress President), Rahul Gandhi (Leader of the Op-

TMC), national secretary, Annie Raja (CPI).

While addressing the audience, Annie Raja said, "Voting Is Our Right, Not Anyone's Gift". At Dak Bungalow Chowk, Annie Raja declared, "Voting is our constitutional right. No one's father gave it to us, it was given by the Constitution so we that can choose our own leaders."

She congratulated the

national issue, and the Modi government, which follows a divisive agenda, must be removed from power.

Rahul Gandhi, in his address, said, "Hydrogen Bomb Is coming, following the atom bomb."

While speaking at the event, Rahul Gandhi, accused the BJP and Election Commission of tampering with the voter list. He said, "The voice from Bihar against voter fraud is now echoing across the country. We will not let attacks on the Constitution succeed."

Referring to previous revelations, he said, "We dropped an atom bomb in Mahadevapura (Bengaluru Central)... now a hydrogen bomb is coming. BJP, get ready." He promised bigger revelations soon, making voter fraud a national issue linked to people's rights.

Tejashwi Yadav slammed Nitish Government as "Copycat". He called the Nitish Kumar government a "copycat government", claiming it simply copies the RJD's policies like pension, electricity bills, and domicile rules.

He said, "Bihar doesn't need a copy-paste government. It needs leaders with original ideas."

He accused two BJP leaders of working with the Election Commission to destroy democracy in Bihar, the very land where democracy was born.



friendly alliance government will be formed.

The rally marched through Income Tax Golambar and Dak Bungalow before reaching Gandhi Maidan. Alongside senior leaders, hundreds of other CPI leaders and thousands of party workers had

position in Lok Sabha), Tejashwi Yadav, (RJD Leader, Bihar LoP, MABaby, (CPI-M), Dipankar Bhattacharya (CPI-ML), Hemant Soren (Jharkhand CM, JMM), Sanjay Raut (MP, Shiv Sena - Uddhav group), Yusuf Pathan (MP,

people of Bihar for making the yatra successful and said the fight against voter fraud will continue nationwide.

"We will remove the vote thieves from power. We will not let the Constitution and democracy be destroyed." She added that this is now a

Com S Sudhakar Reddy is No More

A Voice of Rebellion against Injustice is Silent Now

On the evening of 22 August, 2025, an unfortunate news came from Hyderabad, Com. Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy was no more. He passed away at the age of 83. Soon the news started running on news channels and social media platforms. First of all, I saw the post of CPI national secretary K. Narayana from Hyderabad. And then I kept seeing the posts of many colleagues of the central leadership and state leadership of CPI. A wave of mourning ran from top to bottom in all the left parties, especially in CPI. With a great sadness, everyone was paying tribute to him with tearful eyes. His body was kept for public viewing and paying tributes at Telangana CPI office Makhdoom Bhavan in Hyderabad on August 24, 2025 from 10 am to 3 pm. Telangana Governor, Chief Minister, Andhra Chief Minister and many Ministers, top leaders of all left parties, students, youth, intellectuals, women, top leaders of workers and farmers paid homage to him. This proves his general popularity, friendliness and wide political credibility.

Com. S. Sudhakar Reddy was born on March 25, 1942 in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh (now Telangana) and did his schooling in Kurnool itself. From childhood, he had a special passion to raise his voice against injustice and exploitation. While studying in school, he along with his student friends went on strike for blackboard and chalk. The school management had to accept his point.

He worked all his life as a true communist. As general secretary, Comrade Sudhakar was very popular among the comrades and the general masses. Due to his magnetic personality, deep Marxist understanding and firmness in his thoughts, he continuously moved forward towards the peak of politics. He travelled from riches to rags. In his entire political life, he always remained steadfast to his ideals, ethics and discipline along with Marxist thoughts.

In today's era, there are only a few people left in politics who, like Comrade Reddy, have voluntarily resigned from their posts citing age and health while being at the pinnacle of politics. Comrade Sudhakar Reddy had resigned from his post in 2019 and handed over the leadership to the current general secretary Comrade D. Raja. Comrade Reddy, a law graduate from Osmania University, was influenced by Marxist ideas since his student days. He became active in student politics in Osmania University itself. As the university student union, he painted the university campus and gave the student union a new height. In 1966, he was elected the general secretary of the All India Students Federation (AISF) for the first time. This was the same period when no other student union existed. AISF was leading students all over the country. In 1964, CPI had split and the other one was called CPI (Marxist). CPI was facing many political and organisational upheavals.

In 1969, Com. Sudhakar was elected General Secretary of AISF for the second time. Under his leadership, a 62-day nationwide strike was held over hostel, scholarship and other welfare issues of students. He was arrested and imprisoned many times. He was also kept in Lucknow and Calcutta Central Jail. Comrade Reddy, who was a man of his word and considered revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh as his role model, was elected President of All India Youth Federation (AIYF) in 1972. He raised the demand of giving the right to vote to the youth at the age of 18 and made it a national issue. Later, by making the 61st amendment to the Constitution, the

Prof. Arun Kumar

youth got the right to vote at the age of 18, which is considered a notable and important chapter in the Indian democratic history. After this, Comrade Reddy's political stature grew even bigger. The leaders of CPI at that time, especially Comrade C. Rajeshwar Rao and Comrade S.A. Dange, had a significant contribution in shaping and sharpening the political life of Comrade S. Sudhakar Reddy. Under their guidance, Comrade Reddy left no stone unturned in sharpening the politics of CPI. In fact, he was a grassroots leader who had a clear understanding of regional and national problems. He started a militant movement in Andhra Pradesh against the arbitrary increase in electricity prices imposed by the World Bank. During this movement, the police targeted him and fired, but he narrowly



escaped. Comrade Sudhakar Reddy was the state secretary of Andhra Pradesh CPI from 1997 to 2005.

In 2008, when Comrade A.B. Bardhan was the general secretary, Comrade Sudhakar Reddy became the deputy general secretary of CPI. A clear message was sent to the party cadres that he could become the next general secretary. And that is what happened, in 2012, in the Patna party congress, he was elected the general secretary of CPI for the first time. Comrade Sudhakar Reddy was an effective speaker in English, Hindi and Telugu. He was also a very good writer.

His articles, books and pamphlets were in simple and easy language which was easily acceptable to the common masses. Due to his politics and popularity, he was elected to the Lok Sabha twice in 1998 and 2004 from Nalgonda in Andhra Pradesh. Even in his parliamentary life, he always remained a strong voice of the long oppressed people of the society. When he was made the chairman of the Labour Parliamentary Committee, he recommended social security for unorganized workers and gratuity for teachers of private schools, which later turned into law in the Parliament. He put forward his views very strongly and clearly on the complex problem of fluoride in Nalgonda, problems of farmers, black money and 2G scam, which were appreciated by people of other parties as well. There was often a consensus on his parliamentary questions.

In 2015, he was elected General Secretary of CPI for the second time in the Puducherry National Convention. He made every possible effort to ex-

pand and spread CPI and left politics among students and youth and to give it a new form by linking it with the theoretical aspects of caste and class. Its effect was especially seen in universities. As General Secretary, he infused new energy into the party. He played an important role in training cadres, building mass organizations and strengthening left unity against communalism. During the time of Comrade Sudhakar Reddy, the membership of CPI increased significantly. The party expanded among the youth and women. Com. Sudhakar Reddy was a discipline-loving communist. He had great respect for the party constitution. He was an expert in taking decisions inside and outside the party. There was always consensus on his decisions from top to bottom. He never hesitated in taking any decision for the truth and in favour of the party. He never adopted the path of luring or trickery for a position within the party. His ability and capacity were such that the position remained with him throughout his life. He was never seen praising himself. Due to his magnetic personality, he led more than forty international delegations as a student, youth and CPI leader to the party leaders and common people. He led the fraternal delegation from the Student Congress in the Soviet Union to Mongolia and the United States of America very well. He led the Indian delegation in Italy, Japan, Vietnam and many other countries. While leading India in the United Nations Organization, he addressed the General Assembly. His entire life has been a unique example of principled party politics, discipline and struggle. Comrade Reddy, who was rich in his multi-faceted personality, remained a lifelong source of inspiration not only for his party colleagues but also for the ruling party and the opposition. He was counted among the great and effective leaders of Indian left politics. He maintained meetings and dialogue till the end.

