

23rd International Meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties

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The political and ideological battles to confront capitalists and imperialism. The tasks of communists to inform and mobilize the working class, youth, women, and intellectuals in the struggle against exploitation, oppression, imperialist lies and historical revisionism; for the social and democratic rights of workers and peoples; against militarism and war, for peace and socialism

**Intervention of the
Communist Party of India (Marxist)**

Dear Comrades,

The 23rd International Meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties is taking place at a time when Israel, the junior partner of USA, has launched an unprecedented attack on Gaza, Palestine. Israel has announced that it would enforce a stringent blockade on Gaza and change the 'middle East' forever. This is a very dangerous situation and a serious threat to the world peace. It is very important for all the communist and workers' parties, progressive and peace loving forces in the world to join hands together and express their unflinching solidarity with Palestine. If at all 'middle East' (or West Asia for us), has to change, it has to change through the recognition of the State of Palestine with pre-1967 borders and East Jerusalem as the capital. West Asia has to become a region of peace, progress, democracy and equality.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the US backed coup against Salvador Allende's government in Chile. Thousands of communists, socialists and their supporters were brutally murdered and thrown into prisons. Renowned poet Pablo Neruda and singer Victor Jara were among many such famous personalities who were killed. The coup was used not only to oust the Popular Unity government, but also to convert Chile into a laboratory for new economic policies under the euphemism – neoliberalism. The international media was completely in support of the coup and this economic subjugation. *The Economist*, ran a campaign against Allende right from the day one of his election and supported the coup. It was for even a civil war in Chile. This is an example of the role played by corporate media against communists, democratic rights of the people and in defence of imperialist intervention.

Comrades,

We are witnessing a renewed right-wing offensive. Proponents of fascism are elected to government, like in Italy. Such forces are rapidly increasing their strength by promoting various forms of divisive ideas. They are feeding on the growing popular discontent against the economic policies pursued in different countries.

Inflation is on the rise, which is reflected in the growing prices of food and essential commodities. According to the data available between February and May 2023 inflation was higher than 5 per cent in over 60 per cent of low-income countries and 70 per cent of middle-income countries, with many experiencing double digit inflation. Food price inflation exceeded the overall inflation rate in nearly 80 per cent of 163 countries. In order to control inflation, aggressive monetary policies like increasing the interest rates are being pursued. These rising interest rates are contributing to an increase in unemployment, reduction in real wages and hence are adversely impacting the life of the working class and common people.

In reality, the real wages of the workers are witnessing a steep fall. According to the ILO, monthly real wages fell by 0.9 per cent in the first half of 2022, the first negative growth since 2008. If the typically higher wage growth in China compared to other countries is excluded, the real wage growth fell by 1.9 per cent. According to OECD, in the first quarter of 2023, in 31 out of 34 countries there was a 3.4 per cent decline in real wages.

The capitalists are not satisfied even with this decline in real wages. They are openly stating that there should be 'some more pain' inflicted to the economy. This pain will be

inflicted by reducing wages, reforming labour laws and further tightening the screws of austerity. On the whole, this shows their desire to profit by imposing heavier burdens on the working class and the toiling people.

We are witnessing new waves of working class militancy in many countries against the imposition of burdens. The struggles being waged in US, UK, France and such other developed capitalist countries is a positive feature. These working class struggles have to be tempered with the scientific understanding of Marxism-Leninism, giving them the ideological armour required to fight class exploitation.

Fearing a growth in class consciousness and a challenge to their class hegemony, the ruling classes are unleashing the media – one form of ideological attack. Majority of the media houses are controlled by huge corporations whose interests are intrinsically tied up with that of Capital and profit maximisation. Their bias can be understood in the manner in which they distort facts and hide truth from reaching people. Working class hardships or their struggles hardly find a mention in their reportage. Right-wing political campaign is given enormous space and prominence. Divisive ideas – racism, regionalism, fundamentalism, religious sectarianism, patriarchy, extremism and neo-fascism are promoted both stealthily and openly.

