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CPI Supports Workers General Strike



CPI general secretary D Raja briefing the press. Also seen CPI national secretaries Dr B K Kango, Rama Krushna Panda

The following is the communiqué issued by Communist Party of India General Secretary D Raja at the press conference on July 4, 2025 after the conclusion of the three-day National Council Meeting held at New Delhi on July 1, 2 and 3, 2025:

A meeting of the National Council of the Communist Party of India was held on July 1, 2 and 3, 2025 at New Delhi.

The meeting was presided by Rama Krushna Panda, Secretary, National Council.

Party General Secretary D. Raja presented the draft political resolution to be presented before Party Congress to be held in Chandigarh from September 21 to 25, 2025. He also spoke on certain current political developments.

A detailed discussion on the draft took place and number of amendments were moved and it was decided that the national secretariat will consider these amendments and prepare the final draft.

1. CPI Supports July 9, 2025 Workers General Strike

A resolution supporting the national strike on July 9, 2025 called by Central Trade Unions and supported by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, agricultural workers' organisations was passed.

2. On SIR Exercise of Electoral Rolls by Election Commission of India in Bihar:

CPI Demands that Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls by Election Commission in Bihar should be withdrawn.

A resolution demanding that the Election Commission should conduct Bihar Assembly Election with the roles prepared in 2024 for Lok Sabha elections and only new names of those who have completed 18 years of age be added as the proposal of Election Commission to prepare entirely new voters list within a short period of one or two months is impractical and deprive number of eligible voters, was passed unanimously.

3. Compensation for Loss Incurred by People

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NATIONWIDE GENERAL STRIKE JULY 9, 2025

Kudos to Workers, Farmers, Agri-workers and People at large

More than 25 crores participated in the Strike action/Rasta Roko/Rail Roko all over the country in the formal and

Amarjeet Kaur

labour and farmers and other sections of common people. Participation of students and youth was quite vis-

ible in many states. The ranks and file of Samyukt Kisan Morcha and joint front of Agricultural Labour Unions



informal sectors, in Government, Public sector enterprises, and industrial areas. There were

Atomic Energy, Cement, Port & Dock, Tea plantations, Jute Mills, Public transport, transport of various types in private



very large mobilisations in rural India and also at block-sub-division levels by informal sector workers, agricultural

played significant role in the mobilisation in rural India.

The workers and their unions in Coal, NMDC

sector, state government employees in various sectors/states and Central government employees

On Page 04

New Age Weekly

Deepening Economic Crisis

Industrial growth, the stock market and the rupee have already been sinking. Now more and more reports show a constant fall in Indian households' rapidly shrinking expenditure capacity. According to the latest data released by the National Accounts Statistics, Indians have significantly reduced their spending on clothing and footwear over the past three years. Clothing and footwear are essential items for any household. A continued decline in expenditure on these items for last three years means that the crisis has started turning endemic in nature.

The data shows that the consumer expenditure on clothing and footwear stood at Rs 4.52 trillion in the financial year 2023-24, marking a seven percent decline from Rs 4.94 trillion in 2021-22. This dip shows a growing trend of cautious spending among Indian consumers. Such a situation arises when there is a definite fall in the purchasing power of the people.

A deeper look into the data reveals that during this period the footwear consumption remained largely stagnant, with a marginal slip from Rs 1 trillion in FY21 to Rs 99,000 crore in FY24, while the clothing segment faced a steeper decline, falling from Rs 3.93 trillion in FY22 to Rs 3.53 trillion in FY24.

The downward trend in Indian consumers' ability to spend money on clothing and footwear began in 2020-21 fiscal, the year which was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. That year the spending on clothing and footwear dropped by 15 percent in comparison to the level of expenditure Indian consumers had shown on these items in the financial year 2019-20.

Recent figures from the Ministry of Statistics signals that the fall in Indians' capacity to spend on items of daily use is acquiring deeper roots in the economy. They also highlight the desperate need

for policy support to boost income growth and restore consumer confidence.

However, such a transformation would require massive efforts to reverse the trend of fall in the employment generation in the country. This in turn would require a complete policy overhaul. This seems an impossible proposition given the way the unemployment, falling expenditure capacity, rising inflation and almost stagnant economy have become the defining feature of the Narendra Modi government.

Only in February this year, a study by venture capital firm "Blume Ventures" found that Nearly 100 crore Indians, 90 percent of the country's population, lack discretionary spending power to purchase goods or services.

The report stated that the intensification in the decline of the consumption pattern

Editorial

is driven not only by a decline in purchasing power of ninety percent of the population in India but also by a sharp drop in financial savings and a surge in mass indebtedness.

The study, titled "Indus Valley Annual Report 2025" clearly stated that only the top 10 percent of India's population have shown a significant hike in their consumption expenditure. It, therefore, called this small group of Indians as "the primary driver of consumption and economic growth".

The report, however, noted that this "consuming class" in Asia's third-largest economy is not expanding in size but rather becoming wealthier, meaning the rich are getting richer while the overall number of wealthy individuals remains stagnant.

According to the Deccan Herald, India's

top 10 percent controlled 34 percent of national income in 1990, a figure that surged to 57.7 percent by 2025. In contrast, the bottom 50 percent saw their share of national income shrink from 22.2 percent to 15 percent over the same period.

Similarly, an international investment managers' group "Marcellus", in a study released on March 5 this year, found that Indians are the most indebted people in the world. "Cross country data shows that Indians today are amongst the most indebted people in the world if we exclude mortgages (or loans taken towards home or property)."

The study said that until 2019 India's non-housing household debt was broadly in line with other countries. But in 2020, post-Covid India witnessed one of the steepest falls in its GDP and massive increase in indebtedness of the people. The surge in India's non-housing household debt after 2020 has been unprecedented and has surpassed most of the country in the world.

The study said, "Over the last decade, whilst incomes for the Indian middle class have been stagnant, food prices have nearly doubled. As a result, not only has the ability of the middle class to consume distinctly been reduced, their inability to finance day to day consumption has also led to a rise in their indebtedness."

The study concluded that Indians today have not only borrowed money, but they have done so increasingly for sustenance and not asset creation.

The Marcellus study also pointed out that white-collar urban jobs are becoming harder to come by as artificial intelligence automates clerical, secretarial and other routine work. "The number of supervisors employed in manufacturing units [as a percentage of all employed] in India has gone down significantly," it added.

CPI Supports Workers General Strike...

**From Front Page
in Himachal Pradesh
Due to Rains:**

As lot of property and crop damages have taken place in Himachal Pradesh due to continuous heavy rain, a resolution demanding

adequate compensation for those who have lost crops and property was unanimously adopted.

4. CPI Condemns US-India Trade deal under COMPACT as "Death Warrant for Farmers," Demands Halt to Talks & Delegation Recall.

tion Recall.

CPI vehemently opposes the newly negotiated "U.S.-India trade deal under COMPACT, unveiled by President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. While the government portrays

this as a transformative initiative, CPI warns that its trade and economic provisions will devastate India's farmers, destabilise the financial sector, and exploit the nation's youth and erode the sovereignty of India.

Opening of the Agri-

culture and dairy sector to US agribusiness corporations will be a death warrant to Indian Farmers.

Already unprecedented imports of oilseed and soya products has resulted in collapsing prices of soyabean, and cotton, giving rise to farmers' suicides.

Resist RSS Attack on Constitution

D Raja

On the eve of the 75th anniversary of the Indian Constitution, the Supreme Court of India reaffirmed the foundational character of our Republic by upholding the inclusion of the words “secular” and “socialist” in the Constitution’s Preamble. These words, introduced through the Constitution (42nd Amendment) Act, 1976, by the Indira Gandhi-led government during the Emergency, have been the subject of repeated political and legal attacks from the right-wing forces in the country. The Supreme Court bench, comprising Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice P.V. Sanjay Kumar, dismissed a batch of petitions challenging the amendment and held that the mere absence of these terms in the original Preamble adopted on November 26, 1949, cannot invalidate their later inclusion.

This legal reaffirmation came as a powerful signal from the judiciary as a historic milestone. But just six months later, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the ideological backbone of the BJP, chose to launch a fresh offensive on the very idea of India as enshrined in the Constitution. RSS General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale made a brazen demand: remove “secular” and “socialist” from the Preamble. According to him, these ideas are alien to Ambedkar’s constitutional vision.

Piling on to this narrative, the Vice President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar, went further to call the insertion of these words a “sacrilege” against the spirit of Sanatana. It is not coincidental that these statements are being made from the highest offices of the land. This is not an intellectual debate. This is a deliberate political strategy to delegitimise the modern, plural, democratic republic of India and to usher in a communal and hierarchical order in its place.

