

CPIML “Liberation”: Letters From the States

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Gujarat: Encouraging Beginnings

IN Gujarat, the Party has in the past few years developed work in Sabarkantha, Valsad, Ahmedabad, Bhavnagar, Anand, and Khera districts.

Sabarkantha district, situated in North East Gujarat bordering Rajasthan, is predominantly populated by Dungri Gadasia and Dungri Bhil adivasis. The forest area in this district comes under the Fifth Schedule category of forests. Here, we began work after 2002, unionising daily wage labourers in the PWD. Through the All Gujarat Jaher Bandh Kam Mazdoor Mandal (Union) we organised daily wagers nearly all over the district. Struggles were waged to demand fixed work, timely disbursement of wages, regularisation of government employees, bonus, and other issues. Many militant demonstrations and gheraos were held at the office of the district's PWD officers. Some partial demands and bonus were achieved. PWD daily wage workers have achieved bonus only in Sabarkantha district. Their militant struggle influenced the daily workers and guards in the Forest Department too. There are a significant number of these forest workers in the district and most are either adivasi 'Dungri Gadasias' or Dalit 'Bankars'. This section has for long been associated with the 'Eklavya Sena' of local Congress MP Madhusudan Mistry. But in spite of the fact that it was led by an MP, the Eklavya Sena was unable to achieve the long-pending demands of the forest workers or to rein in the high-handedness of the Forest Department Officers. We organised these workers in various talukas in the district on a range of issues, including regular employment, timely disbursement of wages, checking of arbitrary dismissal by officers and corruption in the Forest Department. Dharnas, demonstrations and processions were often held at the offices of the Forest Ranger, DFO, Collector in the talukas of Kher Brahma, Bhiloda, Eedar, Vijaynagar, Meghraj, Modasan, and Malpur.

Our struggles achieved a considerable degree of success. Along with union activities, party membership among the workers was also a priority right from the start. Since the PWD workers and forest workers are mostly from adivasi villages, they naturally helped the party to establish close contact with the adivasi poor peasants and agrarian labourers in the villages.

As a result of Sabarkantha's geographical situation (predominantly hills and forest) and backward agricultural economy, its inhabitants are victims of poverty and backwardness. Initially we mobilised the rural poor, in particular the adivasis, to demand drought relief in the drought-affected villages. We held protest demonstrations and road blockades at the Taluka Magistrate's and the Collector's against corruption in drought relief. In 2003, the 'anti-encroachment' drive all over the forest area of

the eastern belt of Gujarat (of which Sabarkantha too is a part), adivasis were evicted from their ancestral lands. Since then, the right of the rural poor over land and forests has become the main issue for our party in that region. As part of a campaign, we held mass meetings among rural adivasis in a large number of villages in all talukas. At many places, we organised the villagers in protests that managed to thwart the government's eviction drive. Between 2003 and 2005, we have held dharnas and protests twice at the District Collectorate and thrice at the Gujarat Vidhan Sabha at Gandhinagar. At the Vidhan Sabha dharna, around 300-400 people had participated.

We also took up several local issues at villages, such as the irregularities in the implementation of NREGS, police repression, demands for roads, drinking water etc... We also formed trade unions in the industrial areas of this district, in Prantij, Himmatnagar, Modala and various GIDC factories. Recently, we mobilised the employees (cooks, helpers, etc...) of the government's mid-day meal scheme against their exploitation, and on 22 December 2007 the CPI(ML) held a militant demonstration on this issue at the Himmatnagar District Collectorate in which 1200 men and women participated. On several occasions we confronted the communal forces and held protests and campaigns on this issue. Many Left activists, especially those who were frustrated by CPI(M)'s surrender to the Congress, were attracted by our movement in this district and joined our party.

