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Organ of the
Central Committee CPI(ML)

NEW DEMOCRACY

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CPI(ML) New Democracy Statement

Oppose Russian Aggression against Ukraine !

Down with Imperialist Military Alliances including NATO !

Since US withdrawal from Afghanistan in defeat, contradictions among imperialist powers have intensified and Ukraine has become the latest victim.

It is the second attempt by imperialist powers since Second World War to shape the global order especially in Europe, first being after dissolution of erstwhile Soviet Union when US led western powers moved to reshape the order in Europe declaring victory in the 'Cold War'. Europe is again at the centre of the present attempt at reshaping.

Russia has launched full scale invasion of Ukraine by land, air and sea routes. Russian Air Force has launched attacks on all major urban centres and ground forces have entered from north, east and south at several points.

This war is essentially a fall out of sharpening conflicts among contending imperialist powers. USA and Russia are giving excuses for their stance in this war. All talk of US about democracy and commitment to international law and treaties is bogus. US had

supported, nay engineered overthrow of a democratically elected President of Ukraine in 2014, the beginning of the present crisis. US had encouraged, nay dictated to Ukraine to tear apart Minsk agreements reached between Ukraine and two self-proclaimed republics in eastern part of Ukraine. While they talk of ‘will of the people’ to join NATO they are opposed to any such will of the people in Latin America. All along, US establishment’s aim has been to extend NATO closer to Russia. US establishment especially its military industrial complex has refused to draw any lessons from their fiasco in Iraq and Syria and utter defeat in Afghanistan. It is intent on fomenting war. Biden Administration has continued to pursue the strategy of multi-theatre war drafted at the peak of uni-polar world. US imperialism has not to come to terms with multi-polar world.

Russian rulers have chosen to confront US and NATO led by them in order to increase area of their influence which has been systematically and considerably reduced since dissolution of Warsaw Pact and Soviet Union. Engaged in a transition to ‘private’ capitalism i.e. loot and plunder of state properties, and for which they needed support of US led imperialist block, Russian rulers watched the shrinking of their area of influence and expansion of US area of influence. With US getting bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they themselves having consolidated their control over Russia, ruling elite of Russia sought to claw back its influence. First it went about it area by area with limited aims e.g. Georgia and after US defeat in Afghanistan for whole sale roll back of US influence in the region. As events of Kazakhstan showed, Russia is re-emerging as the ‘gendarme’ in vast Eurasia.

Ruling elite of Ukraine, capitalist oligarchs, emerging like in Russia from loot and plunder of state properties, have been divided

on their attitude towards Russia. These ruling elite had a conflict based on continued dependence on Russia besides linguistic and cultural bonds, and need to enlist US and West Europe for increasing their wealth and containing Russian influence. Rather than pursuing the interests of people of Ukraine, they hobnobbed with big powers, hoping that balance between the two will keep them in power and property. Hitherto existing balance has been disturbed by change in international situation. A testimony to the nature of Ukraine rulers is Saakashvili who was thrown out of power in Georgia and became a minister in Ukraine. Fed up with oligarch politicians, Ukrainians elected a comedian but times are too cruel.

With this all out attack on Ukraine Russia has proved that its talk of defending people of Donbas was just a stepping stone for their wider aim of controlling Ukraine. Russian President Putin, who was earlier talking of ‘preventing genocide in eastern Ukraine’, has now launched a ‘Special Military Operation’ to “demilitarize’ and ‘denazify’ Ukraine, which means controlling Ukraine. It is in fact pursuance of regime change, a term popular among imperialist powers.

One of the main aims of Biden Admn. of USA is to reassert control over Western Europe where France and Germany were beginning to take an independent course, more so after UK leaving the European Union. Biden’s slogan “US is Back” is targeted at that, and cancellation of Nord Stream 2 has been its focal point. In fact Russian Oil and Gas companies are contending with big oil companies of the West. Biden Admn. has, from the beginning, made it clear that it is not going to send any combat troops, even ‘trainers’, in case of conflict and has withdrawn all its armed men from Ukraine.

Ukraine rulers have allowed their country to be a victim of intensifying contradictions of imperialist powers. US is trying to consolidate Western Europe and use Ukraine to rally support world over, while Russia is taking over Ukraine or at least a substantial part of it, link areas controlled by it to area in neighbouring Moldova which is aligned with Russia. Russia also banks on bullying other countries of Eastern Europe.

While Biden and Putin both have domestic compulsions to divert attention of the people from their deteriorating conditions, the real content of the present dispute lies in increasing scramble among imperialist powers for greater share of world resources, areas of influence and markets.

It is the people of Ukraine who are the real sufferers. Ukraine has long been a bone of contention among imperialist powers but has been ill served by its rulers. President Zelensky allowed his Govt. to be a tool of US's European policy and made himself totally dependent on "Ukrainian Nationalists". Against his election promise to strive for peace, he rather intensified attacks on people of Donbas region, branded them as terrorists and refused to even talk to them. Zelensky Govt. has been totally insensitive to problems of people, especially working class. People of Ukraine have every right to be independent and sovereign, a right threatened by big imperialist powers especially Russia, but present rulers do not represent this right. Workers and people of Ukraine must step forward to not let their interests and aspirations be drowned by imperialist powers. They must step forward to peacefully resolve dispute in Eastern Ukraine in fraternal spirit, shunning Russophobia.

Govt. of India has been caught in the bind due to this intensifying conflict between USA and Russia. Modi exhorted

people of Uttar Pradesh to vote for his Party to strengthen a strong leader in view of the situation in Ukraine without saying a word about what this 'strong' leader would do. Ruling classes of India including ruling RSS-BJP have courted both USA and Russia to counter China. In fact, their so-called independence stems from their courting different imperialist powers. But the present war is restricting scope for that. Indian Govt. has so far maintained 'neutrality', not criticized Russia in UNSC, a stand being interpreted as favourable to Russia both by Russia as well as western powers. Ukraine Ambassador's statement is also in the same vein. Indian Govt. is keeping an eye on China and would avoid annoying Russia. Prime Minister of Pakistan, our South Asian neighbour, has reached Russia ignoring opposition from US, even after Russia attacked Ukraine.

