



MIL Update

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Sankalp Sabha in Gaya

A massive Sankalp Sabha (Pledge-taking meeting) took place at Azad Park in Gaya on 4 February to protest Manpur firing in which two Party comrades were killed. Addressing the meeting Party Gen. Secy. Com. Dipankar Bhattacharya asserted that "police bullets could never suppress the voice of democracy". The meeting was also addressed by State Party Secy. Com. Ramjatan Sharma, Convenor of BPKS Com. Rajaram Singh, RYA president Mithilesh Yadav and Com. Arvind and Niranjana of Gaya District Committee. Before the meeting Com. Dipankar went to Suraj Pokhra village to meet the bereaved families and also to the hospital to meet the injured persons. The speakers demanded punishment to the DM, DSP and BDO, officials guilty of opening fire and killing two persons.

In Memory of Martyrs

Com. Nagendra Kushwaha, member of Party's Mariwa Block Committee, Comrades Ashwini Kushwaha (25), Hosil Ram (23), Ashok Yadav (28), Parashuram Ram (24), Kamlesh Sharma (25), Shankar Ram (23) and Batti Karmkar (28), all Party activists, were killed on 2 February by Satish Pandey-Suresh Chaudhry gang in Siwan. Com. Jaipal Singh Yadav, Party and RYA activist was killed by PWG criminals on 3 February at Dulhin Bazar in Patna. While condoling the death of these martyrs, Party shares the feeling with local comrades as well as bereaved families and vows to avenge their killing and fulfil their unfinished task.

Gujarat Earthquake: Lessons and Posers

How many lives have been claimed by the killer quake in Gujarat? How many children have been orphaned? How many people have been rendered disabled? And how many have been left homeless and jobless? Figures and estimates seemed to have lost all meaning in the immediate aftermath of the colossal tragedy. But as the enormity of the tragedy gradually sinks in, the country will have to find answers to all the embarrassing and disconcerting questions the quake has left in its trail.

Bhuj and surrounding areas were of course known to constitute one of the most quake-prone regions of the country. But while the young science of seismology can tell us a lot about the quake-prone areas, it cannot as yet predict the moment and theatre of the next quake. Nobody will therefore argue that the tragedy in Gujarat was entirely avoidable. The world is yet to see any successful case of anticipatory evacuation of people from a quake-hit region. But if we look at the pattern of rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations in Gujarat we cannot miss to see the unpardonable mess the rulers have landed us in. Instead of minimising the impact of a natural calamity, we always end up amplifying it many times over. Gujarat has been no exception.

The brutal fact is that we still do not have anything like a disaster management policy. Our rulers have not bothered to learn anything from the repeated disasters the country has had to face in recent years. No lesson has been learnt from either the quake in Latur in Maharashtra or the more recent supercyclone in Orissa. We claim to be an adult republic aspiring for the status of a nuclear weapons state. The World Bank and IMF are also fond of characterising India as a budding economic giant in Asia. But the quake in Gujarat has exposed the real state of affairs. The sordid capitalist anarchy thriving in the absence of any kind of urban planning, the utter inefficiency of a thoroughly bureaucratised administration, the absolute insensitivity of the state especially towards the poor and ordinary citizen - all these maladies of modern India have been so abundantly evident in Gujarat.

We have seen it all. How rescue and relief operations have been thrown out of gear to make arrangements for VVIP visits. How precious moments have been lost and expert rescue teams and medical missions have been subjected to bureaucratic hurdles and harassment. How the government has been trying to cash in on the tragedy to subject the country into an emotional and economic blackmail of accepting a 'harsh budget' and disastrous policies.

We have also seen inspiring signs of patriotism, people's solidarity and regional friendship. We have seen the treasure of human warmth and fellow-feeling among the most deprived and exploited sections of our society. We have seen planeloads of blankets and other relief materials arrive from Pakistan. We have seen 'secessionist' JKLF leaders donate blood for the quake victims.

As Gujarat buries and burns its dead, let us not forget the tremors. Let us not forget the questions we have inherited from the victims of Bhuj and Anjar. Let us not wait for another calamity.