In Ahmedabad, Gujarat's most important urban centre, the party has contact amongst workers and people running small trades in the wards of Amraipadi, Bhaipura, Bag-e-Firdaus, Khokhra and Maninagar, all of which are part of the Maninagar Vidhan Sabha constituency. RYA has become popular among sections of students and youth. RYA as well as the party was built here in the backdrop of the 2002 saffron offensive, and has been a bold voice against the communal genocide, fake encounters, and Modi's rule. This area is notorious for the criminalisation of politics. Most of BJP's and Congress' local leaders and corporators are linked to criminal activities. Official records show that in the whole of Gujarat, the maximum number of crimes are recorded in Amraiwadi and Maninagar thanas. Murder, loot, rapes, gambling, illicit liquor and the flesh trade flourish here. RYA has taken up a campaign against criminals and police repression here. We have had to confront criminal elements many times, and have often, through movements, forced senior officers to take legal and administrative action against goons and criminals. We have also taken up local issues of the poor and working class people: for instance the demand to run more state transport buses in the poor and workers' settlements. This struggle has continued since 2005, and students and youth along with workers have participated in good numbers in the processions, dharnas, road blockades, blockade of the bus terminal and so on. Clashes with the police have ensued many times, and our activists have been arrested several times. Eventually the administration was forced to increase the number of buses as we had demanded. Cases imposed on activists during this struggle continue. RYA and CPI(ML) defied the attempt by the police to ban a dharna protesting the Sohrabuddin fake encounter issue, and the dharna and mass meeting were held successfully. The recent attack on our candidates and activists on polling day have further increased our appeal among democratic sections.

Our party began work in Valsad in early 2007, when a section left BSP to join our party. This district too is predominantly populated by adivasis - mainly Doriya Patels and Warlis. In the past year, we have developed contacts and work in Valsad, Unergaon, Pardi, Dharmpur talukas. We have been leading a struggle in Valsad town demanding regularisation and plot ownership under Town Planning in the dalit and adivasi bastis in the town. Most of these dalits and adivasis are hand-cart vendors in the city's main bazaar, and in the process of the struggle since July '07, there have been many clashes with BJP-backed goons and police, and 40 activists of our party were arrested too. In Umergaon, adivasis' land was illegally grabbed by GIDC, and CPI(ML)'s candidate in the last elections is a tribal leader who has led a struggle against this land grab for many years; a struggle which to some extent has been successful. After the elections, we plan to hold two cadre conferences

focussed on building up a struggle for rights to land and forests.

In Bhavnagar, we revived our work in 2006, and RYA is our main mass organisation here. Here too, police atrocities and criminalisation have emerged as major issues. Here too, as in Ahmedabad, educated youth have been attracted to RYA.

Anand and Khera districts are areas of Gujarat where there has been considerable capitalist development in agriculture. The main farm produce here is tobacco. AIALA is organising farm labourers in Petlad, Borsad, and other talukas here.

Ranjan Ganguly

Mayawati's Uttar Pradesh: Emerging Dissent

DESPITE its own peculiarities, the by-election for the Ballia Parliamentary seat, held within months of a spectacular Mayawati victory in the State, was Mayawati's chance to reaffirm the electoral invincibility of her new magic wand of Sarvajan politics. Though she fielded the son of the biggest icon of eastern UP's Brahmin power groups and the entire state machinery along with a battery of Ministers was at her service, she lost, to her shock, by quite a big margin of more than one lakh votes! Notwithstanding various explanations offered by Mayawati and certain factors definitely favouring Niraj Shekhar, son of late PM Chandrashekhar's son, such a decisive defeat must also undoubtedly be understood in terms of the evolving people's response to the ongoing Maya-Raj. Particularly worrying for Mayawati may be the reported passivity among the poor and dalits resulting in their low turn-out, as well as sections of Brahmin peasantry shifting away.

By all indications, the peasant question is emerging in a big way in the state and may in the coming days prove decisive for the Mayawati-regime, just as it once proved to be the nemesis of her bête noire Mulayam Singh. Farmers' suicides continue unabated in various parts of the state, most notably in the Bundelkhand region. Recently two brothers committed suicide in Lakhimpur when their land (8 bighas) was auctioned by the government for non-payment of a bank loan. Dues to the tune of several thousand crores of rupees of sugarcane farmers are pending unpaid by the sugar mill owners; the farmers were brutally lathicharged when they protested at the Bajaj Sugar Mills demanding pending dues and minimum support price for their crop.

Mayawati's dream project of the Ballia-Greater Noida Ganga Expressway, for which her loyal Chief Secretary of UP equated her with Sher Shah Suri and his Grand Trunk Road, is the latest flash point of struggle. This 8-lane, 1047 km. long Expressway for which the tender has already been accepted in favour of JP Associates, her long time financier, has a catchment area of lakhs of acres of land, out of which around 10 thousand acres of land worth Rs. 293 crores will be handed over to JPs for developing industries etc. to reap profit against their investments. They will also collect toll tax for 35 years. If a much smaller patch of land gifted to Reliance in Dadri could trigger a peasant unrest across the state which cost Mulayam Singh quite dearly, what political cost this dream project will extract from Mayawati is anybody's guess.