In this process, historical facts are deliberately obfuscated. People are fed with myths in the name of history. The role played by communists in anti-colonial struggles, in the war against fascism, social reforms and in the struggle to establish an egalitarian system is ignored. Instead, attempts are being made to equate communism with fascism and communist rule with dictatorship. In this manner, a vicious anti-communist campaign is being carried out.

Comrades, unless a conscious ideological struggle against these kinds of attacks and distortions is carried out, we cannot build the required class unity to challenge the current hegemony of international finance capital and ultimately overthrow the exploitative capitalist system.

Our Party in its successive Congresses had identified that to comprehensively defeat the right-wing forces, our struggle should be multifaceted. Along with our efforts to defeat these forces in elections, we should fight them on political, economic, cultural, social and ideological planes too. We have come to this conclusion basing on the experience we have gained in our struggle against right-wing forces.

In our country, you might be aware of the authoritarian government led by the right-wing political party, the BJP. It is guided by religious sectarian ideology championed by its parent organisation the RSS. The government is deeply committed to neoliberal ideology, which is extreme capitalism, and is on a privatisation spree. Agriculture is sought to be opened for corporate entry. Public sector units and sectors of the Indian economy that were hitherto out of bounds for foreign capital are diligently opened for the entry of international finance capital. Forest conservation laws are being diluted to help corporates to plunder natural resources undermining the environment.

These domestic policies invariably find a reflection in the foreign policy. In spite of all the tall talk of standing with the 'Global South', the government is pushing the country closer and closer to the US. For the first time in our history, the government had openly stated

that it would stand with Israel in the present attack on Palestine. Defence and security relations with US and its allies are strengthened at the cost of our sovereignty and self-reliance. Popular opinion is totally ignored and whoever questions the government democratically and legitimately are branded as anti-national.

Neoliberal economic policies come as a package – they are invariably followed by the curtailment of democratic rights. Freedom of expression, organisation and protest are the first victims in this attack. Media houses that are not toeing the ruling class dictates are threatened using all possible State instruments and are forced to shut down. There are many instances of attack on such independent media houses and journalists.

In the name of reform of labour laws, the right to unionise is being made increasingly impossible. Right to negotiate and strike are stifled. Public spaces are made inaccessible for protests. Draconian laws are enacted to coerce opposition. Bourgeois democratic institutions like the parliament, election commission and even the judiciary are sought to be completely captured to further its agenda. These attempts are exposing the true nature of the State and all its institutions and helping people to understand it.

In order to divert popular attention from their bread and butter issues, religious and sectarian hatred is being spread. There are systematic attacks on the Muslim minorities. Diversionary tactics are employed by rousing chauvinism and jingoistic passions. A distorted history of the country, particularly its anti-colonial struggle is presented to the people. Textbooks are rewritten to suit these purposes. Science and rationality are sought to be buried in a heap of superstitions and myth.

The corporate media, true to its class character, has become an active cheer leader to all these acts of the government. Struggles of the working class, peasantry, trade unions, youth, students, women, depressed and disadvantaged sections, Communists and other progressive forces rarely finds a mention. The alternative policies pursued by the lone Left government led by the CPI(M) in Kerala, within all the limitations of functioning in a capitalist system, especially the fiscal strangulation by the Central government, too are ignored by the media. The intention is clear – people should not be made aware of any alternative to neoliberalism and capitalism. They want to stick to their now failed theory of the ‘end of history’.

It is out of this experience we have realised that defeating right-wing offensive and the penetration of international finance capital in our country requires a strong communist movement. This would be possible only when we are able to bring the workers, peasants, agricultural workers and all other exploited and oppressed sections as a unified core around which all other sections of people who are willing to fight for a basic change can be mobilised. This can be done only by sharpening our socio-economic, political and ideological struggles correctly analysing the concrete situation in each country along with the important developments in the changing world.

For this our brave comrades are committed.

Down with Imperialism!
Long Live International Communist Solidarity!
Long Live Socialism!!