CPI (ML)-New Democracy condemns Russian attack on Ukraine. We consider that this war is born out of increasing conflict among imperialist powers and their seeking and consolidating areas of influence at the expense of the rights and national aspirations of the people of different countries. The present war has once again proved that **IMPERIALISM MEANS WAR**. CPI (ML)-New Democracy calls upon the people of India to demand end to attack on Ukraine and disbanding of NATO and other imperialist military alliances while immediately halting their expansion.

CPI (ML)-New Democracy calls upon people to intensify the struggle against imperialism and its reactionary allies. We call upon the people to confront imperialist war designs with people's struggles for independence from imperialist dictates, liberation from oppression by imperialism and their allies, and strengthening revolutionary movement for their overthrow.

CPI (ML)-New Democracy demands that Govt. of India take immediate and effective steps to ensure safety of Indians in Ukraine and their safe return to India.

Central Committee

CPI (ML)-New Democracy



CPI(ML) New Democracy Call on Coming Assembly Elections

Defeat Fascist RSS-BJP and their Allies in Assembly Elections

Campaign to Build Militant People's Movement

Elections to assemblies in five states are taking place at a time when overwhelming majority of the people are facing heavy burden of price rise and unemployment; abandonment during ongoing pandemic; further decrease in their abysmally low incomes reducing them to penury and destitution and widening inequality owing to Govt. policies favouring the rich.

These elections are also taking place at a time when the heroic struggle of peasants of India, symbolized by longstanding sit-ins at Delhi borders, scored a historic victory leading to withdrawal of three agri Acts. It dealt a severe setback to the fascist rule of RSS-BJP and put a spoke in the wheels of the chariot of fascist

rulers. The struggle has brought into focus agrarian distress and put the demand for MSP as a legal right on the national agenda. It has exposed before the common people the pro-Corporate character of the rule. It has highlighted the deteriorating conditions of peasants, their declining incomes from crops and increasing indebtedness, continuing suicides especially of poor peasants and agricultural labourers and basic necessities like health and education increasingly going out of the reach of the common people. Declining incomes and increasing indebtedness have been corroborated even by NSSO 77th Round (2018-19) and situation has worsened further during the pandemic.

The peasant struggle has been an exemplary extra-parliamentary militant mass movement. It showed that fascist forces can be effectively defeated through people's struggles. It has shown that electoral struggles, which are portrayed as the sole valid form of democratic expression by the ruling classes and their media, at best play a marginal role especially in struggle against the economic offensive of the fascist forces. The electoral exercise, even when it gives setback to fascist rule does not rouse the people against the sections behind the fascist forces. Ruling classes make it an end in itself while mass movements take this, where such setback occurs, only as a starting point for a process challenging the fascist rulers and those behind them. This lesson is reverberating through Punjab and parts of UP and Uttarakhand. While delivering a big blow to the fascist rule, the movement has been a glorious part of the Indian people's struggle against imperialism and the domestic reactionary forces. By daring to hold the reins of the Emperor's (fascist rulers') horse, it has opened democratic space for rise of people's movements for which there is fertile ground and favourable situation.

Corona pandemic has brought into focus the anti-people character of the ruling classes. Hundreds of thousands perished due to refusal of the ruling class parties to spend to protect the people; their focus being on helping the super-rich become even richer. People of India have suffered the most, dying on the roads finding no place in hospitals, gasping for Oxygen, bodies flowing in rivers and buried on river beds. Common people became poorer and indebted while losing their near and dear ones, all because the Govts. would not care for them despite having large number of trained medical personnel and abundant Oxygen with big capitalists. Hospitals were empty & understaffed while crematoriums were overflowing. Ruling class parties with the help of corporate controlled media, made a pretense of acting, abandoning people to police. Despite pandemic ravaging prisons, even political prisoners and those charged with crimes with lighter sentences were not released on bail. Conduct of the govts. has been criminal. Even while the pandemic was raging, the Union Govt. reduced the Health Budget.

Allocation for Health was cut by 10% in the Union Budget for 2021-22 as compared to revised estimates for the expenditure during 2020-21. Similarly budget for Education was cut by 6% in the Union Budget and budget for Social welfare schemes was reduced from 1.5% of Union Budget to a mere 0.6%. Impact on social sector expenditure is further compounded by depleting the resources of the state govts. which are mainly tasked with social welfare schemes, thus undermining federal structure even as given in Indian Constitution. On the other hand largesse was showered on the corporate. Corporate tax has been steeply reduced and wealth tax was abolished in 2016. On the other hand indirect taxes have been sharply raised including sharp increase of 79% in tax on petrol and diesel from pre-Corona level.

The sharp increase in inequality is a direct result of the policies being pursued by the Govt. Number of billionaires (whose wealth is above Rs.7500 crores) has increased and so has their wealth. The richest 98 Indians own more wealth than 552 million poorest people of the country. On the other hand, 84% of people have suffered decline in their incomes and India has seen highest increase in the number of poor; more than half of abysmally poor added in the world are Indians. The lowest income group has suffered the most with poorest losing more than half of their abysmally low income. The present Govt. has outdone its predecessors in blatant pro-rich policies.