The State is gradually evolving into a police state. Sensing the turbulent situation on the ground and harbouring prime ministerial ambitions, Mayawati wishes to showcase herself for the ruling elite as the iron lady of governance and development, and is intolerant of any dissent and mass protest, especially of a political nature. However, combined with this autocratic suppression of political

adversaries is her meek surrender at times to the spontaneous agitations which she fears might precipitate a serious crisis before the upcoming Parliament elections; the tactical retreat on the question of contract farming and Reliance Fresh were two such cases in point.

She disbanded student unions, historically one of the most potent forums of democratic protest in UP and while protesting against this patently draconian measure, AISA-RYA leaders along with other students were put behind bars for weeks under fabricated criminal charges like 7 Law Criminal Amendment Act. etc. Recently Comrade Dinkar Kapur, AICCTU National Secretary, Ramayan Ram, President AISA UP and others were arrested from Allahabad Collectorate while they were sitting on hunger strike to highlight the demands of IFFCO workers, and on the flimsy ground of violating 144 they were sent to jail! However subsequently, the government had to take action against the local SDM, and the IFFCO MD and the GM of the Bagging Plant have also been removed.

The witch-hunt of Muslims in the state in the name of tackling terrorism is acquiring worrying proportions. Only recently one Muslim youth, Aftab Ansari from Kolkata had to undergo incarceration for around 3 weeks in STF custody at Lucknow, under charges of recent serial blasts in UP courts. The STF was bent on forcing him to accept that he was Mukhtar Ansari alias Raju of HUJI, despite his repeated plea that police could verify his identity from his ration card, pan card, Election I card etc. It was only a spirited legal battle by his widowed hapless mother, who had to rush to Lucknow from Kolkata, that he was finally released on Court orders. In fact the Aftab case is no aberration; many more Aftabs in various UP districts are undergoing the same trauma and witch-hunt. The deepening crisis of Muslim artisans intensify this growing sense of persecution among the broad Muslim populace.

In the run-up to the coming parliamentary elections, a fierce political battle has begun, to capture the crucial state of UP as a necessary pre-condition for claiming Delhi's seat of power. With Prime Ministerial ambitions of Mayawati eating into the social base of Congress in many states outside UP as well, the bonhomie between Congress and Mayawati has turned into its opposite, thus paving the way for a new equation between Congress and Samajwadi Party. Instead of seriously addressing the grievances of drought-hit, debt-ridden, famine-struck peasantry of Bundelkhand, Rahul Gandhi and Mayawati both are engaged in a game of political one up-manship by offering sops and separate statehood for Bundelkhand. Samajwadi Party, the main opposition Party, despite its confrontationist posturing, is a discredited force in popular perception. Enthused by its recent victories, BJP is trying to regain its foothold in its erstwhile bastion of UP by raising the issues of internal security etc. in the background of recent terrorist activities in the state. However it has failed to cut much ice so far.

The CPI(ML) has intervened in this situation, taking up the struggles of workers and peasants in the states and protesting against the shrinking of democratic space. Statewide protests were held all over UP against the arrests of AICCTU and AISA leaders during the IFFCO struggle.

The UP unit of the All India Kisan Sangharsh Samiti held a dharna at the UP Assembly on January 7 in which thousands of peasants participated, taking up the demands of sugarcane farmers for MSP; complete payment of all the dues with interest; waiving of all debts of small and medium peasants and a stop to the auction of their lands; as well as scrapping of the anti-peasant 'Ganga Expressway' Project; and other demands. The protestors highlighted the fact that in six months of Mayawati's rule, over 100 peasants have committed suicide, while the unpaid dues of sugar mill owners towards sugarcane farmers amounts to several thousand crores of rupees. On 15 January (Mayawati's birthday and the also the day when she laid the foundation-stone of the Ganga Expressway Project at Noida and Ballia) was observed as 'Kisan Virodh Divas' (Protest Day for the Peasantry).

There is a fertile ground for a popular left democratic resurgence in the state, and CPI(ML) is determined to meet this challenge.