CPI(ML) Team to Bhuj

CPI(ML) has sent a central relief team led by Com. Ranjan Ganguli to the quake affected district of Bhuj on 31 January. The team comprised of around 20 AISA activists from Delhi University and JNU. In Bhuj they joined the Red Cross team in their relief operation.

Initiatives for Relief

As a mark of deep sympathy toward quake victims and in response to the CC call, Bihar State Committee suspended the state level Khet Mazdoor Sabha convention earlier slated to be held on 12 February and initiated a campaign for collecting relief from 29 Jan. to 4 Feb. In almost all districts of the state Party ranks enthusiastically took part in the campaign and Party leaders including Com. Ramjatan Sharma, State Secy. and CC member KD Yadav personally took part in collection of relief that has till now crossed Rs.50,000. The money will be handed over to Red Cross Society.

In U.P., CPI(ML), Jan Sanskriti Manch, AISA and RYA conducted a relief campaign in Lucknow, Varanasi and Allahabad and collected Rs.11,000 in the first phase. The money is being deposited with Red Cross relief fund. Party units and mass organisations have taken up Party's call to stand by Gujarat quake victims quite enthusiastically. Intellectuals and cultural activists also participated in the Party campaign in Lucknow on 1 Feb.

In Mansa district of Punjab, a joint appeal was brought out by AIPWA, RYA and Youth Action Front asking people to contribute for quake-relief.

In Delhi, campaign teams have collected more than Rs. 10,000 by now.

Police SHO Bows Down

UP Police is notoriously known for its violation of human rights, and now Rajnath Singh is there to boost their morale. Therefore, when the local Party unit of Kiratpur in Bijnor district of UP declared to stage a demonstration against the SHO who did not enter complaints without a bribe, and the statement got published in the newspaper, the SHO called the district CPI(ML) Incharge Com. Shamshad Hussain on 24 January and threatened to kill him. Party and RYA made an issue of this threatening by taking it to the people. Ultimately the SHO had to publicly apologise for issuing the threat.

Political Convention on Autonomous State and Other Autonomy Demands in Assam

A political convention on "Inevitability of Autonomous State and other Tribal Autonomy in the present political context of Assam" was held on 2 Feb. at Pandit Tirthnath Sarma Conference Hall in Guwahati under the auspices of CPI(ML) Hill District Party Committee (HDPC) and Autonomus State Demand Committee (ASDC). Com. Hemsing Tisso, Gen. Secy. of ASDC presided over the convention attended by representatives of different tribal organisations of Assam viz. Tribal Students Federation (TSF), All Assam Tribal Sangha (AATS), Mising Memag Kebang (MMK), All Tiwa Students Union (ATSU), Tiwa Cultural Society (TCS), Autonomy Demand Struggling Forum (ADSF), Sonowal Kachari Autonomy Demand Committee (SKADC), etc.

Presenting the approach paper of the convention, Com. Salawar Bey, Secy. of Karbi Anglong Party Committee (KAPC) of CPI(ML), said that creation of Karbi Anglong-NC Hills Autonomous State and inclusion of the Mising, Rabha and Tiwa Autonomous Councils into the 6th Schedule of the Constitution after demarcation of their boundaries has become inevitable for development and political transformation of Assam.

Main speaker Com. Swadesh Bhattacharya, Party Polit Bureau member said that the question of autonomy is basically a question of democracy. Opposed to it, the Indian state is hatching a conspiracy to confine all popular democratic struggles into "disturbed areas". Condemning the recent killings of innocent people in Karbi Anglong, he said that Cong(I) has built up a nexus with extremists. Tribal autonomy movement of Tripura was a victim of such conspiracy. He appealed to all to defeat a similar conspiracy in Karbi Anglong and NC Hills. Com. Ranaj Pegu, GS of MMK said that tribal forces of Assam along with other democratic forces must force inclusion of tribal autonomy issues into main political agenda of the state. Com. Rubul Sarma, Party State Secy. said that tribal autonomy struggles must get united with broader democratic struggles, especially with working class people, otherwise the ruling class parties will utilise the situation to divide the people and crush the movement. He also appealed to unite against globalisation and communal fascism. Com. Milon Sonowal, Coordinator of TSF, Com. Aditya Khakhlari, Gen.Secy. of AATS, Com. Rimol Amsih of ADSF and Com. Pronob Jyoti Mosrong, Secy. of ATSU also addressed the convention. The convention adopted several resolutions including the demand for creation of autonomous state, extension of 6th schedule to Mising, Rabha, Tiwa areas and solution of Bodo and other tribal problems through negotiation.