When the Constitution was being framed, the

Constituent Assembly emphatically and unanimously supported the idea of a secular State. Not a single member argued for a theocratic State. Not one. The idea of India was built on the foundations of unity in diversity – a rejection of colonial divide-and-rule, of communal politics, and of caste and religious supremacy. Today, however, the RSS-BJP establishment is working relentlessly to dismantle that consensus and impose the idea of a Hindu Rashtra.

This agenda has moved from fringe rhetoric to the political mainstream. On the day of the Ram Temple consecration in Ayodhya, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a provocative statement equating Ram with Rashtra and Dev with Desh. This kind of fusion of religion and State is exactly what the framers of our Constitution warned against. It is also directly in contradiction to the Supreme Court’s ruling that secularism is part of the basic structure of the Constitution – something that cannot be amended or erased, even by Parliament.

The warnings of our national leaders resonate even more forcefully today. In 1931, Mahatma Gandhi, in his resolution on Fundamental Rights, insisted that the State must remain neutral in religious matters. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, in his 1945 draft of the Constitution of the United States of India, categorically wrote in Article 17: “The State shall not recognise any religion as State religion.” What is particularly instructive – and ironic – is that even the Hindu Mahasabha, which boycotted the freedom movement and opposed secular nationalism, included a similar provision in its 1944 Hindustan Free State Act, stating: “There shall be no State-religion for the Hindusthan Free State or for any of its Provinces.”

The Constituent Assembly Debates further lay bare the intent of India’s founding generation. On August 27, 1947, just twelve days after Independence, Govind Ballabh Pant posed a direct question: “Do you want a real national secular State or a theocratic State?” He warned that if India became a theocracy, it could only be a Hindu State, raising questions about the status and security of those who would be excluded from such a polity. Jaspat Roy Kapoor, on November 21, 1949, noted that Gandhi had made it clear: religion should be a personal matter, and the State should be completely neutral. A day later, on November 22, Begum Aizaz Rasul called secularism “the most outstanding feature” of the Constitution and expressed hope that it would remain “guarded and unsullied” in the

years to come. On October 14, 1949, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel reassured the nation that the Constitution of free India would not be “disfigured by any provision on a communal basis.” And on November 23, T.J.M. Wilson warned that the clouds threatening India’s secular character were already gathering. These warnings were not alarmist. They were deeply perceptive, and they speak with urgency to our times.

The present RSS-led campaign is not merely against secularism; it is also aimed at discrediting and eliminating the socialist orientation of the Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar, in the Constituent Assembly, clearly noted that the Directive Principles of State Policy – enshrined in Part IV of the Constitution – were rooted in socialist ideals. They envisaged a welfare state committed to reducing inequality, ensuring social justice, and securing a life of dignity for all citizens.

The Supreme Court’s recent decision rightly interpreted the term “Socialist” in the Preamble as synonymous with a Welfare State. This vision resonates with Ambedkar’s own emphasis on the social and economic transformation of India – an end to caste exploitation, landlessness, poverty, and discrimination. Socialism, in this Indian context, means creating conditions for equality and justice – not the importation of any foreign ideology, but the realization of the promises of the freedom struggle. In this regard, Ambedkar issued perhaps the most unambiguous warning ever made about the dan-

gers of a majoritarian State. In “Pakistan or the Partition of India” (1940), he wrote: “If Hindu Raj does become a fact, it will, no doubt, be the greatest calamity for this country... Hindu Raj must be prevented at any cost.”

That cost is now upon us. The demand of the RSS to remove the terms “Secular” and “Socialist” from the Constitution is not an isolated act of historical revisionism. It is part of a long-term project to dismantle the very edifice of the modern Indian Republic and to institutionalize a new order built on religious supremacy, caste hierarchy, market fundamentalism, and political authoritarianism.

This must be resisted – through public awareness, legal challenges, political mobilisations, and mass democratic struggles. We must remember: the Constitution is not just a legal document. It is a political, social, and moral covenant forged in the crucible of our freedom struggle. It embodies the dreams of countless martyrs, revolutionaries, and constitutionalists who envisioned an India that belonged to all its people.

To defend secularism and socialism today is to defend democracy itself. It is to defend the right of every citizen – regardless of faith, caste, class, or gender – to live with dignity, equality, and freedom. As the 75th anniversary of our Constitution reminds us, the Republic is not guaranteed – it must be protected, nourished, and, if necessary, defended against those who seek to destroy it from within. Let us rise to that responsibility – with courage, with clarity, and with collective resolve.

Nationwide General Strike July 9, 2025

From Front Page

in major areas like postal, income-tax, audit and others went on strike. The workers/employees in most of the Industrial areas in the country including in many MNCs joined the strike in a big way and organised processions. The defence sector employees held protest demonstrations for one hour in support of strike and joined office only after that as per their decision. The railway unions mobilised and participated in solidarity actions in. The unions in Construction, Beedi, Anganwadi, ASHA, Mid-Day Meal, and other Scheme workers, Fisheries, Domestic workers, Hawkers and vendors, Head-load workers, Home based piece rate workers and Rickshaw, Auto, Taxi were among those who participated in strike and joined Rasta Roko, Rail Roko at several places. The students, youth, women and social activists also participated in processions and dharna actions in many places. The common people supported these actions. The markets were closed at many places in response to Strike/Bandh call.

There was Bandh like situation in many areas of the country like in the states of Puducherry, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Tamilnadu, Punjab, Kerala, West Bengal, Odisha, Karnataka, Goa, Meghalaya, Manipur etc. Reports of Partialabandhs were also received in many segments of Rajasthan, Haryana, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh etc. There was industrial and sectoral strike held in Madhya

Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Gujarat (the news from other states are still awaited).

Workers joined the strike action en masse throughout the country bravely confronting numerous intimidating and repressive actions and threats by the administrations, both of the Centre and many states and also the employers.

The strikers expressed their anguish against the anti-national policies of the Government to favour Indian and Foreign corporates and the international finance capital as against Public Sector Undertakings, Public services as well as against the small trade and businesses. The government through its policy of National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) has put on sale the infrastructure, the natural resources and national assets which will jeopardize the self-reliant development of the country, posing threat to its Sovereignty. High time to oppose and fight these anti national policies, the agitators opined.

The people expressed themselves against the rising inequalities in the face of unprecedented price rise of essential commodities, rising unemployment and underemployment leading to desperation, increased suicides of casual labour and the unemployed youth.

The government has not been conducting Indian labour conference for last 10 years, violating international labour standards and continues taking decisions in contravention to the interest of

labour force including attempts to impose four labour codes to favour employers in the name of 'Ease of doing Business'.

The trade unions consider these labour codes as negation of the labour rights won over after struggle of 150 years from British Raj onwards. These codes negate our right to strike, make union registration problematic, de-recognition of unions easy, the process of conciliation and adjudication cumbersome, winding up labour courts and introducing tribunal for workers, overriding power to registrars to de-register unions, definition of wage being changed and the schedule of occupations for minimum wages applicability being abolished, Occupational Safety and Health and Working Conditions code designed to put the right of safety of every worker and also rights and entitlements of workers in workplace in total jeopardy, the inspection exclusive putting the right of safety of every worker made in jeopardy, the inspections have been done away with and facilitators to facilitate employers is being brought, change in industrial code and its rule for increasing applicability threshold from 100 to 300 would push out 70 percent of industries out of the coverage of labour laws, the changes in factory act also would throw out substantial number of workforce from its coverage, giving the employers class wide discretionary powers to repress and exploit.

There is no labour protection fixed term employment is fully devoid

of labour law protection, unlimited apprenticeship and no compulsion of absorption is another way of exploitation, violation by employers being decriminalised whereas criminalization of trade union leader on the cards, the limit of contractor licence proposed to increase from 20 to 50, outsourcing and contractorization being made normal, recruitment of sanctioned posts not being done rather there is ban on new posts creation leading to rising unemployment, trend of appointments of retirees instead of regular employment to unemployed youth etc.

The unions are asking for immediate recruitments in the sanctioned posts lying vacant in all Government departments and PSUs, creation of more jobs in industries and services, increase in days and remuneration of MGNREGA workers and enactment of similar legislation for Urban areas. But the government is busy imposing ELI scheme to incentives employers instead in order to subsidise their labour cost and informalize the workforce. In Government departments and in public sector, instead of providing regular appointments for youth, the policy to recruit the retirees on the one hand and appointing fixed-term/ apprentices/ trainees/ interns in the core jobs on the other, is being brought as witnessed in Railways, NMDC Ltd, Steel sector, teaching cadres etc. This is damaging to the growth of the country where 65 percent population is below the age of 35 years and the numbers of unemployed is maximum in the age group of 20 to

25 yrs. The government is making fraudulent claims on employment and provisions of social security. The existing social security schemes are being weakened and the attempts being made to bring private players into it.