In 2018, at the Kollam national convention of the CPI, he was unanimously re-elected as the party's general secretary for the third time. Following the ideals of the CPI, he resigned from the post of General Secretary in 2019, citing the reasons of ill health and age, two years before the completion of his term as General Secretary and handed over the command to Com. D. Raja.

He was elected for the first time to the National Council of CPI in 1971 and despite being in national politics for almost five decades, he remained steadfast to his communist ideals till his last breath. He was Honorary Advisor, Former President, Honorary President of C. Rajeshwar Rao Foundation, Hyderabad. He had donated his eyes to L.V. Prasad Eye Hospital. After paying tributes, his body was handed over to Gandhi Medical College, Hyderabad. Com. Reddy has two sons, who are also active in the CPI. His wife Com. Vijay Lakshmi has been very active in Mahila Samaj and Trade Union AITUC. Their reputation as an ideal communist family has remained intact in the whole of Andhra Pradesh. When on August 24, in his last journey on the streets of Hyderabad, thousands of students, youth, women, workers, farmers and party comrades in red uniforms with red flags were marching in front and behind his body, the whole city became witness to it. Everyone's eyes were moist. The soldiers of the red flag gave him a revolutionary farewell. Even today, remembering that emotional moment, eyes become moist.

Heartfelt tributes and red salute to you Comrade Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy! -

(The author is General Secretary, AIFUCTO, Member National Council, CPI)

Political Shenanigans that Led to a 50 Per cent Tariff

A fifty per cent tariff imposed on Indian goods exported to US came into effect from August 27, 2025. The cumulative tariff hits a huge body blow to the Indian economy. The economic impact is significant. In the year 2024, India exported goods worth 87.3 billion USD to the USA, its single largest trading partner. Out of this, nearly 48 to 55 billion USD worth of trade is under direct risk. The heaviest blow falls on the most labour-intensive, employment-generating sectors such as the gems and jewellery, textiles and apparel, agriculture and leather and footwear. The existing tariff of 5 to 10 percent on Indian imports in US was increased to 26 percent. This was estimated to cost Indian exports by 10 billion USD per annum.

Trump had come out with concrete and candid pronouncements about reciprocal tariffs immediately upon assuming office in January 2025. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the US in February 2025. The visit, a 'Business first' affair, was taken up agreeing on "Mission 500" to reach 500 billion USD trade by 2030. As a part of this objective, defence deals with the US were signed. Modi gave in to the US pressure. He signed the deal but never spoke about the 'tit for tat' reciprocal tariff.

Instead, Modi signed a new defence deal with Trump, creating a new defence co-operation with the imperialist country, the USA. The deal involves expanded US military sales to India from 2025, including F-35 jets, along with increased oil and gas exports to narrow the trade deficit.

This deal for the US is important in the ongoing geopolitical struggle and trade war with China. The deals align with the efforts of US to protect and perpetuate its global hegemony, camouflaged in a security framework, and involve India in defending common interests against a rising and aggressive China. The deals will likely be shaped by the trajectory of the China-US rivalry in the long run. Modi has made India a willing and voluntary partner in the trajectory.

The devil lies in the details
New Age Weekly

Vahidha Nizam

Pakistan after the Pahalgam terror attack, followed by Operation Sindoor. Of course, Modi was clever enough not to name Trump or US. Trump's aim to score points to 'be a peace broker' that would potentially bolster his prospects for Nobel Peace Prize was crushed! INDIA's opposition parties deserve the credit for bringing pressure on the Modi government, that Modi had to buckle down in the parliament.

Incensed, Mr. Donald Trump had issued warnings to slap new sanctions on Russia and secondary sanctions on countries that buy crude oil



nological might of US military-industrial complex. Though not an immediate threat to India, the deal was a tactical move by the US.

Trump manipulated Modi as a tool to reinforce US' imperialistic hegemony. Narendra Modi willingly bowed down. He did not discuss reversing the reciprocal tariff that would rudely snatch away livelihoods of millions of workers in India, debilitate the MSMEs in India and deal a devastating blow to Indian industries. Narendra Modi not only betrayed India and its people, but he also pawned its interests on the altars of the United States of America.

On the other hand, Narendra Modi, in the inept handling of things and clumsy strategy, infuriated his friend Trump when he negated his claim to have brokered a ceasefire between India and

from Moscow in efforts to end the Russia-Ukraine war. On August 27, the penalty tariff of 50% was imposed. But China, the largest buyer of crude oil from Russia, is spared from this punitive action.

US accuses India of engaging in "arbitrage" and "profiteering" from the import of crude oil from Russia while maintaining that China has a diversified input of their oil. India and China are the vital lifelines of Russia's oil exports. This difference between how US views India and China reflects a confluence of political calculation and economic leverage.

China stood firm against US's imposition of tariffs and retaliated, unlike India, which willingly yielded. In April, China was slapped with a tariff of 145 per cent while Beijing slapped a reciprocal tariff of 125 per cent on the

US – rates that amounted to a virtual trade embargo between the countries. There were negotiations. A trade truce was reached whereby both countries slashed the tariffs. This highlights the political will of a country to face a challenge with grit and gumption.

Years of trade wars, geopolitical conflicts have made US-China relations brittle. But both countries realise the depth of mutual interdependence. U.S. policymakers rightly believe they can pressure India economically without risking the kind of systemic disruption that would follow a direct confrontation with China. This is where Modi has failed, failed miserably for want of shrewd and efficient diplomacy to engage with US.

The uncompromising commitment of Modi to his crony capitalists is seemingly an impediment to India reconsidering its oil purchase from Russia. India's import of Russian oil after the onset of Ukraine war has been extraordinary in scale and speed. Before the war, Russian crude accounted for less than 2 percent of India's oil imports. A year later, it grew to 40 per cent, an all-time high that persisted into 2025. Indian refiners, Ambani's Reliance and Nayara Energy of Adani Group, are beneficiaries of steep wartime discounts. They refine the crude oil into gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel for export. These companies together recorded a profit of over 13000 crores per annum. The discount in price of Russian imports only goes to fill the boots of Modi's cronies. Not a penny to the common man. While it is true that oil trade between India-Russia is a historic one since the time USSR existed, while India must never give in to the dictates of US administration, is it also not true that a deal that feeds the two profit hungry corporates plays havoc in Indian export industry and livelihoods of millions of Indian workers through this tariff imposition, and Modi still masquerades as the messiah? Why should India not rethink diversifying its oil

imports as a strategy to negotiate a lower tariff?

Modi has taken a detour, a shortcut to join hands with the political and trade enemies of the US - China and Russia, "Enemy of my enemy is my friend". Meeting Putin and Xi Jinping, attending SCO, are all good. Rebuilding the strained relations with China is essential and welcome. India has to work to gain trust and strengthen the relationship.

Aspiring to build relations, the US and India had failed to play a key role in the BRICS grouping, particularly in the changing economic uncertainties and geopolitical landscape. A strong BRICS with its own bank and currency, trade treaties would redefine the global economic balance. But India dashed out the proposal of de-dollarisation of BRICS countries, categorically stating that there was no need for de-dollarisation. This was aimed to favour the US. Modi was the sole responsible factor for thwarting BRICS currency idea.

Modi chose to join QUAD, the four-nation grouping of US, India, Australia and Japan. Australia withdrew from this group after China issued formal diplomatic protests. The motive behind the Quad is to keep the strategic sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any military or political influence. It is basically seen as a strategic grouping aimed at reducing Chinese domination. The forum strategically counters China's economic and military rise. This is the objective of US and the Western imperialist powers. India cannot be a part of QUAD. It should exit the QUAD now and normalise with China.

These are, in a nutshell, political shenanigans that have brought India to its knees in front of US powers. Now, to protect the Indian economy and prevent it from sinking, India needs to work hard with diplomacy. A mature and multifaceted strategy to restore trade relations with the US is the immediate imperative, besides market diversification.