What would have taken decades to achieve, ruling classes have done in less than two years of pandemic! Unemployment has risen sharply with even recorded urban unemployment going above 15% while rural unemployment and underemployment are at all time highs. In fact unemployment has emerged as an important issue and youth are agitated over it. The sheer number of people in relation to the number of jobs for which they are applying shows the scale of unemployment. This brings into sharp focus the underlying reasons for growing unemployment- failure to address agrarian distress and implementing land reforms, growing stranglehold of imperialist capital on different sectors of economy. While large sections of workers have been rendered jobless, there has been no increase in minimum wage since 2020. Distress of peasantry has been much in focus. Retail trade has been undermined. All this has resulted in a lop sided economy with sale of luxury cars, high end apartments and gold reaching all time high while basic necessities are going out of the reach of the common people including even middle classes.

To increase their profits and wealth and to overcome

compulsions of coalition govts., the aggressive sections of ruling classes had brought RSS-BJP to power with majority. They supported the communal fascist mobilization targeting the struggles of the workers and peasants, Tribals and Dalits, almost all sections of people and misleading of the people under pseudo-nationalist agenda. People were fed on jingoist diet and communal divisions were deepened by targeting minorities especially Muslims. Under the garb of this pseudo-nationalism, openly pro-corporate policies have been adopted. Resort to fascism has been taken by dominant section of ruling classes to overcome the people's resistance and do away with the rights won by the people through their struggles over the decades in the course of anti-colonial struggle and in struggles since transfer of power.

In the course of anti-colonial struggles, certain people's principles got crystallized which mobilized and rallied the people. These were anti-colonialism, democracy, secularism, social justice and federalism. The elite sections i.e. big capitalists and big landlords, to whom power was transferred, have always been lukewarm towards them and adopted vacillating positions, theoretically affirming but practically undermining. RSS, a fascist organization from inception, has always been opposed to these principles. Owing to exigencies of electoral politics they have interpreted these in such a way as to negate them. Since coming back to power in 2019 and the caving in of several regional parties of ruling classes and sections of state, RSS-BJP has systematically undermined each of these. To impose fascist rule over the country it has moved to centralize power and has systematically attacked federalism. While it has always been opposed to secularism, it intensified communal conspiracies in service of fascist rule through CAA-NRC-NPR and crushed democratic protests and dissents with

utmost ferocity. It has systematically deprived oppressed castes (Dalits and OBCs) of their rights while paying lip service to their icons. It has combined upper caste chauvinism with splitting oppressed castes in what is called social engineering, not to benefit anyone of them but to deprive all of them and weaken them. BJP and RSS have intensified war on Tribals to dispossess them of their lands, rich in mineral resources, for their corporate benefactors. Their rule has been an open attack on women. Women have lost jobs and social codes have been imposed furthering restrictions on them. They have kowtowed to imperialist powers, reducing nationalism to jingoism targeted against neighbouring countries esp. Pakistan. They have vigorously attacked democratic rights and even existing democratic institutions and practices reducing the whole concept of democracy to merely the electoral exercise with its full scale manipulation through money, media, muscle and also Election Commission. Misuse of central agencies have reached new heights and activists are targeted through laws like UAPA, sedition law and general abuse of legal process even using military grade spyware against them.

Elections to five state assemblies are being held in a situation where people's fight back against fascist rulers and pro corporate policies has recently gained a victory. This fight back, which is marked by wide unity of affected people and revolutionary forces, has the prospect to play an important role like it played in the farmers' movement. The role of the revolutionary forces is critical to mobilizing the people in the direction of revolutionary change and for forging a united front of people's struggles and struggling forces. The situation today is marked by prospects for people's forces to advance versus reactionary fascists to regain their lost momentum. Hence it is important that fascist forces are not left off the hook

especially in most populous state of Uttar Pradesh which, besides playing an important in deciding rulers in India, is critical to their Hindutva platform.

While people all over the country are facing mounting problems, political situation in different states going to polls is to an extent different. People in Uttar Pradesh, mainly an agrarian and mostly backward state, suffered a lot from criminal conduct of the Govt. during Corona second wave. It is mired in most oppressive conditions for the overwhelming majority of people and spiraling unemployment especially in rural areas. While farmers in the western part of the state rallied in the movement through big mobilizations, agrarian distress has affected all regions of the state and here the agrarian distress has got compounded with mobilization along caste lines as oppressed castes constitute bulk of marginal and small peasants. In West UP, non-payment of sugarcane dues is a major problem with nearly half of the payment (Rs. 7000 crores) of the current season still pending and some dues pending from the last one as well. Retail trade been affected and unorganized sections have faced the worst. Most importantly, the mobilization of farmers especially in West UP has undermined the communal push of RSS-BJP to a large extent besides turning this support base away from them. RSS-BJP communal hordes are so unnerved that their supporters are openly calling for genocide of Muslims besides raking up the issues of Mathura and Kashi.

UP under RSS-BJP Govt. under Yogi Adityanath has been a laboratory of fascist attacks on minorities and democratic forces. Large scale police attacks were launched on minorities during protests against CAA-NRC-NPR killing a large number. Economic extractions were made from them in the name of damage to public property besides publically defaming the leaders of the protest.

Naked police terror is on, epitomized by “Thoko” call by Chief Minister where judicial process is done away with forcing all Mafia to seek patronage of ruling RSS-BJP. Struggles of the people, different sections, are crushed with brute force. Manuwadi code is imposed on girls. Body of a rape victim, a Dalit girl, was forcibly cremated in Hathras against the will of her family. Cow protection is taken to extreme with large number of stray animals damaging crops of the peasants and the latter rendered helpless.