The attack on the democratic rights as enshrined in Indian Constitution continues more vigorously by this ruling regime and now the attempt to de-franchise the migrant workers is being designed beginning with Bihar as immediate case. The misuse of constitutional bodies is rampant to suppress voices of opposition, the enactments in some states to control and criminalise mass movements is on the cards; the Public Security Bill in Maharashtra and similar enactments in the state of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh etc are the pointers. Now the attempts to snatch the citizenship is on the cards.

This is the beginning of the prolonged battle in the days to follow in the sectoral levels focussed on determined united resistance, again to culminate into a bigger national level heightened united action.

The unions in Delhi after taking out procession in industrial areas effecting strike held a public rally at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi which was addressed by National leaders of 10 Central Trade Unions Ashok Singh-INTUC, Amarjeet Kaur-AITUC, Harbhajan Singh-HMS, Tapan Sen-CITU, Rajiv Dimri-AICCTU, Lata Ben-S E W A , Chaurasia-AIUTUC, Jawaahar-L P F , Dharmendra Verma-TUCC and R S Dagar-UTUC. The union leaders from ICEU and MEC, and leaders of AIKS and Agri-agriculture workers also addressed.

The All India Bank Strike on July 9, 2025 all over the country at the call of All India Bank Employees Association, All India Bank Officers Association and Bank Employees Federation of India (AIBEA, AIBOA and BEFI) was an impressive success.

As per reports reaching us from various parts of the country about the strike, employees enthusiastically participated in the strike. No Branch could be opened in some of the States. In other States, though branches remained open since officers in these branches were not part of the strike, normal banking transactions could not be carried out. Receipts and payment of cash, sending cheques for clearance, and all other routine work in the Branches pertaining to the customers could not take place due to the strike by the employees. Some of the ATMs also dried out and could not be used for disbursement of cash. As per our information, clearing of cheques in the National Grids are to be affected on July 9 today due to the strike. About four crores cheques for about Rs. 20 lac crores will be delayed by one day for clearance. Bank employees and officers held demonstrations on July 8 evening and on July 9 morning and raised slogans on the demands of the strike.

The Strike is to protest against the continued anti-people economic policies and anti-worker labour policies of the Central Government. Their pro-corporate economic policies are resulting in accumulation of huge wealth in the hands of a few industrialists and business houses and on the other end, depriving the vast

All India Bank Strike on July 9: An Impressive Success

C H Venkatachalam

masses of their basic livelihood. Instead of creating more and more jobs for the youth of our country, existing jobs are getting evaporated and reduced. Permanent jobs are made on contract basis in the name of Fixed Term Employment and paid paltry wages, even less than minimum wages, prescribed the Government. Contractors become rich but workers suffer.

Unemployment is un-

hours. Internationally it is maximum 8-hour work. But in the name of helping 'Ease of doing business', employers are allowed freedom to increase working hours. State Governments are encouraged, rather coerced to increase working hours to 9 or 10 hours per day. Infosys Narayanamurthy talks of 70 hours of work per

cies, the trade unions have been the target now. Labour Codes are brought in to replace existing labour laws won by the working class through years of struggles and sacrifices. Labour Reforms are meant to aid the employers and deprive the working class of their basic labour rights.

Definition of a worker is sought to be changed by which many sections of workers will be out-

class is the real wealth creator. Unfortunately, they do not enjoy any share in this prosperity. Five per cent of the population at the top control 70 per cent of the wealth and 50 per cent of the people at the bottom are left with only three per cent of the wealth. The inequality is widening, aggressively, menacingly and nakedly. All this is aided by the Government policies. That is why there is need to oppose these policies. The entire trade union movement - INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, TUCC, SEWA, AICCTU, LPF, UTUC along with various independent trade union federations, peasants, agriculture workers have protested against these anti-people economic policies and anti-worker labour reforms by today's strike action. In the Financial sector, bank employees and insurance employees - AIBEA, AIEEA, GIEAAIA, AIBOA, AILICEF and BEFI participated in the strike. Others Unions, AIBOC, NCBE, INBEF, INBOC supported our strike. Employees of public sector banks, some private sector and foreign banks, Co-op. Bank employees, Regional Rural Bank Employees, LIC and GIC employees participated in the strike. We thank all our Unions and members for making the strike a success. We hope that Government will understand the protest in right perspective to review and rewind their policies.

(Author is General Secretary, All India Bank Employees Association)

New Age Weekly



precedented but job generation is negative. Prices are skyrocketing but instead of providing some extra money in the hands of the poor, they are being burdened with more and more taxes. Public Sector in our country is at the core of our country's growth and development. Now public sector has become the target for disinvestment, privatisation and monetization. Even public sector banks and insurance companies which deal with huge public savings are now sought to be privatised. Public Sector Banks deal with Rs. 140 lac crores of people's Deposits. Can we afford to hand over this public savings to private Corporates and capitalists? Wage is always linked to working

week. L&T Subramanyam talks of 90 hours work per week including Sundays and Holidays. It is not their individual opinion. It is His Masters Voice. It is nothing but an attempt to squeeze and exploit the workers in order to maximise profits.

Profit First, Worker Last is their policy now. Bulk of the workforce in our country is now unorganised. They are exploited to the core. More than half of them is women workers. They are made to work in degraded conditions. Instead of strengthening the Laws in their favour to prevent this exploitation, rules are being liberalized to aggravate the exploitation. When workers are questioning and opposing these poli-

side the protection of labour rights. Freedom is given to employers to go for contract workers with less wage, increased working hours, deny trade union rights, cripple the right to strike, since their agenda is union-free environment for the industrialists and foreign investors. Their idea is trade union mukt Bharat. Agriculture is the main avocation in our country. But the contribution of agriculture sector to total GDP has drastically come down indicating the deep crisis in this vital sector. Farmers are in distress. They want minimum support price for their produce. But Government was for the Corporates to control the produce for hoarding and profiteering. But we all know that working

Election Commission of India's order of June 24, 2025 for conducting Special Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls in Bihar violates its core constitutional Responsibility, and is contrary to the well-defined protocol and procedure, and hence whimsical.

In the note explaining the process of annual revision/updation of electoral rolls, the ECI has itself given the details, how to proceed with the procedure, but it is shocking that the Constitution body itself acted against the details. It is simply a breach of trust for the citizens of India.

The creation, maintenance, and purification of Electoral Rolls is a core constitutional responsibility of ECI, and for that there has been a well-defined and meticulously followed legacy over the decades, which was not followed by the ECI while notifying its order. The process is ensconced in a watertight statutory scheme which is rule based.

The process of revision of electoral rolls says, "The electoral roll is prepared in accordance with the well-defined protocol and following the principle of natural justice by providing reasonable opportunity to the electors and all stakeholders, political parties in particular."

Since, ECI is a constitutional body in a democracy, it is not supposed to change the "well-defined protocol and procedure" all of a sudden without deliberations with the stakeholders.

ECI's order mandating new rule for electors whose names were not in the 22-year old electoral roll of 2003 to prove not only citizenship of their own but also of their parents is a major change in the procedure, and hence it can't be done violating the principle of natural justice.

India being a democratic country, ECI was supposed to democratically act if it had found the

decades of legacy of "well-defined protocol & procedure" wrong. Deliberations with the political parties in a democracy was the minimum need as per the process of the revision of electoral rolls, since the provisions of the process of revision of electoral rolls make the ECI responsible for giving "reasonable opportunity to the electors and all stakeholders" in the process.

In the current instance, the ECI neither gave "reasonable opportunities" to electors nor the stakeholder political parties. One fine morning ECI rises from its sleep, and just makes an order to be followed by political parties and electors, forgetting that the responsibility given to the ECI is not autocratic but democratic, in which every elector and the political party is a participant, not servile to ECI. Therefore, the order violates not only the rules of democracy but also the spirit of it. It is also against the "principle of natural justice".

ECI has arbitrarily given a submission deadline for enumeration form and required documentation by July 25. The one month time is too short, and can't be considered "reasonable opportunity" because the documents are not ready with crores of electors in the first place, and then the large part of the state is under flood, farmers and farm labourers are busy because of sowing of Kharif crops, many are not able to move on account of their checked movement due to rains, flooded or disrupted paths and roads, and seasonal illness.