From Free Inquiry to Blind Obedience

The UGC's War on the Indian Mind

What is a university for? Is it a place where young people learn how to think, or a place where they are told what to think? This question lies at the heart of the University Grants Commission's (UGC) latest proposal to weave "Indian Knowledge Systems" (IKS) into every discipline across higher education.

On the surface, the move seems inspiring. It speaks of recovering cultural pride, decolonizing the curriculum, and reconnecting students with India's heritage. But beneath the attractive packaging lies a carefully crafted project that undermines the very foundations of modern education. It seeks not to enrich critical inquiry, but to replace it with reverence, mythology, and ideological conformity. This is less an academic reform and more an undoing of the university as we know it.

The core of a genuine education is critical inquiry—the freedom to question every idea, text, and figure, no matter how sacred. The proposed curriculum does the opposite. Instead of encouraging students to interrogate sources, it commands admiration. Take the Arthashastra, presented as timeless wisdom on governance and finance. Students are not asked to grapple with its authoritarian statecraft, its caste-based order, or its prescriptions for assassination. Instead, they are invited only to revere it.

The same distortion appears in mathematics, where sutra-based methods are promoted as shortcuts to problem-solving. But applying formulas without engaging with modern principles reduces learning to rote memory. Pride replaces analysis, ritual replaces reasoning.

Another striking flaw is

the artificial fusion of ancient ideals with modern concepts. For instance, the mythical notion of *Ramarajya* is taught in relation to corporate social responsibility (CSR). This is intellectually dishonest. *Ramarajya*, a pre-capitalist monarchical ideal, has little to do with CSR, a modern corporate strategy. Similarly, ancient time units like *gatis* and *vighatis* are equated with GMT and IST, creating a false equivalence that validates outdated systems by dressing them in modern science.

Perhaps most troubling is how the framework blurs the boundary between science and mythology. Courses propose blending astronomical calculations with mythic cycles of gods and cosmic ages. Mathematics is linked to Puranic texts, and rituals such as determining *muhurtas* are treated as legitimate scientific methods. This not only devalues scientific rigor but also trivializes India's cultural traditions by forcing them into categories where they do not belong.

Education must teach history as a process of inquiry, but here it is turned into a tool of politics.

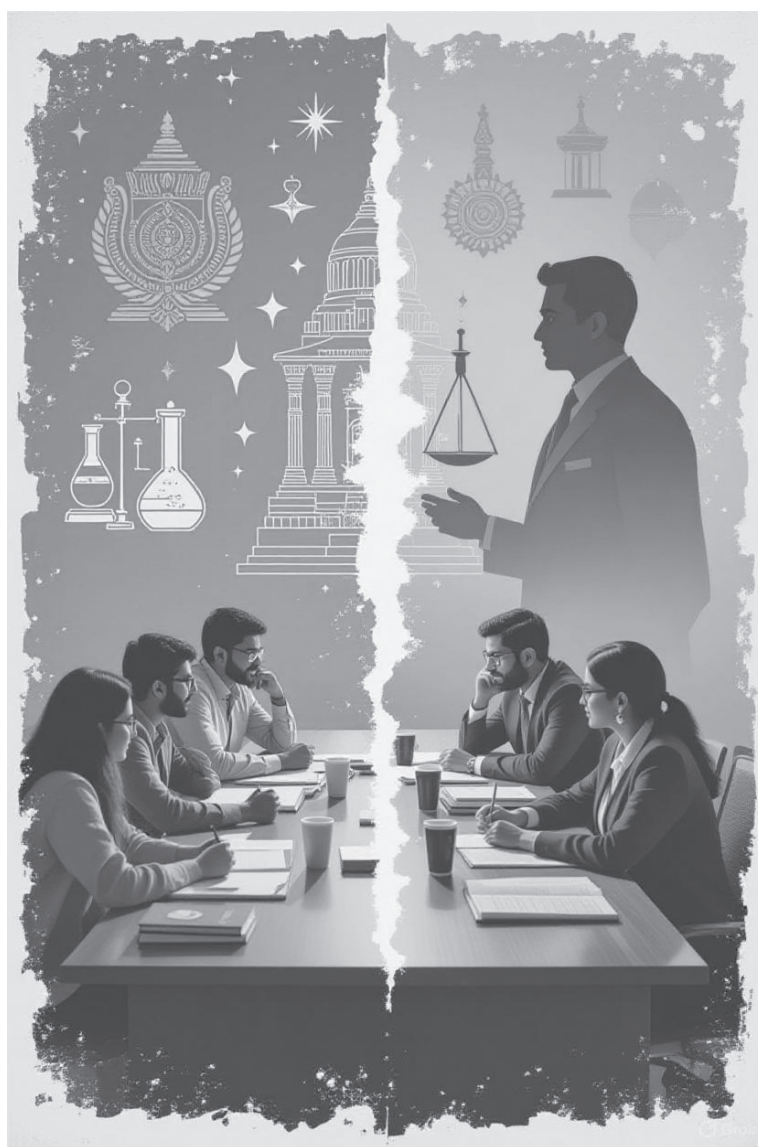
The curriculum strategically elevates Vinayak Savarkar's writings to the centre of the freedom struggle. This shifts India's founding narrative away from a pluralistic movement to a sectarian one aligned with Hindutva ideology. Similarly, "Bharatiya innovation" courses frame India's past as one of victimhood and erasure, aligning neatly with nationalist rhetoric rather

than academic exploration.

The very phrase "Indian Knowledge Systems" suggests a singular tradition. In practice, it privileges upper-caste Sanskrit texts—the Vedas, Shulvasutras, Puranas—while erasing marginalized voices. The philosophies of the Buddha, the anti-caste resistance of Phule and Ambedkar, the syncretic traditions of Bhakti and Sufi saints, and the ecological wisdom of Adivasi communities are left out. For Dalit, Bahujan, and Adivasi students, the mes-

fect is obvious: professors risk their careers if they contradict state narratives. The result is the transformation of universities into extensions of the state, suppressing independent thought.

Why this aggressive push now? India faces high unemployment and economic distress. At such moments, governments often turn to cultural nationalism as a diversion. When material promises cannot be fulfilled, symbolic compensation is offered: pride in a glorious



sage is clear: their histories of struggle are not considered knowledge. This is not education but the sanctification of hierarchy.

A university should be a self-governing community of scholars. This proposal, however, is a bureaucratic command imposed from above. Academic bodies and scholars are sidelined, and curricula are dictated by ideology. The chilling ef-

fect is obvious: professors risk their careers if they contradict state narratives. The result is the transformation of universities into extensions of the state, suppressing independent thought.

Ironically, a curriculum that looks anti-modern is perfectly suited to authoritarian capitalism. Corporations need technically skilled but politically docile workers. This framework provides just that—graduates who can



STUDY & STRUGGLE

C Adhikesavan



follow formulas but lack the tools for innovation or critique. They become efficient servants of the system rather than its challengers.

In political terms, the curriculum transforms students from citizens into subjects. Citizens question authority; subjects obey. By embedding ritual and mythology into science, reverence into history, and ideology into philosophy, it fosters obedience rather than autonomy.

At its core, this is a battle over what education is for. One tradition, from the Buddha to Ambedkar, views knowledge as liberation—freeing the mind from superstition and prejudice to create rational, independent citizens. The other, embodied in the UGC's proposal, treats knowledge as a tool of identity formation—molding individuals into proud but obedient members of a singular national culture.

The choice before India is stark. Will universities remain spaces of free inquiry that empower students to think for themselves? Or will they become factories producing compliant subjects who serve the interests of power?

The stakes could not be higher. The UGC's project is not just a flawed syllabus; it is a declaration of intent. It is a war on the Indian mind.

Berta Braganza: First Woman Freedom Fighter of Goa and a Communist

Maria Berta de Menezes Braganza belonged to a distinguished family of freedom fighters and nationalists of Goa, which produced several prominent figures. She is considered the first woman freedom fighter of Goa, joined soon after by her sister Beatris. These two sisters, both Communists, were daughters of Luis de Menezes Braganza and Ana. Ana was the sister of the famous freedom fighter and Communist of Goa Tristao Braganza da Cunha. The family members left their mark in a wide range of fields: as writers, ethnographers, doctors, biochemist, and so on. One of them was an indologist and private secretary to the famous poet Rabindranath Tagore.