Bagdigi Coal Mine Mishap Points to Criminal Negligence of Management : Investigation Team

Coal industry in India witnessed one of its most tragic mishaps on 2 February when 41 employees including 39 workers, a manager and an assistant colliery manager got trapped in the waterlogging in Bagdigi Colliery of BCCL in Dhanbad district. A fact-finding team led by Com. Upendra Singh, Gen. Secy. of Coal Mines Workers Union (CMWU) and member of Jharkhand SC visited Bagdigi on 3 Feb. The findings suggest that the mishap was a result of criminal negligence of the management in collusion with so-called Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS). The mine adjacent to Bagdigi Colliery was waterlogged and the statutory barrier between two mines was not properly maintained. Though the seepage of water was witnessed and reported by the concerned workers to the management a week before the mishap, neither the management nor DGMS took this seriously. Ultimately on the tragic day, under the impact of a small blasting the thin barrier broke down and water logged in the adjacent mine (Jayrampur) flooded Bagdigi mine's working section and the entire workforce of the shift was marooned. The findings also revealed utter negligence displayed by the management as well as by both the state and central govts. in controlling the situation and in rescue operations, even after 24 hours.

CPI(ML) and AICCTU have demanded judicial enquiry into the incident, booking BCCL officials in criminal cases, and confiscation of their property, resorting to multi-cornered initiatives in rescue operations. It was decided to launch a protest campaign on 6 February in all subsidiaries of CIL. Statement of top officials blaming coal strike for the mishap was also condemned.

Agitation Against Killing of A Jute Worker

Workers of Baranagar Jute Mill in North 24 Paraganas burst with anger when a management staff killed a worker with his personal revolver as the casual workers were demanding job. This is the first time that a management staff is found carrying revolver in the factory and using it to suppress the workers' movement. In spontaneous retaliation two of the management staff were killed by the workers on the spot. State Govt. and the leadership of official central unions, including the Left-led unions, expressed their anxiety over the fact that a management staff was killed by workers, but they did not emphasise the fact that first a worker was killed without provocation. AICCTU in its press release severely condemned the killing of the worker and blamed the state govt. for its connivance with the jute owners, without which the owners would not have been so offensive as to loot the industry and kill the workers at will.

AICCTU sent an investigation team to Baranagar Jute Mill and organised a demonstration before the office of Labour Commissioner in Calcutta.

Dharna by AIPWA and AISA against Rape

Protesting against the incident of rape of a Rajasthani woman at Kumbha Nagar in Allahabad and demanding arrest of criminals, AIPWA and AISA staged a dharna before the residence of Commissioner at Allahabad on 3 February and submitted a memorandum through ADM (city). The dharna was addressed by Chittaranjan Singh, state convenor of the newly formed People's Union for Human Rights (PUHR), Ranjana Kakkar, ex-president of Allahabad University Teachers Association, Reader Kalpana Dwivedi, Lecturer Suryanarayan, Party State Committee member Com. Pranay Krishna, Dr. Nisha Srivastava, Dr. Rajul Mathur, Dr. Anita Gopesh, ex-President of Allahabad University Students Union KK Roy, Shahnaaj of Mahila Samakhya, Anshu Malviya, Allahabad Party District Secy. Com. Radheshyam Yadav, Arvind Kumar and Om Prakash of AISA and others. It was conducted by Ajit Singh Yadav, state secretary of AISA.