It is against natural justice to not to give enough

time to electors. The draft electoral roll will be released around August 1, followed by a claim and objection window until September 1, 2025. The final Revised Electoral Roll will be published on September 30, 2025.

Since electoral roll is part of a live process under the ECI, it is arbitrary to reverse the electoral roll revision date. The logic to make the electoral roll of 2003 as the basis of the Special Intensive Revision now is illogical, and amounts to creating trouble to electors.

Election Commission is given responsibility to facilitate the entire election process and is not supposed to create new troubles, especially when the live electoral roll is there, with summarily revised year after year.

ECI has taken a major decision to reject the live Electoral Roll which remains in a "state of continuous updation" undemocratically without any transparent manner, violating the provision of maintaining "widest possible transparency". The reason given by the ECI for reverting back to 2003 electoral roll is that there have been large scale additions and deletions to the electoral rolls over the last 20 years due to rapid urbanisation and migration.

This has increased the possibility of duplicate entries in the roll. ECI's logic is faulty since, merely deletion and addition in electoral roll during continuous changes does not make the electoral roll invalid. Thus, making the current electoral roll invalid, and making 2003 electoral roll valid is an arbitrary decision. As for the ECI's cleaning "duplicate

Dr Gyan Pathak

entries" logic, it does not require making 22 year old electoral roll valid, but it needs only making officials work to get the duplicate entries removed.

Since free and fair election based on universal adult franchise is the basic, ECI has no power to hijack this basic principle by its arbitrary order purportedly only to delete "duplicate entries" as the ECI has said. Election Commission is not "law unto itself", as the 1977 Supreme Court judgment in *MS Gill vs CEC* had observed.

Constitution of India has given the ECI the power of "superintendence, direction and control" only but nowhere it gives it power to decide the citizenship of a person, or to decide which documents amount to proving citizenship and which are not. ECI can't arbitrarily chose which documents amount to be valid citizenship proof and which are not. There is already a decade old legacy in this regard which the ECI is supposed to follow. ECI can't create its own rule, and the rules for electors to be imposed on them arbitrarily.

There are many more issues involved in the ECI's order that has been challenged by many petitioners in the Supreme Court of India. The bunch of petitions against the ECI's order will be heard by the Supreme Court on July 10.

The petitions were mentioned on July 7 before the Bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Joy mala Bagch on behalf of many organisations and associations. Among them, are D. Raja of the Commu-

nist Party of India, Dipankar Bhattacharya of CPI-ML among many others.

Petitioners contended that the ECI's order is ill timed and hasty; revision is opaque and disproportionately targeting Muslim, Dalit, and poor migrants; violates the provisions of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1950 and Rule 21 A of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960; shifted onus of proving citizenship from the state to citizen; excluded identification documents such as Aadhaar or ration cards which further make marginalised communities and the poor more vulnerable to exclusion from voting; and over three crore voters and more particularly from marginalised communities (such as SCs, STs, and migrant workers) could be excluded.

The entire nation is looking at the outcome of the hearing of petitions in Supreme Court on July 10. This is just not the question of assembly polls in Bihar, the issue has much bigger dimension about the right to vote of a citizen. If the ECI prodded by the Union Home Ministry achieves success in the apex Court in getting its intensive revision procedures passed, that will endanger the democratic rights of a large number of citizens throughout the country. The two judge bench of the Supreme Court is expected to act as the custodian of the Indian Constitution in rejecting the pleas of the ECI and the Centre in the interests of the transparent functioning of Parliamentary Democracy in the country.

Bihar's Eight Crore Voters at Risk

Opposition Battles ECI's 'New Norms'

The ongoing intensive revision of the voter list in Bihar has sparked significant controversy, raising questions about the Election Commission of India's (ECI) impartiality and the potential disenfranchisement of millions. A delegation of 11 opposition parties recently met with the ECI to address concerns about this process, only to encounter what they described as an unfriendly and restrictive atmosphere. This incident, coupled with allegations of targeting migrant voters, has escalated tensions, with the opposition labelling the exercise a "vote ban" akin to the 2016 demonetisation. This article examines the issues surrounding Bihar's voter list revision, the opposition's grievances, and the broader implications for India's democratic framework.

CPI General Secretary D. Raja has fiercely criticized the Election Commission of India's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of Bihar's voter list, warning it could disenfranchise lakhs of migrant workers and marginalized voters. Urging postponement, he argues the rushed process, requiring citizenship proof, threatens democracy. Raja insists the 2024 electoral rolls suffice for Bihar's upcoming polls, slamming the ECI's timing and motives.

Bihar, with its estimated 8 crore voters, is undergoing a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of its electoral rolls, a process not conducted

since 2003. Unlike routine summary revisions, this exercise requires voters to submit new forms, photographs, and, critically, proof of citizenship, such as birth certificates or parental documents. The ECI's stated goal is to eliminate duplicate voter IDs and ensure that voters are registered where they "ordinarily reside," as per the Representation of the People Act, 1950. However, the timing—mere months before elections—and the stringent documentation requirements have raised alarms.

The opposition, in-

ing in Delhi but registered in Darbhanga may find their voter ID cancelled if they fail to comply, effectively barring them from voting in Bihar's elections.

The opposition's meeting with the ECI on July 2, 2025, was marked by friction. The delegation, representing 11 parties, faced unexpected restrictions: only two representatives per party were allowed, leaving senior leaders like Jairam Ramesh waiting outside for hours. The opposition described the ECI's demeanour as harsh and dismissive, with the Chief Election

The opposition's frustration culminated in Congress labelling the ECI a "mediator" for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), warning of public protests if their concerns remain unaddressed.

The controversy raises serious questions about the ECI's neutrality and the integrity of India's electoral process. The requirement for citizenship proof—a first in voter registration—has drawn comparisons to the National Register of Citizens, fuelling fears of exclusion among marginalized groups. Migrant workers, who often lack access to smartphones or documentation, face significant hurdles in complying with the SIR. The ECI's insistence that voters register where they reside, rather than their native place, contradicts long-standing practices where voters maintain ties to their home constituencies.

Moreover, the ECI's lack of transparency—failing to consult political parties before launching the SIR or clarify its sudden implementation—has eroded trust. Reports in *The Times of India* and *The Hindu* quote Kumar emphasizing residence-based voting, but the absence of clear communication leaves voters confused. For instance, booth-level officers are instructed to visit homes only three times, and failure to meet voters could result in their names being struck off. This is particularly concerning for migrant labourers in states like Punjab or



STUDY & STRUGGLE

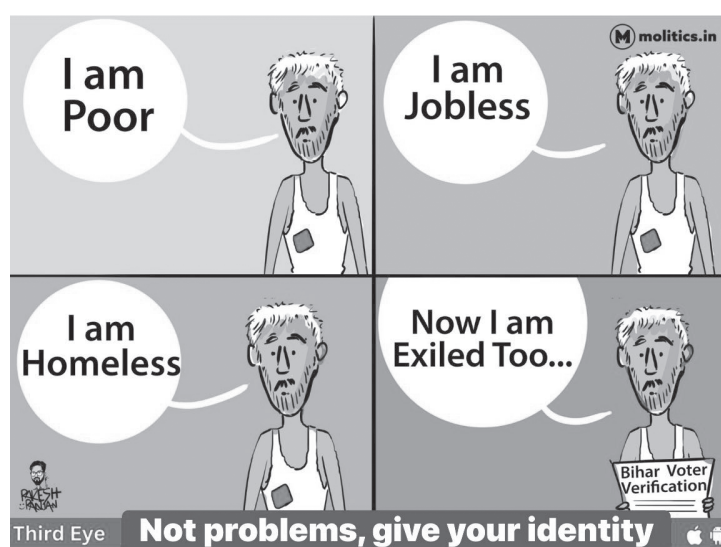
C Adhikesavan



Gujarat, who may not return in time to complete formalities.

The opposition has demanded that the ECI hold a press conference to address these concerns and provide written responses to their questions. They argue that the SIR's rushed timeline and documentation demands violate the principle of a level playing field, a cornerstone of democratic elections. The ECI must extend the revision period, simplify requirements, and launch awareness campaigns to ensure no eligible voter is excluded. Additionally, allegations of bias, including leaked WhatsApp messages attributed to Kumar, warrant an independent review to restore public confidence.