Berta was born on December 17, 1911 in Cuelim village in Mormugao taluka. The family lived in the Menezes Braganza House in Chandor, a famous place today.

Berta was well-educated and became a teacher and a journalist. She married lawyer and journalist Antonio Furtado in 1947.

In political activities

Goa being a repressive Portuguese colony under the fascist dictator Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, anti-Portuguese feelings ran high. Berta too was soon in the midst of activities for freedom.

Her uncle the famous Tristao Braganza da Cunha was in France for full 14 years; on return in 1926, he founded the Comissao do congresso de Goa (Goa Congress Committee) in 1928. At that stage, no attempt to found Communist party could be made, as that would invite fascist aggressive repressions, though there were several Communists including Cunha.

Berta was included in Goa Congress Committee (GCC) in 1929 itself, at just 18 years of age. She actively worked to enroll members.

Participation of Goan leaders like Luis de Menezes Braganza (father of Berta), T.B.Cunha, J.J.de Cunha and Luis Miranda at the 44th session of Indian National Congress at Calcutta in 1928 was kept a closely guarded

secret due to severe restrictions in Goa. Their main purpose was to get GCC affiliated to Congress, which they achieved. Unfortunately the news was flashed by some newspapers in British India, leading to increased repressions within Goa. Consequently, GCC was disaffiliated by Congress.

Goa Youth League

Goa Youth League (GYL) was founded in 1935. It played a key role in the Goan liberation movement, giving rise to many movements and producing prominent leaders. Berta joined her uncle TB Cunha in GYL, and in 1945, she became its secretary. Along with Berta, Libia Lobo Sardesai, another pioneering woman leader, also joined it as its secretary.

Secret radio station

GYL organized mass rallies, protests, satyagraha, underground activities like organizing groups and newspapers, underground radio stations, etc. The underground radio station was run by Libia under the name "Voice of Freedom", broadcasting from the forests of Amboli Ghat in Maharashtra and Castle Rock in Karnataka, roughly 100 km and 80 km respectively from Goa. They transmitted hour long programs. The radio played a big role in keeping contact with the people. It was later contacted by the Indian forces too. It func-

tioned with salvaged wireless radio stations.

Mass activities of GYL

Berta was often seen at the side of TB Cunha at protests and speeches in South Goa. Some of their meetings would be held at the Menezes Braganza House in Chandor. She and her sister, Beatris, wore khadi saris and promoted khadi fabric.

Between 1940 and 1943, Berta contributed to the Panjim-based publication, O Académico.

Her sister Beatris de Menezes Braganza too was



among the founders of Goa Youth League. She along with Berta made significant contribution to encourage the participation of youth in Goa's freedom movement. GYL was at first a socio-political organisation, evolving under the impact of the situation into a political one dedicated to Goa's liberation.

GYL was able to bring outstanding national leaders onto its platform. Among them was the unique M.Y.Nurie, one of those few Indian leaders and a Muslim, who fought for Goa's liberation before 1947. He addressed rallies in Goa in 1946 under joint auspices of Goa Congress Committee, Goan Youth League and Nationalist Christians Party. In one of such meetings, he said it was the primary duty of leaders to dispel fear and infuse political consciousness among the Goans.

Berta, Cunha and Lohia

Around 1946 Dr Julio Menezes, a noted doctor, academician and writer, invited Dr Ram Manohar Lohia to his house in Goa. Dr. Lohia had earlier visited him for a medical examination in Bombay. They were old friends. Menezes advised him to stay at his house in Assolna, Goa, and take rest.

The visit to Assolna sprouted into broader discussions on Goa's liberation. Dr Julio's house soon turned into a centre for leading Goan intellectuals and political activists discussing future course of action.

On June 15, 1946, Menezes and Lohia defied ban on public meetings and organised a meeting as an act of civil disobedience against the Portuguese rule. It came to be known as the 'June 15 movement'. Another defiant meeting, held on June 18, attracted a turnout so big that police decided to arrest both Lohia and Menezes, who had entered the area in a horse carriage. It was one more milestone in the history of Goan freedom struggle. The inhumane treatment meted out by the Portuguese police would leave a lasting impression on the Goans.

Berta too joined the uprising. In her capacity as secretary of the GYL, she along with her uncle TB Cunha, offered satyagraha at Margao on June 30, 1946 in response to Lohia's call for civil disobedience. However, the Portuguese police stopped them and beat her badly, shoved both of them into a car and abandoned them on the roadside in Chandor.

Berta and Cunha address meetings

The next venue for meeting was at Cansaulim, where

around 1300 people gathered on July 1 (1946) to listen to the fiery speeches of T.B.Cunha and Berta Menezes. Interestingly, among the assembled people, there were around 130 Kunbi Gawdas from Cuelim, the native village of T.B.Cunha.

Perplexed by frequent public meetings all over Goa, the government decided not to take the slightest risk. Consequently, in an incident, Police with bayonets swooped upon a group of people assembled at Chandor on July 10 to condole the death of the great Goan nationalist Luis de Menezes Braganza, and father of Berta, and dispersed them.

Work after Indian independence

Between 1946 and 1950, Berta continued to distribute nationalist pamphlets and Indian newspapers in Goa. However, on April 16, 1950, she and her husband, António Furtado, were forced to escape to Belgaum, after she was threatened with deportation to Africa. This was because they both refused to sign an official declaration condemning Prime minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru's declaration that Goa was a part of India and must be returned.

Berta continued her revolutionary work and distribution of nationalist literature from Belgaum. She was elected president of Belgaum branch of National Congress of Goa. She and Furtado started a leftwing journal Free Goa, an 'Organ of Portuguese India's Liberation'. Furtado was its first editor.

Later, TB Cunha escaped to Bombay. Consequently, Berta and Furtado also moved there. They continued to publish Free Goa from Bombay. After the death of

Cunha in September 1958, Berta became the editor of Free Goa in 1958, and continued editing it till its closure in 1962.

Goa's women freedom fighters

Berta and Beatris were part of a whole pantheon of women freedom fighters of Goa, who underwent unimaginable physical and mental tortures. Very little is known and written about them. Besides Braganza sisters, they include Premapurav, Vatsala Pandurang Kirtani, Sudhatai or Sudhamadhav Josi, Shashikala Hodarkar, Sindhu Deshpande, Libia Lobo Sardesai, Sharda Padnagar Savaikar, Celina Olga Moniz, and many others. On occasions, they were actively supported by hundreds of common women in processions and meetings.

Many of the women freedom fighters were inhumanly treated, brutally beaten, severely tortured, which broke their teeth and bones, were mentally traumatized, forced to lay on the ice, beaten on the ear leading to hear loss, and what not!

Not only women leaders but even the common mass of women also participated in Goa's liberation movement. For example, when the news of arrest of Vatsala Kirtani by Police spread around Margao, about 60 women and girls came rushing, arranged themselves in two rows and stopped in front of the Police Station. They came to free her from the lock-up, and the police had to release her. The behavior of police was uncivilized all through.

Goa Satyagraha

Berta took an active part in the famous Goa satyagraha of 1954-55. She offered satyagraha at Patradevi in the jathaled by Gerald Pereira under the banner of Goa Vimochan Sahayak Samiti (GVSS), on August 15, 1955. On that day, some 70 satyagrahis were killed all over Goa borders, 30 at Patradevi border alone. Two biggest groups of 2500 each



Goa's women freedom fighters (File Photo)

tried to walk into Goa borders, one at Patradevi in the north at Goa-Maharashtra border, and at Pollem in the south. Berta was in the group of VD Chitale, Karnail Singh, Sahodara Devi and others. Many were shot and killed, including Karnail Singh from

lages there in 1954, much before others could move. Thus this Portuguese colony was liberated much before Goa achieved freedom in 1961.