Mazdoor Ekta Manch Founded in Patna

The foundation conference of Mazdoor Ekta Manch took place at United P&T Recreation Club Hall in Patna on 28 January. Around 170 worker activists participated as delegates representing railways, P&T, telecom, bank and insurance and govt. employees. Trade union leaders from Bhagalpur, Munger, Gaya, Arrah, Begusarai and Dhanbad had also come to attend it. The day-long conference was inaugurated by veteran trade unionist Com. RAP Singh, ex-General Secretary of All-India Postal Employees Union, Class-III, who exposed in details various evil impacts of economic reform programme on government departments. A 17-member committee of Manch was elected. Md. Yusuf, president of Bihar Circle of Federation of National Telecom Organisations was elected its convenor.

Convention Against Privatisation and Downsizing in Calcutta

"Workers Solidarity Forum", a Calcutta-based organisation was formed in a convention against privatisation and downsizing on 24 January held at CTC auditorium. The convention was attended by the workers and employees from organised sectors like bank, rail, defence, power, GIC, govt. employees, etc. An approach paper was placed by Com. Debojoyti Mazumdar of bank sector and Com. Sujit Ghosh described the objective and need of this convention. Speakers from different sectors supported the ideas expressed in approach paper. The "Forum" was formed as a loose body with 21 workers and employees with Com. N.N. Banerjee, one of senior the T.U. leaders of S.E.Rly, as convenor and five more workers and employees as co-convenors.

The newly formed "Forum" will not be a trade union or its alternative. It decided to launch an ideological campaign against globalisation and liberalisation. It will also organise solidarity movement against every attack of capital. Important T.U. leaders like Com. Golak Ghosh of defence accounts, Com. Shankarshan Roychoudhury of bank, Com Chintamony Sau of State Govt. employees were also present in the convention.

Statewide Protest Day Observed Against Massacre in Siwan

Eight party activists including Com. Nagendra Kushwaha were killed in Jagdishpur village of Nautan PS in Siwan district of Bihar on 2 February, when Satish Pandey-Suresh Chaudhry gang attacked the dalit tola where a meeting of agrarian labourers was in progress. The attackers set several houses on fire, kidnapped a boy named Gautam from the venue of the meeting and murdered another villager.

Immediately after receiving the news Com. Akhilesh, Secy. of Siwan District Committee and Com. Satyadev Ram, MLA reached the spot. Com. Nand Kishor Prasad, PB member, Com. Ramjatan Sharma, State Secy., Com. Vimallesh, State Secretariat member too reached there. They accused DM and SP of Siwan for shielding the criminals and demanded their suspension and said that this was an attempt to terrorise CPI(ML) supporter poor and toiling people right before the Panchayat elections in the state and demanded resignation from the chief minister on moral ground.

Against the massacre, Protest Day was observed throughout Bihar on 3 February. Complete Bandh was observed in Siwan. A protest march led by Com. KD Yadav, CC member was taken out in Patna. Similar marches were taken out in other cities.

A massive protest meeting will be held at Mairwa in Siwan on 7 February, which will be addressed by Party General Secretary Com. Dipankar Bhattacharya.

While returning from such a protest meeting at Dulhin Bazar, Com. Jaipal Singh Yadav, Party and RYA activist, was killed by PWG criminals. A street corner meeting was organised at Dulhin Bazar on 3 Feb. in protest against this killing.

NPMO Meet in Delhi

A meeting of National Platform of Mass Organisations was held in Delhi on 5 February in which Com. Swapan Mukherjee, Kumudini Pati and Ardhendu participated. The meeting passed resolutions expressing shock on Gujarat earthquake and Bagdigi coalmine mishap and condemning Torpa firing incident. It also criticised 2% tax proposal by the PM. It decided to hold a national convention against saffron onslaughts through reform policies on 19 February in Delhi.

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100,000 in Berlin Honour Memory of Communist Heroes

Some 100,000 people walked to the memorial in Friedrichsfelde Cemetery in Berlin on Jan. 15 to pay respects to two martyred communist leaders, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.