The Bihar voter list controversy underscores the delicate balance between electoral integrity and inclusivity. As India's democracy faces scrutiny, the ECI must act transparently to uphold the constitutional right to vote, ensuring that the voices of Bihar's 8 crore voters—especially its most vulnerable—are not silenced.



cluding parties like Congress and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), alleges that the SIR disproportionately targets the 20 percent of Bihar's population (approximately 2 crore people) living outside the state. These migrant workers, often from marginalized communities like Dalits, backward classes, and minorities, return to vote in their home constituencies. Requiring them to re-register in their current places of residence or provide extensive documentation within a short timeframe could lead to widespread exclusion. For instance, a voter liv-

Commissioner, Gyanesh Kumar, reportedly proclaiming a "new normal" where the Commission dictates meeting protocols. This departure from past practices, where larger delegations were accommodated, led to accusations of bias and intimidation.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, a seasoned parliamentarian, expressed shock at the ECI's arbitrary rules, arguing that they undermine democratic dialogue. RJD MP Manoj Jha highlighted the targeting of migrant voters, suggesting the SIR could disenfranchise millions.

Glimpses of Countrywide General Strike





A Mute Leader of the Global South when Imperialism Strikes

T K Arun

Old-style imperialism is back, and it is making the point that might is right with the biggest bang possible without exploding an atomic bomb. Which cat got the tongue of India, leader of the Global South, when the US bombed Iran? Why did the tongue of India, leader of the BRICS, turn mute, when the world called on Israel, at the UN, to end its genocide in Gaza? Cat, Cat burning bright, in the forests of Mt Zion and Washington DC, why this appetite for India's respect among nations?

New Delhi had a tough choice, admittedly, in deciding whether to speak up or mumble inanities like "victim, de-escalate!" When the US or Israel goes rogue: India relies on these partners for vital intelligence and ordnance in the face of hostilities from across the border. It looks embarrassingly difficult to criticise, on the one hand, and extend the other for help, when help is needed.

This embarrassment is more apparent than real. Nations do not play nice with other nations, they pursue their self-interest. If the US helps India with intelligence and weapons, and Israel is happy to sell advanced military technology to India, this is not because a warm, fuzzy feeling envelopes the White House or Tel Aviv whenever India crops up in the conversation. It is because India, as authentic India, has its uses.

India enjoys a degree of global respect because

it is a large and growing economy with diverse capabilities, enough strategic heft, or the promise of it, to be the counter vailing force in the region vis-à-vis China, and a reputation for reasonably principled behaviour.

India is the world's most populous nation, with 146 crore people. Its per capita income is barely lower-middle-income, but, in aggregate size, India will soon become the world's fourth

of at least 1 billion dollar.

India has very large and capable armed forces, nuclear-powered submarines that can stay submerged for long and undetected, to provide the country with second-strike capability, making for effective nuclear deterrence.

India is a member of key groupings that control access to strategic capability. It is a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group on chemical weapons and precursor chemicals, and the Wassenaar Arrange-

but whatever it already has makes India a major power in the region. What makes it globally salient is the independent foreign policy it has carefully forged, thanks to Nehru, and pursued since Independence. This makes for strategic autonomy, and the credibility to speak on behalf of other nations of the Global South, acquired through its role as the moving spirit behind the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and other groupings such as BRICS and BASIC.

NAM has five basic principles: respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-in-

forces in East Pakistan, in collaboration with religious fundamentalist elements.

The Responsibility to Protect imposes the obligation on each state to protect its own people from genocide and, when states fail in that duty, deems breach of the offending nation's sovereignty warranted, to enable the global community to discharge that responsibility.

India stands only to gain by standing by those principles at all times. It could attract some hostility from some capitals for some time, but will win India lasting credibility.

Doesn't the fact that Iran's is an oppressive theocratic regime justify such attacks on its sovereignty? The best way to answer that question is to ask how many people would have welcomed an end being brought to Indira Gandhi's Emergency by an attack by Pakistan, China or America? Internal oppressors are easier to tackle than powerful occupying forces.

Regime change through external aggression in volatile regions leads to chaos that radiates outside and engulfs distant shores. We saw that with Iraq and Libya. Regime change through internal resistance is something else, the resistance is ready to take charge.

India should find the self-interest, if not moral courage, to speak out against imperial aggression, and uphold the banner of principled international relations.

[Sanjaya Report]



largest economy. It has a successful space programme, a successful nuclear programme, and these have yielded nuclear weapons and the means of delivering them accurately. It has diversified technological capability, managerial nous and is home to the world's third largest herd of Unicorns, startups with a valuation

ment on dual-use technologies. It has quasi-membership of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group as well.

Of late, and credit for this must go the present government, India has begun to marshal its technological and manufacturing capability to build its own weapons and weapons systems. India can, and ought to, do much more,

interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. And long before the Responsibility to Protect was formally articulated as a principle guiding international conduct, India had both adopted it and balanced it with the principles of NAM, when it acted to stop the genocide by West Pakistani

BOOK REVIEW

Historical Features of Agricultural Workers Movement in India

The book *“Historical Features of the Agricultural Workers Movement in India”* is a pioneering contribution to the literature on rural and labour history in India. It documents, for the first time comprehensively and systematically, the historical trajectory of the agricultural workers’ movement in the country, most notably under the leadership of the Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union (BKMU). This work fills a long-standing vacuum in our understanding of one of the most exploited, invisible, and yet politically significant classes in Indian society: the rural landless labourer.

Authored by two of the movement’s leading figures, *Vijendra Singh Nirmal*, a veteran organiser and leader of BKMU, and *Anil Rajimwale*, a prominent Marxist intellectual and movement historian. This book is a product of both archival research and first-hand political experience. What makes it invaluable is its combination of documentation, ideological clarity, and narrative immediacy.

Structured in seven thematic chapters, the book traces the evolution of the class of landless rural workers from the colonial era, through their struggles for land, wages, dignity, and political recognition. The central thrust of the book is to bring out the historical invisibility and marginalisation of agricultural workers, despite their crucial role in sustaining Indian agriculture and the rural economy. From the pre-independence period to the post-independence neoliberal era, the authors trace the shifts in agrarian relations, class structure, and political mobilisation that shaped the condition and consciousness of rural

labourers.

The book starts with the stark reminder that although agricultural workers form nearly a third of India’s workforce – and a majority in some regions – no dedicated national organisation existed for them until 1968. This changed with the formation of the

repression faced by rural activists. In Bihar, widespread strikes took place in hundreds of villages in the districts of Saran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Munger, Bhagalpur, etc, which resulted in an increase in wages of the agricultural workers. In Andhra Pradesh, the government was scared of the organised agricultural

tributed, giving rise to hundreds of new villages and altering rural power equations.

The authors highlight that these struggles were not merely economic or legal battles but social uprisings against caste-based feudal domination. The



Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union (BKMU), which provided an independent platform for landless labourers, many of whom belong to Dalit and Adivasi communities. The book positions BKMU not only as a trade union but as a transformative political force that made visible the intersection of class, caste, and gender oppression in the countryside.

One of the most impressive aspects of the book is the way it meticulously documents the early struggles and organising experiences of agricultural labourers in colonial and early post-colonial India. The narrative journeys through the peasant revolts of the 1930s in Bihar (Barahiya Tal, Rewra, Majhiawan) and Andhra Pradesh, the armed insurrections in Telangana and Kayyur, the massive rallies and jathas of barefoot workers, and the brutal

workers’ movements, which led to horrible torture and whole villages were turned into military camps. During this period, the slogan was given for a daily wage of 3 rupees and an annual wage of 45 bags. These movements laid the ideological and practical groundwork for a more organised, class-based assertion in the post-independence period.

Of particular note is the documentation of the land occupation movements during the 1960s and 1970s. The BKMU played a decisive role in mobilising landless labourers across states – Bihar, Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and West Bengal – to seize surplus land under land reform legislations that were either poorly implemented or openly sabotaged. In Bihar alone, over 20,000 acres of land were occupied and redis-

presence of Dalits and Adivasis in leadership and the rejection of their traditional subjugation marked a new era of rural politics. The book rightly emphasises that this transformation did not emerge spontaneously. It was the result of years of patient political work, ideological education, and organisation-building by BKMU.

Perhaps the most iconic episode described in the book is the historic March to Parliament on March 20, 1979. Organised by the BKMU during the Janata Party government’s budget session, this event saw lakhs of agricultural workers from across the country marching to Delhi with a 10-point charter of demands – including land distribution, end to bonded labour, implementation of minimum wages, house sites, and employment guarantees.