Berta later became the 'President' of the Communist Party in Goa. She was also a

bold. Berta Bragança contested from the Cortalim assembly constituency, but failed to win. Along with her, seven others also lost.

Articles and books

In 1990, Berta published a book of fiction, Tales of Goa, collecting 15 short stories previously published in the 1930s in Blitz and Bombay Chronicle.

The stories highlight poverty, injustice and cruelty of the colonial and caste systems. They reflect lives of the poorest.

Berta does not paint the golden sunshine of Goa's sandy beaches, nor the magnificence of its churches, nor the dreamy quality of its temples. Her Goa is not the paradise painted in dazzling colours, instead it tells the stark truth of ignorance and poverty.

In 1992, she published, Landmarks in My Time: Selected Writings, with considerable materials on herself and about her uncle TB Cunha. It is a book of essays reflecting struggles in Goa. The first stirrings of liberation movement in Portuguese Goa struck an immediate chord in the young girl's heart. Those feelings defined her very existence till Goa was liberated on December 18, 1961.

The first eight essays in this book provide an insider's view on Goan freedom

struggle and post-liberation politics. Tristao Bragança Cunha, father of Goan nationalism and a pioneer Communist, has also been profiled.

She also translated a speech by Gerald Pereira in Konkani on the AIR delivered in 1958. Pereira was a Goan freedom fighter and a well-known Communist. The speech was translated into English and published in Free Goa the same month. The journal was edited and published by her. The article was brought out as a booklet by the Goan People's Party.

Work for peace and solidarity

Berta Braganza represented India at the Afro-Asian Women's Conference in Cairo, where the liberation struggle of Goa was discussed in detail. She was also part of a delegation to Moscow on the same issue. In 1959, she was made a member of the Goa Political Convention at the Afro-Asian Solidarity and All India Peace Council. She was also a regular contributor to the Afro-Asian Bulletin. She was Honorary Treasurer of TB Cunha Memorial Committee.

Third National Conference for Afro-Asian solidarity was held in Bombay in December 1960. It called for the immediate liberation of Goa, Daman and Diu and for forming a National Campaign Committee for this purpose. The Committee was led by George Vaz, Berta joining it in 1961. In this capacity, she travelled across India, participating in conferences in major cities like Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta etc, demanding Indian military action into Goa.

She donated land to the Chandor Sports Club, which built the village's Community Hall there.

Maria Berta de Menezes Braganza passed away in 1993. She contributed hugely to the liberation of Goa in 1961. Her ashes are buried in Chandor cemetery. There is a crypt of Menezes Braganza family in Chandor, South Goa. ■

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Anil Rajimwale

Punjab. The incidents are also famous for the fact that two American journalists helped bring in the wounded and the killed from inside Goa border.

There stands a Martyrs' Memorial in Patradevi.

Goan People's Party (GPP)

Goan People's Party was formed after split from National Congress (Goa), by George Vaz, Berta Braganza and Divakar Kakodkar, in 1948 in Bombay. GPP functioned as a unit of Communist Party of India. The Communist Party as such could not be formed in the repressive conditions in Goa.

GPP played the leading role in the liberation of Nagar Haveli. Its armed squads captured more than 60 vil-

part of the 'Instituto Menezes Braganza', named after her father.

She travelled to Indian cities, Cairo, USSR and other places seeking support for Goan liberation. She refused to write in Portuguese as a political statement!

After liberation

Berta Menezes Bragança and other Goan Communists, like Gerald Pereira and George Vaz, began working among the Goan peasants soon after the liberation of Goa. They established the Shetkari Paksh (Farmers' Party).

Elections were held in 1963 to Goa, Daman and Diu assembly. They contested as part of the 'Frente Popular', which included the Communists. They did not contest on Communist sym-

8th Conference of Jharkhand State CPI

CPI Continues to be a Reliable Voice of the Oppressed

RANCHI: The 8th State Conference of the Communist Party of India in Jharkhand was successfully held on August 24–26, 2025, at the Omi Lal Azad Auditorium in Ranchi. The three-day event saw participation from over 300 delegates from across the state, with more than 200 representatives actively taking part in deliberations. Mahendra Pathak has been re-elected as CPI state Secretary.

The conference unanimously elected a new 45-member State Council and a 21-member State Executive Committee. Mahendra Pathak continues to be state secretary. He was re-elected for a second term. In his address, Pathak thanked the delegates and committed to intensifying

Ajay Kumar Singh

exploitation of mineral wealth
■ Employment for un-

large-scale government land scams

■ Stopping migration of youth from the state

National Leaders Address the Conference

stressing on the need to strengthen the Communist movement in Jharkhand.

They highlighted the historic oppression of tribals, Dalits, and minorities in

Red Flag of Struggle Raised in Ranchi

The conference Inaugurate with senior leader Bhuvaneshwar Prasad Mehta hoisting the red flag and paying tribute at the mar-



employed youth and allowance for those living on facing unemployment allowance

The conference was chaired by a presidium comprising PK Pandey, Sonia Devi, and Ram Swaroop

Jharkhand, stating that even after statehood, governments — particularly under the BJP — have failed to address the needs of the people. They accused corporate-backed BJP regimes of plundering the state's natural wealth and weakening democracy.

Ojha also criticized the central government's backdoor attempts to implement NRC, urging all secular parties to unite against the NDA. CPI reiterated its commitment to strengthen the opposition alliance and work toward a common platform.

Mahendra Pathak Announces Posthumous Body Donation

In a remarkable gesture to promote science and fight

tyrs' memorial. Leaders declared that CPI will lead people's struggles against exploitation, injustice, and loot in Jharkhand, and work as a credible political alternative.

Notable Participants

PK Pandey, Krishna Kumar Mehta, Anirudh Kumar, Ambuj Thakur, Dr. Piyush, Mevalal Prasad, Ganesh Mahato, Laxmanlal Mahato, Jawahar Yadav, Sonia Devi, Manju Gautam, ChhayaKall, Pashupati Kall, Kanhai Mal Pahadia, Gaur Rawani, Ajay Kumar Singh, Mahadev Ram, Arjun Yadav, Ram SwaroopPaswan, Deep Narayan Yadav, RamjiSahu, Prof. Anwar, SudhanMurmur, Vikram Kumar Singh, and many more.

The CPI's 8th State Conference has set a strong tone for building a progressive and people-oriented movement in Jharkhand. With renewed leadership and a clear action plan, the party aims to emerge as a reliable voice of the marginalized and exploited in the state.



people's movements around public issues. He called on CPI workers to begin preparations for the upcoming Lok Sabha Assembly, Panchayat, and Municipal elections, emphasizing the need to establish a Left-wing alternative in Jharkhand.

Resolutions passed were on Key issues affecting adversely the life of people. Some of the resolutions passed were the following:

■ Protection of water, forest, and land resources

■ Ban on indiscriminate

■ Support for non-aided educational institutions

■ Abolition of the Land Bank

■ Campaigns against

Paswan.

Former MP and CPI National Secretary Nagendra Nath Ojha and State In-Charge Ramkrushna Panda addressed the gathering,



Imagine a life when you have to slog for hours in the fields with return that is always uncertain. You have no land to call your own, no home that cannot be demolished at a moment's notice, and no power to ask for a better wages. This was the reality for millions of India's agricultural labourers in the decades after independence. They had a major share in running the country's rural economy, but always remained in shadows. They never had a voice in the national platform to fight for their rights.

That is, until September 1968, when a historic conference in the small town of Moga, Punjab, changed everything. This is the story of the long and difficult journey that led to the birth of the Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union (BKMU), the first all India organization for agricultural labourers.

It's a tale of realization, rebellion, and the ultimate recognition that those who feed the nation deserved their own seat at the table.

For a long time, the plight of the landless agricultural worker was lumped in with the problems of all farmers. The main organization fighting for rural rights was the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS), which had been formed in 1936 before independence. The AIKS led powerful movements against feudal landlords and the British Raj, and landless labourers were often the most passionate participants in these struggles.

After 1947, however, the situation in the countryside began to change. While the big, flashy fights were over, the quiet, everyday problems of the landless got worse. They weren't just "poor cousins" of the small farmers anymore; they were a completely with their own unique set of crises.