Punjab is the second large state and farmers of Punjab have played a pivotal role in the farmers’ movement. Here the agrarian distress, rising indebtedness and high scale of unemployment of educated youth are agitating the vast masses. People of Punjab are also agitated over the most slanderous campaign by RSS-BJP and sections of corporate controlled media against them. Such was the sweep of farmers’ movement in the state that BJP lost its longstanding ally – Akali Dal and lost most of its support base. It is not at present a major force, a contender for power, even after aligning with Captain Amrinder Singh. The movement also forced all parties not to engage in electioneering till elections were announced which covered the period when border sit-ins were going on. People of Punjab have also reacted to attacks on the rights of the state i.e. federalism. The movement enjoyed wide support among the people, hence sections of peasant leaders aligned to the ruling class parties or that orientation have taken the plunge in fighting these elections floating a separate platform. However the movement had been an extra parliamentary movement, hence with Govt. not fulfilling its commitments such contesting elections will not be in the interest of peasant movement. However, peasant organizations of different political persuasions and election lines had joined hands to fight the pro-corporate agenda of Central Govt.

Moreover, the unprecedented activity of people of Punjab including peasantry has aroused an interest in searching for solutions to the problems faced by the people of Punjab.

In Uttarakhand, while farmers' movement has been strong in Terai areas, people all over the state are suffering from high unemployment. People suffer losses in disasters, for which environmental destruction by real estate and sand Mafia under Govt. patronage is largely responsible. Govt. does not provide adequate relief. Moreover, the main produce like fruits and vegetables esp. potato has suffered crash in prices, worsening the conditions of peasants. Workers in industrial units have virtually no rights like unorganized workers in other states.

In Goa, a largely urban state, unemployment and mining are important issues besides reaction to communal polarization by RSS-BJP. Corruption is also an important issue.

While issues plaguing the people in other states affect people of Manipur as well, here the main question is oppression and suppression by security forces, especially under AFSPA. Hence demand for repeal of AFSPA is a very important issue here. Recently in neighbouring Nagaland killings by an Army unit of mine workers and civilians has brought the issue of repeal of AFSPA on agenda.

Conditions of the people in all these states testify to failure of much touted Double Engine Govts. i.e. state and central govt. of the same party. If anything, stable double engine Govts. help the ruling classes to trample people under their boots brutally with more disdain. Though opposition ruling class parties represent no basically different policies esp. economic policies, it is RSS-BJP which is best placed to implement anti-people policies. It is the only

ruling class party at present having the agenda and capacity to consolidate fascist rule over the country.

People of the country are going through challenging times. On the one hand fascist rulers are heaping burden after burden on them in the form of high rate of indirect taxes leading to high prices of essential commodities, attacks on peasants and workers, tribals and all marginalized sections, loss of even the existing employment and incomes, in short worsening conditions of the people. But the glorious farmers' movement has once again paved the way for rise of people's movement including revolutionary movement. However, the Govt. though forced to repeal three black laws and announce a committee with SKM representatives to ensure MSP for all farmers, is waiting to recover from the setback and go back from its commitments. Even after countrywide condemnation of the role of Union Minister for Home Ajay Mishra, he has yet not been removed from the Govt. Committee on MSP has yet not been formed. Hence it is vital to preserve the unity of the peasant movement achieved in the course of the recent movement and prevent anything which undermines this unity or changes its orientation from the line of militant mass movement.

In the prevailing concrete conditions, CPI (ML)-New Democracy has decided not to field any candidate in these assembly elections as many issues of peasant movement are still pending.

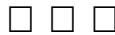
Though situation in every state is different, CPI (ML)-New Democracy calls upon the people to defeat RSS-BJP and its allies in the coming elections especially in the state of Uttar Pradesh and also Uttarakhand to deliver a further blow to ruling fascist forces – RSS-BJP.

In Punjab where BJP and its allies are not among the main contenders for power, CPI (ML)-New Democracy will campaign on the basic issues of the people and our solutions to them.

CPI (ML)-New Democracy has decided to focus in this campaign to crystallize the people's issues and prepare for building militant people's movements in these states.

Central Committee

CPI (ML)-New Democracy (Issued on January 25, 2022)



CC Statement

Union Budget 2022-23 Takes Service to Corporate to Further Heights

Union Budget presented by Finance Minister today is marked by total disregard of the concerns of the people of India and single minded pursuit of serving the interests of foreign and domestic corporate and reactionaries. It appears that the Union Govt. was keen to show to the ruling classes and their imperialist masters that repeal of three Agri Acts was forced upon them by the struggle of farmers and does not in any way represent any dilution in their commitment to serve the interests of these sections.

In the Union Budget 2202-23 there is no relief to the people of the country; not to any section of the people. The agrarian

distress which had propelled a yearlong protest of peasantry that had forced the Govt. to repeal the three farm laws has not been addressed in the Budget. Even the issue of MSP which the Govt. has committed to ensure to every farmer has not even been mentioned except to announce allocation of Rs. 2.37 lakh crore rupees for procurement on MSP. It is in fact lower than the expenditure incurred last year. There has been no announcement on irrigation. There is much talk about promotion of oil seeds production and millet cultivation but there is no concrete action plan on that. Moreover domestic production of oil seeds has been stagnant over the years. Some measures have been announced invoking the name of small peasants like making agricultural machinery available on rent but these lack any substance and are mere window dressing.

In fact some schemes like house constructions, tap water connection, infrastructure development will have rural component but the Govt. has refused to see the need to address the real issues of rural masses who constitute more than two thirds of the population of India. Those who harboured any hope that in this Budget Govt. will address the concerns of farmers should have taken clue from the fact that this Govt. had allowed the peasants to suffer for a full year on Delhi borders; slandering them, refusing to even have any dialogue with them.

Rural India has in fact got a raw deal in this Budget, may be as a punishment for having rejected cherished agrarian reforms of this govt. Allocation for rural development has been reduced by 655 crores i.e. from Rs. 206948 crores in Revised Estimates (RE) to Rs. 206293 in this year's Budget. Budget allocation for MNREGA has been reduced from Rs. 98000 crores in RE to Rs. 73000 crores in this Budget. Even the allocation for agriculture ministry has been kept almost same i.e. Rs. 1,47,000 crores in RE and Rs. 151000

crores in this Budget. In fact the subsidy for fertilizer has been reduced from Rs. 140122 crores in RE to Rs. 105222 crores in this Budget which will make fertilizers even more costly and out of reach of the peasants, further increasing their cost of production. The much touted Crop Insurance, which is often flashed to show Govt.'s commitment to peasants, has fared no better. Allocation for crop insurance has been slashed from Rs. 15,989 crores to 15,500 crores which means significant cut once inflation is taken into account.