The scale and discipline of the march, the brutal police repression faced en route, and the eventual political impact it had on the national discourse are all recounted in vivid detail. For the first time, rural labour emerged as a visible force in Indian politics, not just as a voting bloc but as a militant class force with independent political agency. The March also exposed the duplicity of ruling regimes that promised land reform but protected landlords; that spoke of social justice but refused to enact central legislation for rural labourers.

Another vital section of the book details BKMU’s long-standing demand for comprehensive central legislation for agricultural workers. The authors document the bureaucratic delays, political evasions, and policy betrayals that marked this struggle. While the Minimum Wages Act of 1948 was supposed to cover agricultural workers, it remained mostly unimplemented. The authors explain that in the absence of legislation guaranteeing the right to collective bargaining, employment security, and social protection, rural labourers remain vulnerable to wage theft, violence, and eviction.

In this context, the book notes the efforts to model a national legislation on Kerala’s Progressive Agricultural Workers Act of 1975. However, opposition from landlord lobbies, coupled with a lack of political will in the central government, meant that such laws never materialised nationally.

On Page 14

New Age Weekly

“Economy of Genocide” Report Exposes Role of Global Companies in Gaza

LONDON: Francesca Albanese, the United Nations special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in occupied Palestine, stands as a testament to the notion of speaking truth to power. This “power” is not solely embodied by Israel or even the United States, but by an international community whose collective relevance has tragically failed to stem the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

Her latest report, *From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide*, submitted to the UN Human Rights Council on July 3, marks a seismic intervention. It unflinchingly names and implicates companies that have not only allowed Israel to sustain its war and genocide against Palestinians, but also confronts those who have remained silent in the face of this unfolding horror.

Albanese’s “economy of genocide” is far more than an academic exercise or a mere moral statement in a world whose collective conscience is being brutally tested in Gaza. The report is significant for multiple, interlocking reasons. Crucially, it offers practical pathways to accountability that transcend mere diplomatic and legal rhetoric. It also presents a novel approach to international law, positioning it not as a delicate political balancing act, but as a potent tool to confront complicity in war crimes and expose the profound failures of existing international mechanisms in Gaza.

Two vital contexts are important to understand the significance of this re-

port, considered a searing indictment of direct corporate involvement, not only in the ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza, but Israel’s overall settler-colonial project.

First, in February 2020, following years of delay, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) released a database that listed 112 companies involved in business activities within illegal Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine. The database exposes several corporate giants — including Airbnb, Booking.com, Motorola Solutions, JCB and Expedia — for helping Israel maintain its military occupation and apartheid.

This event was particularly earth-shattering, considering the United Nations’ consistent failure at reining in Israel, or holding accountable those who sustain its war crimes in

Palestine. The database was an important step that allowed civil societies to mobilise around a specific set of priorities, thus pressuring corporations and individual governments to take morally guided positions.

The effectiveness of that strategy was clearly detected through the exaggerated and angry reactions of the US and Israel. The US said it was an attempt by “the discredited” council “to fuel economic retaliation,” while Israel called it a “shameful capitulation” to pressure.

The Israeli genocide in Gaza, starting on October 7, 2023, however, served as a stark reminder of the utter

Ramzy Baroud

failure of all existing UN mechanisms to achieve even the most modest same conclusion offered by UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres, who, in September 2024, stated that the world had “failed the people of Gaza.”

This failure continued for many more months and was highlighted in the UN’s inability to even manage the aid distribution in the Strip,

time appealing to the whole of humanity to take a moral stance and to confront those who made the genocide possible. “Commercial endeavours enabling and profiting from the obliteration of innocent people’s lives must cease,” the report declares, pointedly demanding that “corporate entities must refuse to be complicit in human rights violations and international crimes or be held to account.”



entrusting the job to the so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, a mercenary-run violent apparatus that has killed and wounded thousands of Palestinians.

Albanese herself, of course, had already reached a similar conclusion when, in November 2023, she confronted the international community for “epically failing” to stop the war and to end the “senseless slaughtering of innocent civilians.”

Albanese’s new report goes a step further, this

time appealing to the whole of humanity to take a moral stance and to confront those who made the genocide possible. “Commercial endeavours enabling and profiting from the obliteration of innocent people’s lives must cease,” the report declares, pointedly demanding that “corporate entities must refuse to be complicit in human rights violations and international crimes or be held to account.”

According to the report, categories of complicity in the genocide are divided into arms manufacturers, tech firms, building and construction companies, extractive and service industries, banks, pension funds, insurers, universities and charities. These include Lockheed Martin, Microsoft, Amazon, Palantir, IBM and even Danish shipping giant Maersk, among nearly 1,000 other firms. It was their collective techno-

logical know-how, machinery and data collection that allowed Israel to kill, to date, over 57,000 and wound over 134,000 in Gaza, let alone maintain the apartheid regime in the West Bank.

What Albanese’s report tries to do is not merely name and shame Israel’s genocide partners but to tell us, as civil society, that we now have a comprehensive frame of reference that would allow us to make responsible decisions, put pressure on, and hold accountable these corporate giants.

“The ongoing genocide has been a profitable venture,” Albanese writes, citing Israel’s massive surge in military spending, estimated at 65 per cent from 2023 to 2024 — reaching \$46.5 billion.

Israel’s seemingly infinite military budget is a strange loop of money, originally provided by the US government, then recycled back through US corporations, thus spreading the wealth between governments, politicians, corporations, and numerous contractors. As bank accounts swell, more Palestinian bodies are piled up in morgues, mass graves, or are scattered in the streets of Jabaliya and Khan Yunis.

This madness needs to stop, and, since the UN is incapable of stopping it, then individual governments, civil society organisations, and ordinary people must do the job, because the lives of Palestinians should be of far greater value than corporate profits and greed.

Courtesy: Morning Star

The Iran-Israel War

High-Stake Strikes and the Fragile Path to Peace



*Diary of
International
Events*

C. Adhikesavan

On June 13, 2025, at 3 AM, over 200 Israeli fighter jets launched a pre-dawn assault on Iran, targeting over 100 nuclear, military, and infrastructure sites in a coordinated operation dubbed "Operation Rising Lion." This 12-day conflict, marked by intense airstrikes, assassinations, and geopolitical maneuvering, has been described as one of the strangest wars in recent history, with leaders from Israel, Iran, and the United States each claiming victory. The war raised critical questions: What triggered this sudden escalation? Did Iran possess nuclear weapons? And did the conflict destroy or accelerate Iran's nuclear ambitions?

The Israeli assault began without apparent provocation from Iran, a nation with which Israel has had tense relations for decades. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu justified the attack as an act of "self-defense," citing suspicions that Iran was close to developing nuclear weapons. A leaked International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report from May 31, 2025, revealed Iran possessed approximately 400 kg of 60% enriched uranium—enough, in theory, to produce 10 nuclear weapons. However, the IAEA and its chief, Rafael Grossi, maintained that there was no evidence of an active, systematic nuclear weapons program in Iran, a stance echoed by a March 2025 testimony from U.S. Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard.

Despite these assurances, Israel targeted key figures in Iran's nuclear and military establishment, including nuclear scientists Mohammad Mehdi Tehrani and Fereydoon Abbasi, and high-ranking officials like Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, and Hossein Salami, Commander-in-Chief of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The strikes killed 80 people, including civilians, and injured 320.

Iran responded on the same night with dozens of missiles and drones targeting Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Most were intercepted, but some struck their targets, causing limited damage. Over the next few days, both nations engaged in tit-for-tat strikes, resulting in loss of life and infrastructure damage on both sides.

On June 19, U.S. President Donald Trump issued a two-week ultimatum for Iran to reach a nuclear deal, threatening military action. Two days later, on June 21, 125 U.S. planes, including B-2 Stealth Bombers, targeted Iran's key nuclear facilities at Fordo, Natanz, and Isfahan. These sites, some buried deep underground, were hit with GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator bombs, designed to penetrate fortified bunkers. A Tomahawk missile, launched from a U.S. submarine, also struck the Isfahan facility. Trump declared the mission a "spectacular military success," claiming Iran's nuclear program was "completely obliterated."



Iran retaliated on June 23, targeting the U.S. Al Udeid airbase in Qatar with 19 missiles, though only one hit, causing minimal damage. Iran had issued an advance warning to Qatar and the U.S., allowing the U.S. to evacuate most aircraft, suggesting Iran's intent was more symbolic than destructive.

On June 24, Trump announced a "complete and total" ceasefire, abruptly halting the conflict. Both sides continued minor strikes post-ceasefire, with Iran firing two ballistic missiles and Israel destroying a radar station near Tehran. Trump expressed frustration with Israel's post-ceasefire actions but facilitated a phone call with Netanyahu, after which Israeli jets reportedly made a symbolic "friendly wave" toward Iran, marking the end of hostilities.

