

CPI(ML) Observes All-India Protest Day

‘Dalit anger against the failure of the State justified’

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The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) observed the all-India Protest Day on December 2 to demand punishment for the perpetrators of vandalism against Ambedkar statues and violence against Dalit people, and protesting against the police repression being unleashed on Dalit masses ever since the Kherlanji incident in Maharashtra. Protests were observed in many state capitals and other important centres of the country including Kolkata, Patna, Lucknow, Chennai, Ranchi, Guwahati, Diphu, Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan, etc.

In a Press Statement issued at a Press Conference in Chennai on the eve of the All India Protest Day, the CPI (ML) General Secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya described the desecration of a statue of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in Kanpur as an act of violence against the dignity of the entire Dalit community, and hailed the ongoing protests as an instance of justifiable Dalit anger against the failure of the State to protect their lives and dignity.

He said the desecration of Dr. Ambedkar’s statue is a symbolic reminder of the horrific atrocities against Dalits – at Kherlanji, at Mansa, at Laxmanpur Bathe, at Bathani Tola – that are committed with impunity, and whose perpetrators go scot-free, enjoying patronage and protection of ruling political forces.

Comrade Dipankar pointed out that the instances of Dalit repression and resistance, both exposed the role of the traditional, self-proclaimed dalit and ‘social justice’ formations. While the Dalit masses were on the streets against the rape and massacre at Kherlanji, being branded as ‘naxalites’ and facing the worst repression and harassment at the hands of the Maharashtra police, there was a deafening silence on the part of Mayawati and Ram Vilas Paswan. These political formations and leaders limit their agenda to a narrow and opportunistic pursuit of power in collaboration with the Congress and BJP, which is totally at odds with the oppression and injustice faced by Dalits, as well as with the remarkable instances of brave resistance shown by the Dalits. He reminded that in Bihar, the Ranveer Sena had perpetrated repeated massacres against poor Dalit agrarian labourers, during the tenure of the RJD. Following mass protests and outrage after the Bathe massacre, the Amir Das Commission was set up to probe the political links of this Commission. Just as the Commission was on the brink of submitting its report (likely to expose the links of BJP, JD (U), Congress and RJD leaders with the Sena) the Nitish Government wound it up.

In New Delhi protesters held out a demonstration from Mandi House to the Maharashtra Sadan and submitted a memorandum addressed to the Governor of Maharashtra through the Resident Commissioner. A protest rally was organised in Kakinada, district headquarter of East Godavari in AP and a memorandum was sent to the Governor of Maharashtra. Similar protests were also held at Pratipadu and Annavaram. In Uttar Pradesh, protest programmes were held at many centres. In Lucknow, an effigy of UP Chief Minister Mulayam Singh was burnt in front of the State Assembly. Protests were also held at Ghazipur, Mughalsarai, Chakia, Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Pilibhit, Varanasi and many other places. Earlier, A CPI(ML) team in Kanpur visited the family members of two dalit

youths who were conspiratorially arrested by the police. A protest demonstration was held in Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan. Diphu, headquarter of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous district in Assam, witnessed hundreds of people condemning the Maharashtra and Kanpur incidents.

After returning from Kherlanji Comrade Akhilendra Pratap Singh said in a statement that the government is making dalits and muslims scapegoats to hide its weaknesses and failure in containing farmers' suicides caused by the anti-people policies. The attacks on poor sections of the society by the feudal-mafia-police nexus have increased as a result of this phenomenon. While the Congress has completely failed in protecting the dalits and muslims, the Congress-NCP Govt. in Maharashtra is leaving no stone unturned in saving the culprits of Khairlanji. The Maharashtra Govt. is thus protecting the relatives of the mafia elements associated with the BJP and the NCP.

CPI(ML) has demanded a CBI inquiry of Khairlanji incident in a definite time-frame and proper protection of all witnesses. CPI(ML) has also demanded a CBI inquiry of the bomb blast incident of Malegaon and to stop police repression of innocents in this case.

P.S.

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