The Govt. had earlier announced emphasis on One District One Product to develop raw material sources for corporate. In the Budget, Finance Minister announced that Railways will give concession on the basis of One Station One Product thus paving the way for captive production for the corporate in different regions/ areas.

Successive govts. have reduced the Budget exercise to buffoonery increasing taxes around the year, juggling the facts and figures and in short making the whole exercise devoid of any substance. This year's exercise goes some way in taking this buffoonery to a virtually ridiculous limit. Yet one can discern the direction being taken by the Govt. What one does find is the showering of largesse on corporate in one way after another. The whole Govt. has gone on PPP mode i.e. partnership of public money and private profit making.

There has been continuity in the policies of this Govt. is favouring the rich. Last year the corporate tax was steeply reduced from 30% to 22%. Five years earlier, by this very Govt., wealth tax was abolished. This year surcharge on corporate tax was reduced from 12% to 7%. Tax incentives to the start-ups have been further extended. However, there is no relief to the common people including govt. employees except bringing standard deduction for

state govt. employees at par with Central Govt. employees. With Income Tax limit remaining unchanged, not even taking into account increase in prices, govt. employees will pay more in income tax.

People of India have been squeezed through sharp increase in indirect taxes, and the Finance Minister has complimented herself on this success but no relief has been given on this heavy burden on the common people. In fact that is the main tax revenue of the central and state govts. Over the past one year tax on fuel has been increased by 79%. Govt. has tried to cover up sharp increase in prices of essential commodities by recourse to “refined core inflation” to hide the burden on the people. These indirect taxes constitute a major reason for the price rise.

Despite people of the country having suffered heavily during pandemic, losing lives and jobs, there was no increase in expenditure on health services, having reduced Union health budget by 10% last year. Allocation has remained the same not even accounting for inflation which amounts to actual reduction. It was Rs. 85915 crores (RE) and Rs. 86606 crores have been allocated in this year’s Budget. This is criminal but the whole handling of the pandemic by the Govts. has been nothing but criminal, heaping death and helplessness on the people. Except some initiatives like addressing mental issues arising out of the pandemic or on custom duties on some equipment there has been total silence on the major issues concerning health care services in India. It is important that for the people of India, who are among the poorest in the world and have gone even poorer during the pandemic except a small section of rich, out of pocket expenditure (OoPE) is calculated to be about 62.67% of the expenditure on health care while global average is 18.12%, which pushes a large

number of people into poverty. The emphasis of what remains of health care services is on telemedicine and digital health.

Education has fared no better. The whole emphasis is on distance education which is in fact distance from education for the vast majority of people. Finance Minister laid emphasis on E-vidya (outsourced to 200 TV channels). The allocation on education has remained virtually stagnant i.e. this year Budget allocates Rs. 104278 crores while last year's budget allocated Rs. 93224 crores. And this despite the fact that the Minister had to admit loss of two years of formal education which means loss of two years of any education for the children from the poorer or even average income families. However like all social sector allocations there is no guarantee that even the allocated amount will be spent. While ruling class parties quarrel over their education models, model pursued by all of them is against education to poorer sections of society, in fact virtually taking them out of the formal education.

The cuts by Govt. have affected all poor – rural and urban. In fact the pandemic has reduced the difference between poverty levels in rural and urban areas, with urban poor being hit the worst. This callous disregard can be seen in sweeping cut in food subsidy. Food subsidy amounted to Rs. 5411330 crores in 2020-21 Actuals and was Rs. 286489 crores in 2021-22 RE but has been allocated only Rs. 206831 crores in this budget. It means a number of schemes will be stopped or curtailed. That too when India ranks 104 among the 116 countries in Global Hunger Index and has added nearly half of those rendered absolutely poor during the pandemic i.e. far in excess of our share in the world population. Vultures populating the corridors of power have even scooped out Rs. 1,267 crores from the food of children (Mid-day meal scheme) reducing its allocation from Rs. 11,500 crores to Rs. 10,233 crores.

Union Govt. has only repeated the failed policies regarding industrial development. Firstly, contribution of manufacturing in our GDP has steadily declined over the years due to the policies pursued by successive govts. Gross Value Addition (GVA) from manufacturing has declined from 17.5% in 2011-12 to 14.4% in 2020-21. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) provide for bulk of the employment in industrial sector and they were hit hard during the pandemic. In fact there was little effect on large industries and the brunt was borne by MSMEs. Despite talking about helping MSMEs the Union Finance Minister extended little help to them. She only rehashed the credit schemes announcing Rs. 2 lakh crores in loans and a further Rs. 5 lakh crores in loan guarantees. What MSMEs need are institutional safeguards including sectors marked for them for they can hardly stand in face of large companies, facing extinction or becoming their local clients where nearly all the value is siphoned off by big capital – imperialists and their compradors. Of the 63 million MSMEs, nearly 94% are tiny (micro) and only 0.57% medium size. However, they employ most of the industrial labour and are critical to industrial growth at present. They face formidable existential challenge from corporate backed by the Govt.

From the policy of the RSS-BJP Govt. as further evidenced by this Budget, there is total emphasis on helping foreign and domestic corporate players. Much is made of the Capital Expenditure (Capex) by Modi Govt. announcing nearly 35.4% increase in capex in this Budget. However if it is compared with revised estimates it is only half of the increase claimed. Interestingly, take over by the Union govt. of debts of Air India, whose handing over to TATA has been completed, has been announced to be part of capital expenditure of Union Govt.!