The war's timing and motivations have sparked speculation. In Israel, Netanyahu faced ongoing corruption trials, with cross-examinations beginning on June 3, 2025. His repeated use of

"I don't remember" 1,778 times in court, coupled with a December 2024 law granting parliamentary immunity, fueled accusations that he prolonged conflicts, including the Gaza war, to avoid prosecution. A former IDF General, Israel Ziv, and 55% of Israelis in a Channel 12 survey believed Netanyahu extended wars to maintain power. The Times of Israel reported on June 3 that Netanyahu's strategy was to keep conflicts ongoing to delay his trials.

Trump's involvement also raised questions. After canceling the 2015 Iran nuclear deal in 2018, which had limited Iran's uranium enrichment to 3.67% and allowed

IAEA inspections, Trump's administration cited vague reasons for the withdrawal, with some analysts pointing to his desire to undo Obama's legacy. The cancellation led to renewed sanctions, restricted IAEA access, and Iran's accumulation of enriched uranium, which was later used to justify the 2025 attacks. Trump portrayed himself as a peacemaker, claiming credit for stopping the war and referencing his alleged role in halting an India-Pakistan conflict, even mentioning the Nobel Peace Prize six times in a single post.

Despite Trump's claims of "total obliteration," a Pentagon Defense Intelligence Agency assessment indicated that the strikes primarily damaged above-ground structures at Iran's nuclear sites. Core components, including centrifuges and enriched uranium, were largely unscathed, as Iran had reportedly removed its uranium stockpiles before the attacks. The war likely delayed Iran's nuclear program by only a few

months.

Analysts, including Washington's Arms Control Association, argue that military strikes may strengthen Iran's resolve to pursue nuclear weapons as a deterrent, drawing parallels to North Korea, which has avoided attacks due to its nuclear arsenal. Iran's official stance, backed by a 2003 fatwa from Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, insists its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, though the 2025 attacks have intensified calls within Iran for a nuclear deterrent.

The 12-day war highlighted the fragility of Middle Eastern stability and the risks of unilateral military actions based on unverified suspicions. The 2003 Iraq invasion, justified by false claims of weapons of mass destruction, serves as a historical parallel. The cancellation of the 2015 nuclear deal, which had successfully curbed Iran's nuclear ambitions, set the stage for this conflict. A new nuclear deal, similar to the 2015 agreement, could prevent future escalations, but Trump's willingness to pursue diplomacy remains uncertain, especially after criticism from supporters like Tucker Carlson for involving the U.S. in the war.

The Iran-Israel war of June 2025, or Operation Rising Lion, was a complex interplay of military strategy, political survival, and geopolitical posturing. While Israel and the U.S. claimed to have crippled Iran's nuclear capabilities, evidence suggests the damage was limited, potentially accelerating Iran's nuclear ambitions. The ceasefire, brokered through U.S. and Qatari mediation, ended the immediate conflict but left unresolved tensions and domestic pressures, particularly for Netanyahu and Trump. As the world watches, the path to lasting peace may lie in diplomatic solutions, such as a revived nuclear deal, rather than military confrontations fuelled by suspicion and political expediency.

Historical Features of Agri Workers...

From Page 11

The book also focuses on the atrocities faced by Dalit agricultural workers, especially in Bihar. Massacres in Belchi, Arwal, and other places are recounted not just as episodes of violence but as deliberate acts of class suppression by landlord militias like the Ranvir Sena, Bhoomi Sena, and others. These private armies operated with impunity, often aided by police and political cover. The BKMU responded with massive protests, conventions, and legal interventions. The 1986 state-level convention in Patna is a landmark in this regard, where poets, intellectuals, and political activists united to chal-

lenge caste and class terror.

The book makes clear that for BKMU, the fight against economic exploitation cannot be separated from the struggle against caste oppression. The union's insistence on linking land reform with social dignity and legal protection for Dalits marks its ideological depth.

This work does recognize the role of women and Adivasis in the movement. Women agricultural workers, despite being the majority in many states, are the most exploited in terms of wages, health, and social security. The BKMU's campaigns for maternity benefits, crèche facilities, equal wages, and protec-

tion from violence are referenced, although more statistical and analytical depth on gender dynamics would have added to the book's richness.

The participation of Adivasi workers in the March to Parliament, and their involvement in land struggles, is well documented. The authors rightly argue that the unity forged among landless Dalits, Adivasis, and backward caste labourers gave the movement its mass character and political edge.

The book also briefly touches on BKMU's role in international platforms and its solidarity with global workers' movements. This includes interactions

with agricultural unions in Cuba, Vietnam, and other socialist countries. The authors maintain a firm ideological stance against neoliberalism, corporate land grabs, and imperialist control of agrarian policy. The commitment to Marxist-Leninist ideology is palpable throughout the text. This is not a dry academic history but a living political document meant to educate, inspire, and mobilise. The authors frequently quote from resolutions, speeches, and reports to ground their narrative in movement realities.

While the book succeeds admirably in its objectives, it may have included a union structure. The book may have included photographs.

Overall, the 'Historical Features of Agricultural Workers Movement in India' is a landmark publication. It is not only a chronicle of the BKMU but also a people's history of modern India seen from below – from the villages, from the fields, from the mud paths trodden by barefoot marchers for land, dignity, and rights. It is a tribute to the sacrifices of thousands of unsung labourers, and a call to action for trade unionists, students, researchers, and political activists.

At a time when the rural labour movement faces both old enemies, feudalism, casteism and new threats such as corporatisation, land grabs, and climate disasters, this book offers a much-needed historical grounding and ideological compass.

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CPI NC Resolutions

NE and NC Meeting from July 1 to 3, 2025 at Ajoy Bhawan, New Delhi:

Resolution in support of the 9th July - Nationwide General Strike called by the Central Trade Unions

The National Council of CPI extends its support to the call of the platform of Central Trade Unions and Independent Sectoral Federations and Associations to organise Nationwide General Strike on 9th July 2025.

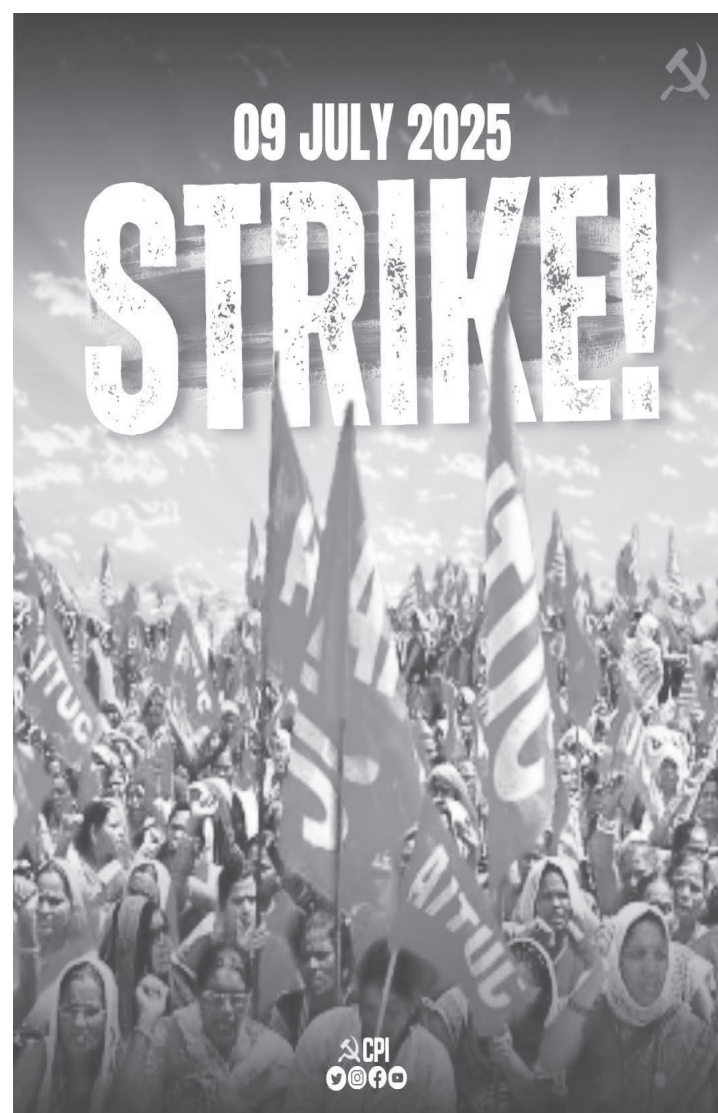
This strike call is in opposition to the anti-worker, anti-farmer and anti-national pro-corporate policies of the Government. The trade unions have been fighting against the privatisation of Public Sector enterprises and public services, the policies of outsourcing, contractorisation and casualisation of workforce, against the anti workers, pro-employer four labour codes meant to suppress and cripple the trade union movement, increase in working hours, to snatch their right to collective bargaining, right to

strike, decriminalization of violation of labour laws by employers, while criminalising the activities of trade unions etc.