The numbers were staggering. A government report in the early 1960s painted a horrifying picture. This wasn't just about poverty; it was about a complete lack of dig-

nity. The majority of agricultural workers were employed for less than six months a year. They lived in tiny huts on someone else's land, vulnerable to eviction at any time. They faced brutal social discrimination, often denied access to village wells and temples. They were paid miserably low wages for unpredictable work. They were, as one leader would later say, treated like cattle.

The first major push for change came from within the AIKS itself. For years, the leaders of the peasant movement had debated what to do about the landless. At first, the idea was to keep everyone under one big tent. The AIKS's 1952 rules even allowed for the formation of "Primary Rural Labour Sabhas" small, local groups for labourers that



would still be part of the main Kisan Sabha.

But as the years passed, the voices within the AIKS calling for a complete separation grew louder. The 1961 AIKS conference in Trichur spent a great deal of time discussing the government's alarming report on agricultural worker. It was clear that the problems of a landless worker who depended on daily wages were very different from those of a small farmer who owned a piece of land.

The turning point came at the AIKS's 19th conference in January 1968. The leaders made a stunning and honest admission: it had been a mistake to keep the labourers within their organization. They declared that with the growth of commercial farming, the agricultural worker had "emerged as a distinct

Rise of Agricultural Workers, and Formation of their Union

V S Nirmal

class", and their needs had been neglected. The AIKS officially called upon its own members to help form a separate, independent union for agricultural workers. It was a bold and selfless move, acknowledging that true strength sometimes means empowering others to lead their own fight.

The idea for a national body did not come out of nowhere. It was built on the backs of powerful state-level movements that had been smoldering for decades.

Andhra Pradesh was a pioneer. As early as 1934, activists began organizing agricultural workers as a distinct class. The first district union

was formed in Nellore in 1937. By 1947, a full-fledged state level conference was held, showing how powerful the movement had become.

Punjab was another stronghold. The Punjab Khet Mazdoor Sabha was set up in 1954. By the time of the national conference in 1968, it had active units in 10 out of the state's 11 districts and had already held eleven annual conferences!

In Bihar, a state-level union fought not just for wages but also to liberate bonded labourers and fight against caste-based oppression that kept labourers trapped in cycles of poverty. Similar stories played out in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Maharashtra. These state organizations were the proving ground. They showed that agricultural workers could be organized,

they could rally around their own demands, and they could win battles. They were the vital pieces that would soon be joined together.

Finally, from September 27-29, 1968, the sparks from across the country gathered in Moga, Punjab, and turned into a single flame. The conference was a powerful and emotional gathering. In his presidential address, the legendary leader Kharagdhari Mishra (Tumaria Baba) put the mission into simple, stark terms. He cited the 1961 census, which showed there were 12 crore (120 million) agricultural workers in India—a massive one-third of the rural population. "From a class angle", he said, "they are the weakest section of the society". He argued that they needed to be organized to increase their 'bargaining capacity' and to create a powerful political voice that could no longer be ignored. The conditions he described were dire: no fixed hours of work, no facilities, miserable wages, no place to live, no clothing, no food, no education, and no honor. "They were compelled to live outside the village like cattle", he said.

But in that room in Moga, they were no longer cattle. They were delegates. They were leaders.

They formally established the Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union (BKMU) and elected its first leaders: Kharagdhari Mishra as President and Guru Prasad as General Secretary. This wasn't just a talking shop. The BKMU was born with a clear plan of action. It adopted the following Charter of Demands that spoke directly to the needs of the landless:

■ A fierce struggle for a living minimum wage.

■ A real ceiling on land holdings and the distribution

of fallow government land to the landless.

■ Free house sites so agricultural workers could have a home and a sense of security.

■ An end to all evictions of tribal people and the return of their grabbed lands.

The chairman of the reception committee in Punjab, Bhan Singh Bhaura, welcomed everyone and reminded them of the strong foundation they were building on. The Punjab unit itself was 14 years old. The movement was ready.

The formation of the BKMU was more than just the creation of another union. It was a revolution in thinking. It was the moment when India's leading rural activists formally acknowledged that the countryside was not a single, united mass of poor people.

It was a complex landscape with landowners, small farmers, sharecroppers, and landless labourers, each with their own struggles. By giving the labourers their own platform, the movement didn't become weaker; it became stronger, more focused, and more honest.

The issues that forced those leaders to Moga in 1968 were still alive like uncertain wages, landlessness, social discrimination, and a lack of basic dignity. The BKMU and the many organizations it inspired continue to fight these battles.

The story of the BKMU is a powerful reminder that the fight for justice is often a long one, requiring patience, tough honesty, and the courage to change old strategies. It's the story of how the most invisible people in the fields of India found the strength to stand up, organize, and demand to be seen. They stopped being a problem to be managed and became a people with a voice. And that changed everything.

Daastan-e-Shanti Majumdar: From the Eyes of a Freedom Fighter

“Daastan-e-Shanti Majumdar” play chronicles Bengal’s turbulent and painful history from the 1930s to the present times through the lens of a woman, Shanti Majumdar. British India’s one of the richest provinces, Bengal, not only underwent immense colonial exploitation but also witnessed the greatest violence. For the subcontinent, the joy of freedom from the yoke of colonialism was marred by communal violence and a brutal partition, which displaced nearly 15 million people, killed over 2 million, and altered the course of the subcontinent’s history forever. Bengal experienced not one



doting mother, she resolves to secretly help her idealistic son in his revolutionary activities

nationalists and actively participates in the freedom movement. The colonial mas-

Dr. Malancha Chakrabarty

persecution in the newly independent state. Massive oppression and mass killings prompt another battle for independence. This time Shanti fights another battle for independence as she joins the MuktiBahini during the Bangladesh Liberation War. Yet another country is born. However, independence again comes across as a travesty of justice as millions of people lose their lives and are displaced from their homes forever. Her struggles and the struggles of thousands of men and women like her don’t

end, as they are still lagging in refugee camps longing for the elusive home that they fought so hard for. Experienced stage and character actor in films, Flora Bose plays the role of Shanti Majumdar. Her poignant performance holds the audience’s attention throughout the play as she successfully navigates all the stages of Shanti Majumdar’s life. The play is based upon the story written by a famous Malayali writer Lalithambika Antharjanam and directed by noted economist Jaya Mehta. The visuals and the commentary by Vineet Tiwari enhanced the effects of the play.



but two partitions, and its people were repeatedly robbed of their lives, lands, belongings, and dignity.

This play offers a rare opportunity to interpret Bengal’s difficult past through the lens of women who were not only shaped by the politics of the day but who also played their bit in shaping politics itself. The play’s central character, Shanti Majumdar, is an innocent Bengali woman from an aristocratic background who suddenly finds herself in the middle of the nationalist movement as her beloved son leaves his education to join the revolutionary group, the Indian Republican Army. A

going against her husband, who sides with the British. Her beloved son gets killed in a police encounter, but her personal loss only makes her resolve stronger. Thus, begins the journey of a woman who leaves her comfortable life as a homemaker in a well-to-do family and steps into the fight for independence, stands for communal harmony, withstands two partitions, endures personal losses, and lastly lands up in a refugee camp in her old age.

After her son’s encounter by the British police, she transforms her palatial house into a refuge and office for the

ters leave, but independence does not mean much for her in East Pakistan, which faces



Leaders Unite at SCO Summit 2025

Amid Divisions, Cooperation Remains Vital

In a display of diplomatic camaraderie and strategic alignment, world leaders gathered for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit 2025, marking a pivotal moment in multilateral engagement. Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Russian President Vladimir Putin stood side by side, sharing smiles, handshakes, and informal huddles that captured global attention. The summit, hosted in the bustling Chinese city of Tianjin, underscored themes of friendship, regional cooperation, and transformation in an evolving world order.

The event kicked off with Xi Jinping's warm overtures toward India, emphasising the deep civilisational bonds between the two nations. In a bilateral meeting on the summit's sidelines, Xi described India and China as "the world's most civilisational countries," invoking the metaphor of the "Dragon and the Elephant" coming together. "The world is going towards transformation. It is vital to be friends," Xi stated, highlighting the need for collaboration amid global uncertainties. This sentiment set the tone for the gathering, where leaders from across Eurasia aimed to strengthen ties in security, economy, and connectivity.