Handing over of AI (with almost all the debts taken over by the Govt.) and converting all the loans of Vodaphone Idea (VI) into equity by the Central Govt. is now a form of capital expenditure. It may be broadening the corporate base of RSS-BJP govt. which has been seen to favour the two- Ambani and Adani. Finance Minister announced that strategic partner for Neelachal Ispat has already been selected and it is reported to be TATA. There is an announcement of IPO of LIC thus initiating privatization of the biggest insurance company in India bringing people's insurance deposits under corporate control. With people's savings too directly under their control, they do not have to even invest.

In fact Modi Govt. has taken the privatization spree to a new level. Till now it was handing over of the profit making enterprises or indebted enterprises but without debt to private players. But now even this policy has run its course. Now the Govt. is building new enterprises only to hand them over to private players. From privatization of public enterprises it is building private enterprises with public money. Finance Minister has announced "growth through public investments". See it in combination with Modi's repeated assertion that Govt. has no business to be in business and contours of the policy are clear. It is not enough to give loans to corporate but the Govt. has embarked on taking over all the risks, to hand the enterprises over to corporate in working, profit making state. The whole push of Finance Minister on Infrastructure with seven transport engines was in fact a push for PPP i.e. public money and private profit. Allocation for infrastructure is in fact in service of corporate.

This desperate drive for service to corporate is part of the service of imperialist interests. Not only are foreign corporate important players in different sectors, investment of imperialist

MNCs is increasing in major corporate houses including Ambani, Adani, Mittal while older ones any way were deeply tied to foreign corporate. Even the startups which are much touted by the present govt. are in fact vehicles of foreign investments. The very size of these startups and also the sectors in which they are springing indicate their origin or support. Most of these are vehicles of imperialist capital to take advantage of tax incentives.

This budget follows the failed policies in face of rising problems of the people. It runs counter to what is needed for the people. It does not address agrarian distress, is clueless on declining manufacturing. It takes the essential needs of the people – food, shelter, health and education further away from their reach. Finance Minister has bandied the vision for 25 years, so-called Amrit Kal, but this period will witness increase in people's challenge to this anti-people govt. of fascist forces. One thing may be of use to them i.e. E passports, as people's movements are rising to challenge them, some of them already making arrangements for residence abroad; many already have this since long.

This brazen attack on the people must be opposed. Militant People's Movements must be built and developed. Alternate vision and policies must be propagated to draw the people into struggle that the present dispensation must and can be changed. Mobilize the people and unite with all the struggling forces to build people's movements.

Central Committee

CPI(ML)-New Democracy

February 1, 2022



Kazakhstan

People's Grievances Sought to be Drowned in Other Conflicts

At times a week is too long a time. People of the biggest land locked country in the world, the biggest state of Central Asia, Kazakhstan, woke in New Year to doubling of the prices of petrol and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). This tipped over a simmering discontent among the people. With rising prices of essential commodities, growing inequality amidst increasing privatization and growing unemployment brought people onto streets in large numbers. These mass protests, beginning on January 2 in the western part of the country, soon engulfed the whole of the country. From 4th January evening, mass protests took on a militant character. On 5th January, large scale firing on the protesters took place with clashes between police and protesters in different parts of the country. The protests shook the ruling elite and heads started rolling. Unsure of the ability, rather willingness of Kazakhstan's police and military to control the situation on the back of deep fissures in the ruling elite, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev asked Common Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) led by Russia to send military personnel, a request waiting to be accepted. Promptly nearly three thousand military men landed in Kazakhstan on a so-called Peace Keeping Mission. By January 8, situation started easing and internet connection was gradually restored. By

10th the Govt. of Kazakhstan announced that the ‘disturbance’ was over.

Kazakhstan protests are a clear example of how people’s protests are colliding with the intensifying contradictions among the imperialist countries throughout the world including in vast Eurasian mass. By the end of the protests, over 250 were dead, nearly a score of them police personnel and the rest civilians. More than 3500 were reportedly injured. Over 10000 have been arrested. Hike in the prices of LNG and petrol was withdrawn at least for a year. The conflict within the ruling elite was settled in favour of ruling President Tokayev and the contradiction among Russia and America has resulted in assertion of the Kremlin rulers over their immediate underbelly.

Protests which started in the town of Zhanaozen in western Kazakhstan spread to not only other towns in the western part of the country but to nearly all towns of the country including the biggest city of Kazakhstan, Almaty, the financial capital of the country as well as the erstwhile capital before it was shifted to Astana since renamed Nur Sultan in recognition of the status of long time President Nursultan Nazarbayev. The protests resulted in widespread arson and looting of shops as well as taking over of the police stations and govt. buildings in Almaty and a number of towns. Lakhs of residents participated in the protests. The two strands i.e. large scale protests of the people and violent incidents by some elements, which got intertwined, need to be understood in their proper dimensions to comprehend collision and interconnection of contradiction between people and anti-people ruling elite as well as intensifying contradictions between imperialist powers which are interlinked with contradictions among ruling elite.

Rise of Inequality in Resource Rich Country

Kazakhstan is a vast country with steppes so characteristic of Central Asia and vast natural resources. It has scanty population, just 19 million (1.88 crores in 2020) and a land area of 2.925 million sq. km (area of India being 3.287 sq. km.) with largest arable land available per inhabitant. The country is very rich in accessible mineral and fossil fuel resources. Development of petroleum and natural gas fields and mineral extraction has attracted most of the foreign investment and accounts for over half (nearly 57%) of industrial output. Kazakhstan has large Uranium, Chromium, Lead and Zinc reserves (second largest in the world) and third largest Manganese reserves, large copper reserves as well as coal and iron reserves and large deposits of phosphorite. With such large natural resources it has obviously attracted large foreign investments especially from China and USA. A large number of companies from USA and China are involved in petroleum and LNG industries as well as in mineral extraction. China has made Kazakhstan a crucial partner in her Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It has no foreign debts and its per capita GDP is nearly 10 thousand US dollars.