The trade unions are demanding to address unemployment, recruitments in the sanctioned posts, creation of more jobs, increase in days and remuneration of MGNREGA workers and similar act for Urban areas.

The national council notes that the Samyukta Kisan Morcha and joint front of the agricultural workers unions have extended support to this strike action and decided to make massive mobilisations in rural India for their demands and in support of trade union demands

The national council of CPI stands by the demands of trade unions, farmers and agricultural workers and calls upon its rank and file to participate in the actions for the success of the nationwide strike action on 9th July in the national interest.



On Record ...

After a 15-day summer break, as schools reopened in Kashmir, students and parents have expressed concerns about the government's decision to start classes earlier in the morning and implement a hybrid mode of education due to the heatwave.

The J&K government decided not to extend summer holidays since the weatherman predicted a drop in temperature. However, the government instructed that schools should open at 7:30 am in urban areas and at 8 am in rural areas. Additionally, schools were directed to shift to online classes in the afternoon.

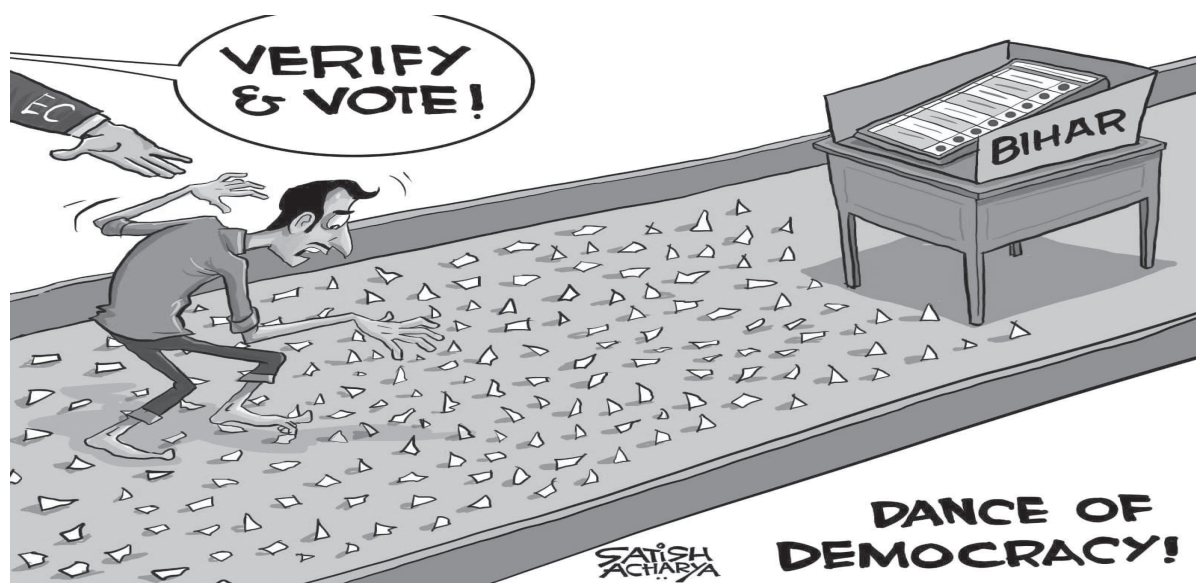
Although parents welcomed the government's decision to reopen schools, they were not as enthused by the timing. – *The Indian Express*, July 8.

Tensions rose as the Assam government carried out one of its largest evictions to date, displacing around 1,400 families from 3,500 bighas (over 450 hectares) of land in Dhubri district to make way for a proposed thermal power project.

The eviction drive, carried out across three revenue villages of Charuabakhra, Santoshpur and Chirakuta Pt. 1, started on Tuesday morning. Violence flared around midday when residents began

pelting stones and bricks at a bulldozer, prompting police to resort to lathi charge to disperse them. According to officials, two pieces of equipment were damaged. – *The Indian Express*, July 8.

The Elon Musk-owned X has said the Indian government had on July 3 ordered it to block as many as 2,355 accounts, includ-



ing those belonging to international news agency Reuters.

The directive, issued under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, had demanded immediate compliance within one hour and did not provide any justification, the company said in a statement. – *The Telegraph*, July 8.

The West Bengal government has extended by two weeks the last date for filing of applications through the centralised

portal for admission to colleges that are run and aided by it. This is a decision that many in the teaching community see as an indication that the number of students seeking to pursue higher education in the State might be dropping. On June 12, the State government had set July 1 as the late date for filing of applications for undergraduate courses but now the same

has been extended to July 15. No reason was given in the circular for the extension, though Education Minister Bratya Basu, in a recent post, said the decision was taken on the instruction of the Chief Minister for the convenience of students. According to him, as many as 3.2 lakh students had registered in the portal so far, a figure that, according to many teachers, is not impressive, if not low. – *The Hindu*, July 3.

– *Compiled by C. Adhikesavan*

Change Government, Save Bihar: CPI



"Congratulations to the people of Bihar for making Bihar Bandh a success" said general secretary of the Communist Party of India D Raja. He had joined the Bihar Bandh organized on July 9 against the anti-labor policies of the Modi government and against the vote ban on July 9 in Patna along with the leaders of the Grand Alliance.

The march was taken out from Income Tax Golambar to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer in Patna. Apart from the CPI general secretary D Raja as well as CPI (M) general secretary M A Baby, among other leaders were leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, leader of Opposition in Bihar Assembly Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, CPI (ML) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, VIP Convenor Mukesh Sahni, CPI State Secretary Ramnaresh Pandey, CPI (M) State Secretary Lalan Chaudhary and other leaders.

Addressing the gathering organized on this occasion, the CPI General Secretary said that the Modi government has decided to abolish 44 labor laws established for de-

cades and make 4 labor codes, which is a blow to the rights of workers. A general strike was organized across the country demanding its withdrawal.

The BJP-led government is aggressively pushing its neoliberal agenda, the central component of which is the labor codes. It is moving aggressively towards the privatization of important national resources, especially strategic sectors like defense and communications.

He said that the NDA government is also trying to suppress all opposition to these anti-labor policies. But that is not all. It is also promoting communalism.

CPI general secretary pointed out that our party's slogan is change

the government, save Bihar. He appealed to the workers of the Grand Alliance involved in the Bihar Bandh and said, remove Nitish government and form the Tejashwi government. If Tejashwi Yadav's government is formed, the problems of unemployment will be solved.

D Raja said that the Election Commission of India should conduct the Bihar Assembly elections on the basis of the voters' list prepared for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. New names should be added

only for those who have completed 18 years of age. Because the Election Commission's proposal to prepare a completely new voters' list within a short period of one or two months is impractical and will deprive a large number of eligible voters. At the behest of the Modi government, the Election Commission of India has been conspiratorially taking Hitlerian action to remove the names of migrant laborers, poor and general voters of Bihar from the voter list.

Ahead of the 2025 Bihar Assembly elections, a dangerous and undemocratic attempt has been taken to erase the names of the poor, Dalits, marginalized people, migrant laborers and minorities from the voters' list. Special intensive revision means vote ban. We will not accept this. Bihar stands to save democracy. The Communist Party of India and the parties involved in the Grand Alliance oppose this.

State Secretary of the Communist Party of India, Ramnaresh Pandey congratulated the people of Bihar for making the Bihar

Bandh a success. He said that the Bihar Bandh against the dictatorship of the Central and state government has been completely successful. Lakhs of people participated in the bandh. It has been decided through this historic bandh that Nitish Government is being ousted from power in Bihar and a people friendly Grand Alliance government will be formed.

Bihar state secretary of the CPI Ram Naresh Pandey was at the lead of the group walking in the front along with leaders. There were also activists from the CPI and journalists from Janshakti reaching Income Tax roundabout through different routes and gathered on the road. After this, a march was carried out from Income Tax roundabout to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer. Hundreds of leaders including CPI State Secretariat members Rambabu Kumar, State Secretary Forum member Sanjay Kumar, Patna District Secretary Vishwajeet Kumar took part in the march.