Live visuals from the summit painted a vivid picture of the proceedings. As leaders arrived for the traditional photo op, Xi Jinping was the first to take the stage, followed by others in a choreographed sequence. Russian President Vladimir Putin, often known for his stoic demeanour, was seen walking away briefly before joining the group. The banner overhead, inscribed in Chinese and Russian, symbolized the "no limits" partnership between Beijing and Moscow—a bond that has drawn scrutiny from Western capitals.

The atmosphere buzzed with anticipation as Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif made their entrances, exchanging handshakes with Xi. However, the highlight

was the arrival of Modi and Putin, who walked together toward the stage, embodying the enduring India-Russia friendship. As they approached, a spontaneous trilateral interaction unfolded: Modi, Xi, and Putin engaged in animated discussions, punctuated by laughter and gestures. "We see more than a smile. Clearly, it's a good giggle with a handshake," observed a commentator, noting the rare warmth from Putin.

This informal "huddle" among the three powerhouses occurred just before the official photo session, with the leaders standing next to their respective flags. Notably, as Modi and Putin passed Sharif, there was no eye

teractions—leaders being welcomed and conversing casually—produced powerful imagery, especially the Russia-India-China (RIC) trio. Siddhant noted that such scenes would be closely watched in the West, particularly after comments from U.S. trade advisors. As dawn breaks in Washington, analysts will dissect these outcomes for clues on shifting alliances.

The plenary session followed, with Xi Jinping opening the addresses as the host. He outlined China's priorities: regional cooperation, connectivity, and multilateralism. This year's summit is the largest in SCO history, a grouping founded in 2001



contact or acknowledgment—a subtle reminder of the strained India-Pakistan relations amid ongoing concerns over cross-border terrorism. The Iranian president and Tajik leader Emomali Rahmon also positioned themselves, completing the line-up for the group photograph.

Security personnel paced the venue as the photo op commenced, capturing the ensemble in a moment of unity. Post-session, another quick discussion between Modi, Xi, and Putin ensued, hinting at deeper conversations beyond the formal agenda. These visuals, broadcast live, are poised to resonate far beyond Tianjin, from Washington to Islamabad.

On the ground, reporter Siddhant provided keen insights into the summit's implications. "Very interesting visuals that will live and be observed globally," he remarked, predicting a "meme fest" on social media. The unstructured nature of these in-

teractions—leaders being welcomed and conversing casually—produced powerful imagery, especially the Russia-India-China (RIC) trio. Siddhant noted that such scenes would be closely watched in the West, particularly after comments from U.S. trade advisors. As dawn breaks in Washington, analysts will dissect these outcomes for clues on shifting alliances.

For India, the summit offers a platform to voice key concerns. Prime Minister Modi is expected to highlight cross-border terrorism, a pointed reference to Pakistan's alleged role in regional instability. On connectivity, India promotes projects like the Chabahar Port, positioning it as a gateway for Central Asia. Modi has also emphasized cultural ties, drawing on shared heritage with the region. Visuals from the previous day showed him engaging Central Asian leaders, reinforcing India's outreach. An upcoming India-Central Asia sum-



*Diary of
International
Events*

C. Adhikesavan

mit at the leader level further underscores this focus.

The SCO's agenda resonates amid global transformations, including geopolitical tensions in Ukraine and the Middle East. Economic security emerged as a buzzword, with discussions on trade corridors bypassing Western sanctions. For Russia, isolated by international penalties, the summit bolsters partnerships with China and India—key buyers of its energy exports. China, facing trade wars with the U.S., seeks to deepen Eurasian integration through initiatives like the Belt and Road.

Yet, challenges persist. The presence of rivals like India and Pakistan tests the SCO's cohesion, with terrorism and border disputes looming large. Iran's inclusion adds a layer of complexity, given its nuclear ambitions and regional conflicts. Observers note that while the summit projects unity, underlying divergences—such as India's Quad alliance with the U.S., Japan, and Australia—could strain relations.

As leaders deliver their statements, including Modi's anticipated address, the world watches for tangible outcomes. Will the Dragon and Elephant dance harmoniously? Can the RIC troika influence global transformation? The Tianjin summit, with its mix of symbolism and substance, signals a multipolar world in the making. In an era of flux, these interactions remind us that diplomacy thrives on personal rapport as much as policy papers.

The event's broader message: amid divisions, cooperation remains vital. As Siddhant aptly put it, this is "a day of great importance," sending ripples through international corridors. With the SCO representing nearly half the world's population, its decisions could reshape global dynamics for years to come.

21st MP State Conference...

From Page 03

presented a resolution advocating for minimum wages for sanitation workers. Gayaprasad Mishra from Rewa proposed that government land possessed by economically deprived sections of society, particularly landless Dalit tribal communities, be registered in land records, granting them ownership rights. Finally, Vijay Dalal from Indore presented a proposal against the threats to democracy and the undermining of public opinion through the SIR process.

Another resolution was passed demanding the dismissal of the case against Indore cartoonist Hemant Sharma. The resolution

stated that the Communist Party of India has always defended the Constitution and democracy of the country. It criticised the ruling BJP coalition government for attempting to undermine democracy and the Constitution by imposing strict legal measures on freedom of expression, resulting in cases being filed against writers, journalists, and cartoonists. Vineet Tiwari presented the resolution, which expressed solidarity with the people of Palestine and condemned the ongoing attacks and atrocities by Israel, as well as the efforts to obstruct global aid.

On the final day of the conference, another resolution was passed about initiating a state-wide mass

movement against the anti-people, anti-labour, anti-farmer, and corporate-friendly policies of both the state and Central governments. They committed to raising awareness among the public regarding their rights and the Constitution. Additionally, the conference elected a new state leadership to energise and expand the party's organisation for the next three years. Shailendra Shaili was elected State Secretary, while Haridwar Singh and Vijendra Soni were elected Assistant Secretaries, and Gunasekaran was elected as treasurer.

During the conference, the party finalised its action plan and strategy for the next three years. A 35-member State

Council and a 15-member State Executive were elected with the unanimous consent of all members. Additionally, three delegates were elected to attend the party congress in Chandigarh in September: Arvind Srivastava, Haridwar Singh, and Sanjeev Rajput.

The state conference determined that the party would organize movements throughout the state to address several key issues: restarting the Road Transport Corporation, stopping the exploitation of electricity consumers through the imposition of smart meters, opposing the forced displacement of tribal people and farmers from their land, ensuring the effective implementation of the Forest Rights Act and the PESA Act for the benefit of tribal communities, granting ownership

rights to slum dwellers in urban areas, and combating exploitation and atrocities based on caste and gender.

In celebration of the birth centenary year of the esteemed party leader and former MP, Homi Daji, events will be organised throughout the year to honour his legacy.

In his concluding remarks, State Party in charge, Dr Girish Chandra Sharma, congratulated all the newly elected office bearers. He emphasised the need to increase party activism, prioritise education within the party, and strengthen the movements. The State Party also congratulated and honoured the organiser of the Dabra unit and secretary Sanjeev Rajput.

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CPI Calls for Special Relief Package of Rs.50,000 Crores for Flood-Affected Areas in Jammu

The state unit of the Communist Party of India (CPI) Jammu and Kashmir expresses its deep concern over the devastation caused by the unprecedented floods in Jammu and Kashmir.

The recent heavy rains have resulted in massive destruction across Jammu Province. Roads and bridges have been washed away, agricultural fields have been ruined, and the electricity and water supply systems have collapsed.

Additionally, schools and hospitals have suffered extensive damage. Farmers,

traders, shopkeepers, transporters, and small entrepreneurs are among those hardest hit, leaving thousands of families struggling to survive and rebuild their lives.

This widespread destruction has plunged the people of Jammu Province into a severe humanitarian crisis. Immediate intervention from the Government of India is crucial. Relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction measures must not be delayed.