Of Kazakhstan's population, more people live in urban areas though a substantial proportion lives in rural areas. Of the GDP agriculture contributed to 5.32%, industry contributed to approximately 331.2% and services to about 55.75%. Of a total of 8.8 million work force, about 27% are engaged in industry, 23% in agriculture and rest in services. Of these a major part is engaged in education, govt. services and security services. Proportion of Kazakhs living in rural areas and engaged in agriculture and allied sectors is higher than their average proportion while other nationalities mainly live in urban areas. Unemployment is quite high; more in rural areas than urban areas and more among women

than men. Workers' organizations are mostly govt. controlled while TUs out of Govt. control have less strength; even registration of union is difficult and lengthy. Kazakhstan has undergone large scale privatization leading to sharp increase in unemployment (officially claimed to be 4.9% but much higher in reality) along with rise of crony oligarchs.

While Kazakhs constitute over two third of population (nearly 70%) nearly a fourth of Kazakhstan's population consists of Russians, their population more in the northern areas bordering Russia. Remaining population belongs to other nationalities. Influx of Russian and other Slav groups was mostly in Czarist period and another large influx was under project of settling the Virgin and Idle Lands around 1956 under the leadership of Nikita Khrushchev. However, some demographic change occurred post disintegration of the Soviet Union with some Russians emigrating to Russia and Kazakhs coming to Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan has been part of Czarist Russia and also of the USSR and in 1936 it was constituted into Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic (KSSR) with the present boundaries. It has relatively higher standard of living as compared to other Central Asian countries and a stable economy. When Soviet Union disintegrated the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which has been ruling since the restoration of capitalism after death of Stalin, seized the state properties and converted them into private properties resulting in the rise of what is described as oligarchs. Most of these oligarchs are linked to old Party apparatus, their relatives or their acquaintances. They have plundered what was built by the people of Kazakhstan in the era of socialist construction there. Nursultan Nazarbayev, who came to power in Kazakhstan along with rise of Yeltsin in Russia, had ruled for nearly three decades and his family members have grown extremely rich, owning properties in western

countries. He headed a band of self-seeking leaders including the present President Tokayev to whom he partially transferred power, retaining control over security forces by retaining the post of Chairman of National Defense Council.

Workers and Youth Rise in Protest

While oligarchs' wealth skyrocketed, the condition of vast majority of the people deteriorated. Salaries stagnated while rise in prices with high inflation over a long period eroded their real value. Unemployment increased resulting in growing unrest in rural areas as well as areas close to cities. Unemployment is estimated to be around 15% while official figures are much lower. These unemployed youth have been restive. Kazakhstan had seen vast unrest in 2011 and 2016 over the deteriorating conditions of the people in a resource rich country with such a small population and relatively high level of technological development. In 2011 there had been big strikes of industrial workers who faced death in firing by security forces including shooting of unarmed oil workers in the same Zhanaozen where from protests started this time. In 2016 there was a very big protest over a land law allowing lease of land to corporate for 25 years. In this situation of growing restiveness, came the announcement of doubling of petrol and LNG prices (LNG is used in most of the vehicles, in nearly 90% cars in western Kazakhstan) from 60 tenge to 120 tenge per litre (nearly Rs. 30 : 0.37 US\$). The excuse that the prices would henceforth be governed by market forces did not cut any ice with the people as Petroleum and LNG are under state control. Cut in subsidies in such situation would simply result in higher prices. People in western and northern part of Kazakhstan were first to come onto the streets in protests in thousands.

Protests by workers in cities were joined in by a large number of young people, mostly marginalized segments of the population that came into the city from the outskirts of the metropolis and from nearby villages. These groups represented the most neglected and oppressed sections of the people and numbered in thousands at different centres. People were fired upon by the security forces which led to resistance on their part and in some incidents of stone pelting in response to police brutality. Faced with this resistance police retreated in many places, resulting in looting of shops by unorganized groups and entry of criminal elements at some places, which is not unusual in such situations. Clashes were most pronounced in business capital Almaty and other urban centres.

Protests quickly spread to all parts of Kazakhstan including its largest city, Almaty. There the protesters were joined by several opposition groups. Such groups do not have much strength and organization as there are few democratic rights in Kazakhstan. When protests moved to these centres, political demands were added to the demands against rising prices and deteriorating living conditions. Political demands included immediate release of political prisoners, resignation of both President and Prime Minister, resignation of Nazarbayev from all Govt. positions, creation of new provisional government and also an end to allied relations with Russia. From 5th January more organized sections of Islamic activists entered the protests and targeted govt. buildings. These groups were active in northern city of Aktobe where they historically existed as well as in the cities in South Kazakhstan and also Almaty where clashes had kept the city ablaze for three days. However most of the protesters were either workers or youth of marginalized sections. That the protests were genuine and of common people including workers is evidenced by continuing

protests in oil industries and power plants like industrial action in the oil-rich Mansystau region from where protests had started on January 2. The involvement of criminal elements could be linked to the struggle for power among the ruling elite as these criminal elements are linked to such forces.

Struggle within Ruling Elite

A statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan stated that the “Peaceful protests in Mangystau region and in all major cities of the country” were “hijacked by terrorist, extremist and criminal groups”. The statement further said, “The events in Almaty and several other regions of the country have shown Kazakhstan has been subjected to armed aggression by well-coordinated terrorist groups trained abroad. According to preliminary data, the attackers include individuals who have military combat zone experience in the ranks of radical Islamist groups.” The statement justified seeking military help from CSTO for this reason. The Govt. counted, as Tokayev himself asserted in the January 7 statement, nearly 20000 people among such elements. However the Govt. statement does not clarify how such a large number had entered the country without the knowledge of the Govt. The statement implied involvement of sections of Govt. While conceding peaceful and legitimate nature of initial mass protests, Tokayev had on January 7 blamed human rights activists for having abused their rights and fanning trouble. This statement showed that the Govt. was deliberately trying to ignore the popular character of protests which it had conceded earlier and wanted to crush the people under the pretext of the activities of a section, for which activities only state or elements from within the state could have been responsible.