The two were murdered by the German Free Korps on Jan. 15, 1919, just days after the communist party they founded took responsibility for the Berlin workers' abortive attempt to seize power earlier that January.

The two revolutionaries are famous and beloved for their courageous opposition to Germany's role in World War I. At a time when the majority of the Social Democratic Party leadership was betraying their promises to fight against their country's role in that murderous war, Liebknecht was the only member of the party in the German Bundestag (Parliament) to vote against war credits.

Luxemburg was the only woman at the time who was a top ideological leader of a major party, and had influence in the struggles within the worldwide communist movement.

The Luxemburg-Liebknecht demonstration takes place each year, gathering pro-revolutionary forces from all over Germany into Berlin. Earlier when the German Democratic Republic existed, the govt. supported and encouraged the demonstration. But now, when there is single, imperialist-ruled Germany, the demonstration is a measure of the mood of the left and the potential for struggle. This year, around 10,000 came under a coalition of left, revolutionary working-class and anarchist forces, including Turkish and Kurdish revolutionary organizations. The other 90,000 people, most of them from the former GDR, were called out by the Party for Democratic Socialism, the only pro-socialist party in the German Bundestag.

Solidarity Message by CPB

We are deeply shocked on receiving the tragic news of innumerable deaths and injury and devastation due to the earthquake in Gujarat and other places in India. We express our deep condolences to you and through you to the bereaved families. We ardently hope that your Party around with the Indian people will unitedly overcome the aftermath of this natural catastrophe.

Comradely yours,

Manzurul Ahsan Khan, President

Mujahidul Islam Selim, General Secretary

Central Committee, Communist Party of Bangladesh

Successful Jharkhand Bandh on 5 Feb.

Babulal Marandi is trying to fulfil Advani's dream of 'hard state' by making the newly formed Jharkhand a trigger-happy 'police state'. This was evident by the unprovoked police firing at Tapkara under Torpa block of Ranchi district on 2 Feb. that took at least 10 innocent tribal people's lives.

This govt began its journey with brutal lathicharge on tribal students protesting against growing saffron attacks on Christians, then firing on Eid day in Ranchi town taking toll of four Muslim youth, followed by calculated police repression on minorities. Then police killed a poor dhobi, Jayram Rajak in Bokaro Steel City on 22 Jan. Only because of the workers resistance led by CPI(ML) the administration could not dispose off the dead body and had to suspend three police officials and institute cases under Sec.304 IPC against them.

Tapkara has been hotbed of Koel-Karo movement waged by local tribal people for the last 30 years against the proposed hydel project that would result in largescale displacement of population. As Marandi govt. showed eagerness to implement the project, the movement gained a new momentum. After Torpa block the entire area was barricaded by the tribal people to resist the possible penetration of project officials. Without entering into any discussion with the leaders of the movement, the police launched a campaign to break the barricade and the activists who dared to protest received brutal beating. The next day thousands of tribal people got mobilised to gherao the local police outpost to protest police atrocity. Instead of going for a dialogue, police suddenly opened fire.

On 3 February, a CPI(ML) investigation team led by Com. Mahendra Singh, MLA and Subhendu Sen, Jharkhand Party Secy. rushed to the spot and found that the police firing was completely unprovoked, policemen had themselves set fire to their vehicles after the carnage to justify their act. The number of victims may be more. Criminal negligence of people's interests and total absence of any mechanism of reconciliation through dialogue are basic reasons behind the incident.

Basing on these findings, Party in cooperation with JMM, CPI and Forward Bloc, issued a call for Jharkhand Bandh on 5 Feb., demanding resignation of Babulal Marandi from chief ministership and institution of judicial enquiry, punishment to erring police officials and compensation to victims.

The Bandh drew spontaneous response from every section of people. Success of another bandh within just two and a half months is indicator of fast erosion of credibility of Babulal Marandi's saffron rule. The Party will spare no means to turn the forthcoming Ramgarh by-election into his Waterloo!

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