

CPI(ML) Politburo Meeting 25-26 November: Deliberations and Decisions

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The Polit Bureau of the Party Central Committee met in Kolkata on 25-26 November. At the outset of the meeting, the PB paid homage to Comrade Ashok Kumar, departed editor of Lok Yudh, Comrades G Murali and N. Venkateswar Rao of Andhra Pradesh and Comrade Ramji Rajbhar of UP. Com. Murali was building the Party organisation in Telengana and Com. Venkateswar, popularly known as Venkanna, played a key role in the Party's recent expansion to Khammam district which hosted the state conference of AIALA two months ago. Comrade Ramji Gond was a member of the Ghazipur District Committee of the Party.

Just as the meeting was coming to an end, terror gripped Mumbai. The PB condemned the terror strike in the strongest possible terms and called for a high-level judicial inquiry to probe the major intelligence and security lapse underlying this most well-planned terror operation. Above all, the PB stressed the need to strengthen the spirit of, and struggle for, people's unity and democracy to overcome the designs of terror and the failure of the government.

The deliberations and decisions of the PB are summarised below.

1. Crisis of Global Capitalism, Obama's Victory and our Tasks:

a) The US economy is currently reeling under an acute financial crisis which has pushed the entire US economy into deep recession. Many other developed countries are also showing similar symptoms. The crisis has been in the making for quite some time and our Eighth Congress had rightly analysed the essential nature of the crisis as resulting from the growing imbalance or contradiction between a stagnant real economy and an ever growing financial superstructure propelled by huge speculative bubbles. While imperialism is bound to make desperate attempts to overcome the crisis by using economic, political and military means, for communist and anti-imperialist forces across the world the current crisis provides a major opportunity to mount a comprehensive assault on imperialism which Lenin had rightly characterised as moribund capitalism. With global capitalism and its American headquarters in grave crisis, the time is ripe for popularising revolutionary socialist solutions to the inherent anarchy and irrationality of capitalism.

b) For us in India, the moment is particularly opportune for heightening our resistance to the Indian ruling classes' gamut of pro-US economic and foreign policies. For India's comprador rulers, the US is the ultimate model and now that the US itself is trapped in such a huge crisis, the Indian compradors will be hard pressed to defend their policies. If the crisis in India's financial sector still remains within somewhat moderate proportions, the credit goes to the continuing movement of the working class, peasantry and the rural poor which has not allowed successive governments to implement the policies and measures of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation as fast and as thoroughly as they would have liked. This is therefore the most opportune time to highlight the contribution of the movement and press for a complete reversal of the policies and stress the goal of economic self-reliance and foreign policy independence.

c) In the name of reducing the impact of the crisis, the government is implementing bailout

packages for the financial sector and the corporate houses. The government strategy revolves around reassuring foreign capital and big Indian corporate on the basis of easier credit and greater concessions. The advocates of free market economy want the state to intervene in favour of crisis-ridden capitalists and bail them out. We must oppose this bailout strategy and instead insist on direct assistance for direct producers. We must press for greater public expenditure to ensure assured employment, minimum wages and adequate availability of wage goods at cheap rates for the working people. Any increase in the purchasing power of the working people will get translated into greater market demand for basic consumption goods and will thus surely provide much-needed boost to the market at a time of recession. The battle for employment and wages must therefore be intensified to save the country from the ravages of the economic crisis.

d) The emphatic victory won by Obama in the November 4 US presidential election cannot be seen in isolation from the raging economic crisis. Two decades ago, during the Reagan era a prominent Black leader Jesse Jackson had run for presidential nomination of the Democratic Party, but on both occasions in 1984 and 1988 it turned out that the Democratic Party was not ready for endorsing Jackson as the party's nominee. But eight years of Bush presidency and the unprecedented crisis of the US economy and of Washington's war campaign have made Obama's nomination and victory so easily possible. However, beyond the symbolism of the first Black man occupying the White House, we must recognise that Obama's policy pronouncements mark no real change and the teams of advisors and officials announced by him are almost all Clinton era appointees and top bosses of mega corporations. While welcoming the social significance of an Obama victory for the domestic context of the US, we must continue to sharpen our struggle against US imperialism and against the pro-US policies of the Indian ruling classes.

2. The Challenge of Terrorism, Communalism and Aggressive Regional Chauvinism:

In recent months we have seen a significant increase in incidents of terrorism, communalism and aggressive regional chauvinism. Investigations have also established the direct involvement of the Sangh brigade in some cases of bomb blasts. While resisting communalism, terrorism and aggressive regional chauvinism in every form and from all sources, we must pay particular attention to the fascist convergence of communalism, terrorism and aggressive regionalism as practised by the Sangh brigade and its allies. We must observe the coming December 6 as a Day of People's Pledge against Communalism, Terrorism and Aggressive Regional Chauvinism.

The Mumbai terror strike has shocked the entire country and vitiated the political atmosphere. Everywhere we can see heightened jingoistic propaganda against Pakistan, a clamour for giving a free hand to the police and armed forces and a generalised hate campaign against the Muslim community. We must reject all these disturbing and dangerous trends and campaign vigorously for a democratic political solution and uphold the banner of people's democratic unity to rebuff every attempt to spread panic and divide the people.

3. Sankalp Abhiyan (Pledge Campaign):

18 December, 2008 will mark the 10th anniversary of Comrade VM's untimely demise. Since 1999, we have been observing every 18 December as "Sankalp Diwas" (Pledge Day). This year the PB has called for observing a month-long Pledge campaign from December 18, 2008 to January 16, 2009 (January 16 is the martyrdom day of Comrade Mahendra Singh). The CC will shortly issue a call for the campaign which will have to be taken to every Party member in an organised way during the campaign period. The call will highlight the challenges and opportunities opened up by the developing situation and call upon the entire party to consolidate and expand the gains made on different fronts since the 8th Congress by strengthening the Party organisation and unleashing the fullest initiative of the entire Party and its mass base. The call must be systematically taken to the

entire Party membership through branch/GB meetings and cadre conventions and all Party State and District Committees must immediately draw up their plans for the campaign period. In the course of the campaign and finalisation of Party membership chart, levy cards will be introduced for every individual member. The proforma of the levy card will be sent along with the call and will have to be printed by State Committees for members in respective states. The CC will initiate the campaign with a four-day-long meeting of the CC in the historic Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh from December 18 to 21. Party leaders and leading Party committees at every level must provide direct leadership to the pledge campaign.

4. Preparation for Forthcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly Elections:

The stage has been set for the forthcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in important states like Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. Many constituencies are yet to fulfil the criteria decided by the CC for contesting the Lok Sabha election (20,000 mass membership and an initial fund of Rs. 30,000), and efforts must be stepped up to fulfil the criteria before the CC meeting in December.

5. Conferences and Mass Political Initiatives:

The Polit Bureau expressed satisfaction over the recently concluded Third National Conference of AIALA and the Party State Conference of Tamil Nadu. The CC had set up a membership target of 25,00,000 for the Ballia conference of AIALA which has been more or less fulfilled. The UP State Committee responded energetically and enthusiastically to meet the challenge of the Ballia conference and now the successful rally and conference have given a timely and much needed boost to the Party in UP.

The PB also appreciated the bold and timely role played by our student-youth comrades in Bihar in the wake of the recent developments and called upon them to keep up the momentum and unleash full-scale initiative to build a popular movement for education and employment, dignity and security, and development and democracy.

P.S.

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