The proposed relief package should ensure:

1. Adequate compensation for farmers and families



who have lost their crops, homes, and livelihoods.

2. Urgent repair and reconstruction of damaged roads, bridges, and electricity and water supply systems.

3. Special financial assistance for traders, shopkeepers, transporters, and small entrepreneurs.

4. Restoration and strengthening of schools, colleges, and hospitals.

5. Long-term disaster management and preventive measures to protect Jammu Province from future calamities. — **Rakesh Sharma**

On Record ...

Why north India floods are so bad: 'Slope cutting, road building, deforestation...' Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir reel from nature's fury, worsened by man-made factors. Heavy rains have left north India reeling, with floods submerging roads, washing away houses, and pushing rivers over their danger marks. Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir are among the worst hit this monsoon..

Punjab has reported at least 29 deaths and mass displacement in what state officials describe as the "worst flood in recent history." The state recorded 253.7 mm of rain in August, 74 per cent above normal and the highest in 25 years. — *The Telegraph*, September 3.

A great deal is happening in the BJP-ruled state of Assam, presided over by a chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who has publicly declared that he is above the constitution. On the basis of petitions filed by three "complainants", at least two of whom are members of the BJP, the Assam police filed FIRs against *The Wire*'s Siddharth Varadarajan and Karan Thapar in early May for "provoking unrest, undermining national security, and spreading narratives aligned with hostile interests" — or, in other words, for just doing their job of analysing, commenting and publishing documentation of the communally slanted ways in which the state of Assam is being run. Coincidentally or, more likely intentionally, the FIRs were filed at a time when the chief minister was in the process of launch-

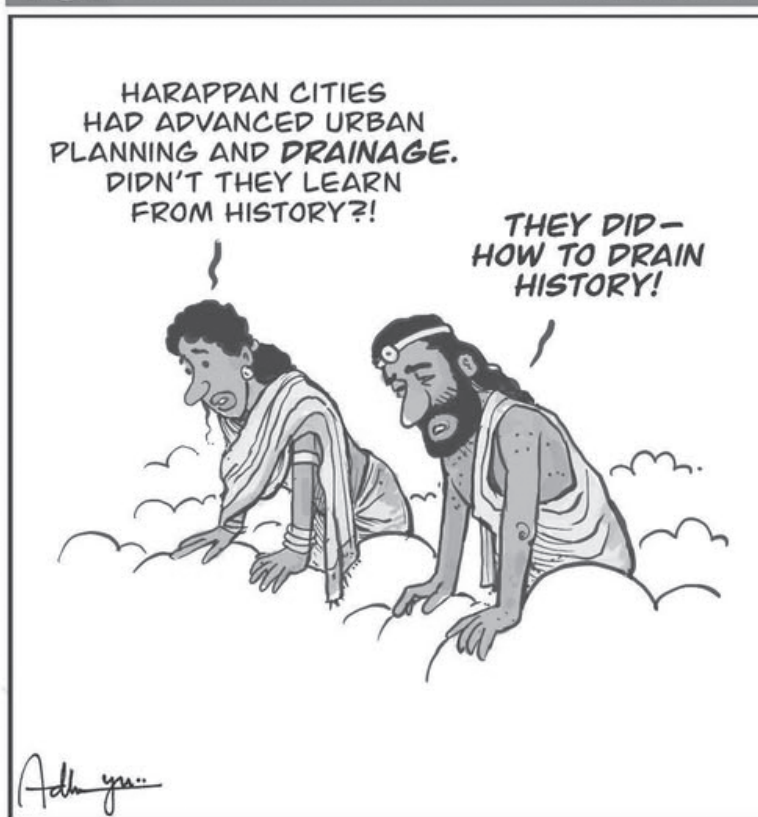
ing a campaign in multiple border districts of his state to dispossess and evict a category of people now given the nomenclature of 'Miya'. — *thewire.in*, August 30.

Supreme Court asks Union to verify allegations that Bengali migrant workers were detained as foreigners only because of language. "India has inherited a legacy of common culture. Bengal and Punjab, language is same. Border divides us", observed J Bagchi. In the PIL assailing detention of migrant Muslim workers from West Bengal, over suspicion of their being Bangladeshi citizens, the Supreme Court today sought a clarification from the Union as to whether Bengali-speaking migrants were detained as foreigners only because of the use of a particular language. A bench of Justices Surya Kant, Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi heard the matter. — *livelaw.in*, August 29.

Under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, we requested the Election Commission of India (ECI) to disclose all records, files, notes, and correspondence related to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) it ordered, first in Bihar and subsequently across the country. Every Indian citizen is entitled to access these records. The RTI Act mandates that the government and the ECI proactively disclose such information without requiring a formal request rather than obscure it.

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL

SANDEEP ADHWARYU



The ECI, a constitutional body, directed nearly 8 crore Bihar voters to provide documentary proof of their citizenship and voting rights within 30 days. Ironically, the RTI Act requires the ECI to provide requested documents to citizens within the same timeframe. However, in response to our RTI application, the ECI provided a weblink to a back-end page on its website, which cannot be publicly accessed. These, ECI claimed, were "comprehensive instructions" dated July 14, 2025, which were self-explanatory, but we could not access them. — *reporterscollective.in*, August 29.

— *Compiled by C. Adhikesavan*

Left Parties Organise Massive “Anti-War” Rally in Kolkata



KOLKATA: Left parties and their mass organizations took out a march from the Lenin statue in Esplanade, Kolkata to College Square covering Lenin Sarani, Subodh Mallik Square, Bawbazar crossing and passing Kolkata Medical College the Grand Procession reached College Square on September 1, 2025 to express solidarity with Palestine. Every year the left parties take out peace rallies on September 1 to observe ‘Anti-imperialism Day’. The procession marched ahead carrying red flags, posters demanding sanctions against Israel for genocide. There was a poster that said “Bombing kids is not self defence.”

The left parties in the state had called for this march on Monday, September 1, ‘Anti-Imperialism Day’, in protest of Donald Trump’s tariff policy and in solidarity with Palestine. All the left parties in the state, workers, farmers, students, women, teachers - professors, and common people joined this march and turned it into a grand march.

The streets of Kolkata

were shaken on September 1, Monday, by an anti-imperialist march calling for peace against war. This march reminded us of the marches in support of Vietnam that shook the streets in the seventies of the last century, and the march against the blockade against Cuba erected by US imperialism.

This march began at 2:45 pm. Before that, two huge processions coming from

Subodh Datta

Howrah and Sealdah surrounded the area. While the head of the procession had passed Subodh Mallik Square, the last part of the procession was still waiting at the Esplanade.

The main slogans of this march were that Israel must immediately withdraw its hands from Gaza, the genocide in Gaza must stop, and the US surveillance on the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal must stop.

Left Front Chairman Biman Basu, CPI State Secretary Swapan Banerjee and Prabir Deb, Tapan Ganguly, Shibshankar Ganguly, Gautam Panda, Kalyan

Banerjee, Gautam Roy and Biplob Bhatta joined this grand procession of the people. CPI (M) State Secretary Mohammad Salim and Suryakanta Mishra and Srideep Bhattacharya, Forward Bloc’s Naren Chatterjee, RSP’s Ashok Ghosh and Debashis Mukherjee, CPI (ML) Liberation’s Kartik Pal and Basudeb Basu, RCPI’s Mihir Bain, SUCI (C)’s Chandidas Bhattacharya and other leaders were also present. There were also leaders of various mass organizations and countless common working people. Such rallies were organized in all most all districts of West Bengal.

Before the procession began at Esplanade and at the end of the procession at College Square two short

meetings were held. Left Front Chairman Biman Basu presided over both the meetings. The leaders said that people all over the world have taken to the streets today for peace and against war madness and imperialism. As announced by the International Labour Organization and the Federation of World Trade Unions, September 1 is ‘Anti-War Day’. Therefore, people in 133 countries including India are observing the day with great importance today. We must remember that if imperialist capital faces a crisis, it will fight or create a war situation in any part of the world. We must continue our fight against this. College Square was filled with pro-peace and anti-imperialist slogans and anti-war songs.