Tripura Assembly Elections and Our Intervention

THE situation of Tripura is already surcharged, with election campaigns by all parties in full swing, particularly the ruling CPI(M). The CPI(M)-led Left Front has captured power for six terms and consecutively for the last three terms. The Left Front continues to be strong; in the last election the Front comprising Congress (I) and INPTC (Indigenous National Tribal People's Council) got 19 seats out of 60 and all others were captured by Left Front. Within the Left Front, RSP got 2 seats and CPI got only one seat, all others were in the hands of the CPI(M), so CPI(M) has absolute control both in the Front and the State Government.

Congress is the main opposition party, but there is no sign of a Congress revival. The Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh results have been a morale booster for the BJP which plans to contest many seats this time. Earlier the Trinamool Congress had some base, but in the last Assembly elections it became very weak. Other streams of Left, such as SUCI, PDF (Dissident group of CPI(M)) are contesting independently; PCC CPI(ML) has launched a new political party. Before the declaration of elections, the CPI(ML) State Committee attempted to initiate an electoral understanding with these groups, but they were not interested. Within the Left Front, at first the Forward Block pressurized the CPI(M) to allot more seats for them, and independently declared 10 seats to contest. Alongside their negotiations with the CPI(M), they also approached us regarding a seat adjustment. CPI(M) has offered them two seats and the discussion is going on; perhaps in the last moment they will come to an understanding. We had called for an alternative Left Front excluding CPI(M), but the LF allies are hesitant.

CPI(M) claims that the present situation is like 1977-78, implying that the Congress will be finished in this election; while Congress has compared the situation to 1988, which implies the Congress will come back to power! It remains to be seen whether either of them will be proved right. But what is undeniable is the degeneration of the Left Front Government. In the name of development, it is borrowing money from World Bank, Japan and Germany, yet all the small industries including tea gardens are closed or sick. The tribal economy has collapsed due to this type of development and tribal are gradually evicted from their land and their rights. Right from the top to the panchayat level, corruption is rampant in the Tripura Government. There is rampant loot in all the welfare schemes of the panchayats, and without being a CPI(M) member or supporter, no one gets benefits. Even the Antodaya, Annapurna and BPL rice were looted. So the CPI(M) is gradually alienated from the rural poor and tribal people. A good section of rural people are joining with us, particularly in North Tripura and Bilonia and Amarpur areas.

In the name of curbing terrorism, the whole state has been handed over to military and para-military forces. In 40 Police Station areas the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act is enforced. Earlier it was only in 27 PS areas. Hence, no non-tribal people can go easily and freely to the tribal areas, and killing of innocent people, rape by police, military and para-military forces is increasing day by day.

In this situation CPI(ML) is preparing to contest the election, aiming to develop a struggling rallying centre of the poor people. Our campaign is focussed against corruption, for pro-poor development, for the democratic rights and the fight for democracy, calling upon all to strengthen the real Left forces in the state. In the last Assembly election CPI(ML) contested 9 seats, now it will contest 15

seats, i.e. one-fourth of the total seats.

In the last five years, CPI(ML) has been expanding slowly but steadily in Tripura. Our work is developing almost all the sections of the people, including tribals and minorities. Our work is developing in tea garden areas and other working people are also organized in TU works. A good section of CPI(M) supporters and workers of grass root level are joining CPI(ML).

RS

Bihar: Nitish Government's Onslaught on Democracy

IN less than two months' time Nitish Government would reach midway of its scheduled tenure, but there is no sign of the "change" promised to be delivered to the people of Bihar. The crime rate is climbing up, particularly crime against women, and the feudal-criminal nexus is wreaking havoc on downtrodden people in the state with impunity, because most of the ruffians in the state nowadays enjoy JD(U) or BJP patronage. The government has dismally failed in implementation of NREGS and rectification of BPL list. It has also failed to check corruption in PDS, provide relief to the flood and drought affected people, or to check hunger deaths.

The Nitish Government's only significant 'achievement' has been its brutal repression on people's movements. After a few months in power it created a new paramilitary force - SAP - recruiting ex-army personnel specifically to deal with 'Naxalites'. In March 2007, it passed the notorious Police Act, giving judicial powers to police magistracy. Both these steps were the first of their kind in the country. Thus all the preparations were meticulously made to turn Bihar into a police state.

Be it poor peasants, flood-victims, displacement affected people, students, medicos, employees, shiksha-mitras, para teachers, women health workers, even home guards and media persons - none were spared from police lathis and bullets. In particular, the repression unleashed over peacefully agitating Asha health workers (all women) towards the end of November evoked protest all over the state. AIPWA took a lead in organizing these protests.

During the devastating flood in north Bihar, there were no less than three instances of police firing on people demanding flood-relief - in Darbhanga in July 2007, when 20 were killed; in early August in Madhubani district where one was killed and three injured; and in mid-August in Sonbarsa block of Saharsa district, where another person was killed and two injured.

The latest witness to the series of barbaric police atrocities is Kahalgaon in Bhagalpur district, where police resorted to unprovoked firing on people demanding their due supply of electricity. According to the government, Bihar needs 1500-1600 MW of electricity. But today in this "pro-development" regime, it produces nothing because its Kanti (Muzaffarpur) and Barauni thermal power plants have been declared "sick". The central government is only supplying less than half of the said requirement. Of course, a political game is on between UPA in the centre and NDA in the state, of which people of Bihar have become a pawn, and they are bearing the brunt of power shortage. But what provoked people was not just shortage but a thoroughly prejudiced and lopsided distribution of available power. Rural supply has suffered most and crops are not getting proper irrigation because the villages get power only for 4-5 hours per day. And the people of Kahalgaon, the site of the NTPC Ltd., had even more reasons to protest against this injustice, because, despite NTPC norms that the plant must ensure 24-hrs supply within its 8-km range, they had been the

worst sufferers throughout the state, getting not even 5 hrs power supply per day! Moreover, the local administration and the police officials have entered into a nexus with NTPC management to suppress any move against NTPC. To protest this injustice the citizens called for 72-hours bandh, starting from 18 January, in which thousands of people took part spontaneously and the town came to a standstill. The police, however, was brutally repressive on the very first day, firing unprovoked and indiscriminately, and killing at least three people. This further enraged the masses and they burnt police vehicles and entered into pitched battles with police on the streets. People in Bhagalpur observed a spontaneous bandh on 19 January. Again the police led by the local DSP and SDO of Kahalgaon fired and killed two persons in cold blood, dragging them from their houses. On the third day of the agitation too, Kahalgaon remained completely paralysed, with people announcing "hukka-pani bandh for NTPC". A CISF jeep was set on fire and people compelled police and paramilitary forces to retreat in many incidents. Beating a retreat in face of defiant Kahalgaon people, the government has announced uninterrupted power supply to Kahalgaon, suspension of SDO and DSP as well as transfer of Kahalgaon BDO and Officer-in-Charge of police station. But the people are demanding arrest of the culprits of firing and institution of murder cases against them, removal of DM and SP of Bhagalpur, and a compensation of Rs.10 lakh to the family of each killed person and Rs.5 lakh to that of injured.

The CPI(ML) staged a protest march against the Kahalgaon police firing and increasing crime rate in Patna and burned the effigy of state government on 19 January. In Bhagalpur, AISA burned the effigy of the CM on 20 January and CPI(ML) staged a dharna on 21 January, demanding uninterrupted power supply and stringent action against the officials responsible for firing in Kahalgaon. CPI(ML) has called for a Bihar Bandh on 24 January to protest the killings. Later LJP too announced to observe a Bandh on the same day, while the RJD-led six party combine announced a Bandh on 25 January.

Earlier in late December 2007, auto-rickshaw drivers of the capital went on a 3-day strike against police highhandedness. The Nitish Government had convened a one-week Assembly session in the first week of December, and people chose this opportunity to vent their discontent and anger on the streets. After the session was over, the administration in Patna went on an offensive and announced that all encroachers will be firmly dealt with. Accordingly, on 22 December, hundreds of auto drivers all over the city were arrested under the new 'Police Act' and 56 drivers were dragged to the court with ropes tied around their waists. Their only crime was that in the absence of any parking space provided by the administration, they had parked their autos on the roadside bus stands. Auto drivers reacted immediately and a spontaneous strike all over the city ensued. The strike continued for 22 and 23 December and in the meantime all the five auto driver unions jointly decided to launch an indefinite strike.

CPI(ML) and AICCTU took an initiative and held meetings with our own union as well as other drivers. Processions were brought out and effigies of 'Police Act' were burnt. A dharna was organized by the Auto Rickshaw Joint Struggle Committee which was addressed by our corporation councilor Comrade Tota Chaudhry. After three days the leadership called off the strike following talks with transport minister, in which he allowed auto drivers to park their vehicles in some of the bus stands and promised on some other issues like CNG supply and longer permits, but did not give anything in written or accede to some other demands. As the discontent among auto drivers persists, the Party has started conducting propaganda among them and mobilizing them for launching a consistent movement.

Another sphere that has witnessed a lot of turmoil in the state is educational institutions. During his tenure Nitish has just toed the Laloo line of refusing democratic rights to the students. In addition, Nitish has given unbridled rights to the bureaucracy and promoted commercialization of education. This has resulted in widespread corruption in education, patronized by ruling political leaders. In the

second half of December, AISA organized a parallel students' senate (simultaneous to Patna University senate meeting) on the demands of students union elections, central university status to PU, immediate filling the vacant posts of teaching and non-teaching staff, withdrawal of fee hike and checking the assaults on campus democracy. The VC of PU had imposed restrictions in the campus to stall the students' senate and section 144 was promulgated by the police and nominated a Disciplinary Committee. Rejecting this committee, AISA conducted a campaign among students and as a consequence, defying all these hurdles around two hundred students participated in the parallel senate held at BN College gate, and even some teachers and employees also attended it, who are very much opposed to the autocratic restrictions imposed by the VC to discipline them. AISA has raised the demand of sacking the VC of PU and restoration of campus democracy.

In the PU senate meeting, instead of participating in person, the governor had sent his OSD. Prof. Nawal Kishor Chaudhry opposed the OSD's presence in the Senate as well as the VC's attitude in general and supported AISA demands. AISA too held that sending the OSD reeks of unwarranted bureaucratic interference in university affairs. After that, YC Simhadri (the VC) went to tour France without taking permission either from the governor or the cabinet. After his return, the governor issued a show cause notice to Simhadri. In retaliation, Simhadri suspended Prof Nawal Kishor Chaudhry.

The recent news is that Simhadri has resigned from his post on the Governor's directive. However, before that AISA had already called for a 3-day University Band from 22-24 January 2008. Even after Simhadri's resignation, they have not called off their Bandh, focusing on the remaining two demands: revoking suspension of Prof Chaudhry and stopping intervention by OSD in university affairs.

Brij Bihari Pande

Campaigning for Change in Jharkhand

THE Party launched an 'Oust UPA Govt., Save Jharkhand' campaign on January 16, Comrade Mahendra Singh's martyrdom day, with a massive Sankalp Sabha in Bagodar as well as meetings in other centres of the state. The campaign, involving demonstrations on worker-peasant issues at district HQs on January 25; and organised mobilization of the rank and file down to the village-panchayat level throughout February, will culminate in a March to Ranchi on March 17, when a mammoth rally will be held in the state capital Ranchi. This campaign is aimed at seizing the political initiative from the ruling class parties which are busy looting Jharkhand and giving Jharkhand a leftward political shift of united mass struggles against UPA-NDA.

Greeting the mammoth rally in Bagodar on January 16, the martyrdom day of Comrade Mahendra Singh, Comrade Dipankar Bhattacharya, the Party General Secretary launched the 'Oust UPA, Save Jharkhand' campaign. Calling for fresh struggles in the new year, Comrade Dipankar said martyrdom could not silence Mahendra Singh or weaken the revolutionary resolve of CPI(ML). Calling upon for a broad front of workers-peasants-youth and various sections of the society facing devastation, Com. Dipankar said that such a common front - a common course of action - will intensify the battle against the disastrous policies of UPA-NDA and broaden its scope.

The day was observed with meetings attended by thousands in Ramgarh, Garhwa, Palamu, Latehar, Ranchi, Lohardagga, Gumla, Jamshedpur, Chakradharpur, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Devghar, Dumka and

elsewhere in the state. The main slogan of the campaign is- 'Mazdoor Kisano ki hai awaz, dhvast karo yeh loot ka raj.' The Party has launched this campaign at a time of deepening crisis of the ruling classes in the state. The Koda Government is thoroughly discredited. During the vote on BJP's no-confidence motion in the house, the absence of 3 BJP MLAs despite a whip has only exposed its complicity with this corrupt govt. Accompanied by a horde of corrupt and mafia forces at all levels, the Jharkhand Vikas Morcha of Babu Lal Marandi is making futile attempts to fish in the troubled waters. This campaign by the CPI(ML) has brought forth the possibilities of new political alignments in the state.

Addressing the Sankalp Sabha, Comrade Vinod Singh, MLA, alleged that after the departure of the NDA Government, UPA came to power in Jharkhand but the unbridled loot of development funds and public money under heads like NREGA, education, health etc. has reached newer heights. However our struggle too has intensified from the Assembly to streets. Comrade Bahadur Oraon, CC Member and ex-MLA from Chakradharpur garlanded the statue of Comrade Mahendra Singh in Bagodar. Party CC members, Comrades Janardan and Raja Ram were also present in the meeting. The meeting was addressed among others by Comrades Raj Kumar Yadav, Mustkim Ansari, Parmeshwar Mahato, Renu Ravani, Rajesh, Ashok Paswan, Satya Narayan Das, and others. Comrade Ibnul Hasan Basru, CC Member, presided over the meeting and Comrade Sita Ram Singh conducted it. Earlier Comrade Mahendra's statue was garlanded in Khambhara in the presence of a large number of women, students and youth. The Motor Kamgar Union organized a Prabhat Pheri early in the morning. A 10-point chargesheet against the UPA Government of Koda was adopted in the Sankalp Sabha.

CPI(ML) Chargesheet against the UPA Government

During 6- year rule of NDA, UPA raised many issues and promised many things. But during their 16 month rule they too betrayed the aspirations of the people of Jharkhand. Comparing the NDA's 6 years of betrayal with the UPA's 16 months of betrayal, CPI(ML) has issued a 10 point charge-sheet:

1. The UPA Government in Jharkhand is captive in the hands of corrupt politicians, bureaucrats and mafia forces whose only aim is nothing but unbridled plunder of development funds and wealth of Jharkhand.
2. In terms of basic amenities like education, health, roads, electricity etc. situation has further worsened rather than improved since the NDA regime.
3. As a result of wholesale corruption in NREGA, BPL and other welfare schemes, starvation deaths and migration have acquired huge proportions. Instead of addressing the basic needs of the people, the Jharkhand Government has crossed all limits of insensitivity to the people of Jharkhand.
4. All promises regarding employment generation have proved hollow. A mockery has been made of NREGA; thousands of posts are vacant in Government jobs. Instead of enhancing the honorarium given to Shiksha Mitras, health workers etc. and making their jobs permanent, the Government has tried its best to suppress their protests.
5. Efforts are on to do away with urban land ceiling instead of returning the land snatched from the tribals. The CNT-SPT Act is being rendered ineffective, and land and projects are being handed over to Jindal-Mittal-Tata and MOUs are being signed NDA-style, without any plans for the displaced people. The government is acting as stooge of corporates and devastating and displacing the peasants-poor and the tribals.
6. Instead of fulfilling the Jharkhandi people's aspirations of industrial revival, the Government has developed transfer-posting of the officials as an industry. Instead of developing any industrial model

in the state, mafia-bureaucrats-politicians are busy plundering the natural resources of the state.

7. Instead of punishing those responsible for Tapkara, Doranda firings and the assassins of Comrade Mahendra Singh, the Government is not only protecting them but awarding promotions to such criminal officials. Also the officers notorious for looting development funds are enjoying similar patronage. Under their tutelage many new criminal organizations are prospering.

8. The Government failed to provide any package for a permanent solution for droughts and famines. Instead of making proper use of natural water resources, the Government's plans are aimed at looting funds or big dam projects causing displacement.

9. UPA has further developed the culture of running the Government depending on horse-trading of MLAs and criminals. It has rendered the Assembly completely irrelevant and a thriving centre of corruption. They have made Jharkhand the state where even the panchayat system is not implemented, let alone defending 'grassroots democracy'.

10. The Jharkhand movement reflected the aspirations of the tribals and dalits of the State, and it is fitting that that the majority seats in the Jharkhand Assembly be reserved for them and total strength of the house be made 150; but instead the Delimitation Commission reduced even the number of tribal seats! The UPA Government's position, however, is a betrayal of the adivasi people and an assault on the tribal aspirations for autonomy of tribal areas under 6th Schedule.

Manoj Bhakta

P.S.

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