President Tokayev has seized the occasion to appropriate more powers and marginalize the influence of Nazarbayev. Besides accepting the resignation of the Govt. to defuse people's anger, those who have been close to Nazarbayev have been targeted. It was shown that violent elements acted in concert with circles close to the former President and to those within the security service, the Committee for National Security (KNB). Head of the KNB, Karim Massimov, who had twice been Prime Minister, was first dismissed and later arrested on charges of treason. It was announced that KNB did not act to control the situation. Tokayev removed Nazarbayev as head of the National Security Council the day he acted against Massimov and took up that position himself. In his initial speech to the nation, President Tokayev spoke about attempted coup, charged Massimov with high treason; in a way justifying invitation to Russian forces (through CSTO). Initial lack of action by security forces has been attributed to internal struggle in the ruling elite. Tokayev in his speech to lawmakers claimed, "In a number of cities, KNB chiefs abandoned office buildings without engaging in battle, despite having a sufficient quantity of arms ... leaving behind weapons and secret documents."

Conflict within ruling elite which at least partially contributed to taking these large scale genuine people's protests to violent incidents, has been settled in favour of Tokayev but also in favour of closer alliance with Russia. Nazarbayev, called "Leader of the Nation" has been allowed to retain formal prestige without any power, after he pledged total support to actions of Tokayev Administration. It is clear that Nazarbayev chose not to defend his former associates in view of superior forces marshaled by Tokayev along with support from Russian Govt.

Russia Asserts in face of Intensifying Contradiction with US and Allies

However, this reconfiguration of power elite has unmistakable relation with intensifying contradictions among imperialist powers especially USA, Russia and China. In Kazakhstan, Russia has vital stakes. Besides being close neighbour sharing a very long border and a large ethnic Russian population, Russia has important strategic facilities like the Baikonur Space Launch Complex and anti-ballistic missile defence testing range. China, with whom Kazakhstan shares borders to the East, has emerged as the largest trade partner of Kazakhstan and has a vital stake in maintaining land route to Europe through Kazakhstan. China is also watchful due to Uighur population in Kazakhstan. Both Russia and China have stake in diminishing the role of USA in Kazakhstan and generally in Central Asia. USA opposed deployment of Russian (CSTO) troops but had weak leverage there. China on the other hand supported deployment of CSTO forces in Kazakhstan.

In the post-Soviet Union period, Kazakhstan has been having good relations with Russia, China and USA. But with inter-imperialist contradictions intensifying, this could not continue. US influence had to be curbed by Russia and China. Hence, pro-West oligarchs and sections of ruling elite have been targeted. After withdrawal of US armed forces from Afghanistan in defeat, the contours of inter-imperialist contradictions have been changing. While USA wants to continue as if no big change has occurred, Russia wants to stop US domination and scale back what Russia was forced to concede during the uni-polar world. Russia wants to put a stop to further insidious advance of US imperialism in Europe and Central Asia. US's dream project of Central Asian Integration is to

increase US influence in Central Asia with Kazakhstan having a central role in it and thereby reduce Russian influence in the region. Russian action in Kazakhstan has also to be seen in context of escalating conflict like situation in Europe where Russia is demanding no further expansion of NATO and scaling back of Western Army deployment and high tech weaponry from East European countries that have already been incorporated in NATO. It may not be just incidental that violent incidents with the support of a section of ruling elite occurred in Kazakhstan just days before the talks between US and Russia were to take place.

In post-Afghanistan withdrawal world, Russia acted swiftly to send troops. It is not that CSTO has always been so eager earlier. Russia had turned down such requests from Kyrgyzstan in 2010 and Armenia in 2021. But stakes in Kazakhstan were bigger and situation different. As Russian President Putin claimed, “Measures taken by the CSTO have clearly shown that we will not allow ... so-called colour revolutions.” Just in December 2021, Russia and Kazakhstan had approved a 10-year military co-operation agreement. Russian rulers have decided to stop and roll back the US and its allies’ incursions into as much space as possible into what was once Russian sphere of influence. However, with the present ruling elite in Russia led by Putin, the aim is not a revival of the erstwhile Soviet Union but the old Czarist Empire. Once regarded as “gendarme of Europe” will Russia once again emerge as the benefactor of all autocratic regimes and suppressor of people’s movements in the vast Eurasia? With China facing challenge from US and its allies who are moving to curtail its influence, Russia is better placed to face US and its allies. US rulers, who are facing a lot of internal contradictions especially intensification of contradiction between labour and capital as exemplified in struggles against

inequality and racial justice, have sought to build up hysteria over imminent (though the word imminent is no longer used) Russian invasion of Ukraine. US rulers are also facing increasing contradiction with third world countries especially in Latin America and also in Middle East. US rulers wish to divert the attention of their own people from domestic contradictions and US support to monarchs and dictators in third world countries and are thus setting the stage for growing conflicts among imperialist powers.

But the real issue in Kazakhstan has been growing grievances and rising struggles of the people born out of increasing unemployment and declining conditions of life of workers. Workers and unemployed youth have been in the forefront and also mainstay of these struggles. Continuing struggles of workers for better pay and living conditions in different sectors prove that they would not allow their struggles to be drowned in the cacophony of conflict among imperialist powers. Their struggles would march to reclaim this resource rich country with their rich legacy of struggles and with a bright future to fight for.



A Report on

**Proposed Steel Plant of
JSW Utkal Steel Ltd. (JUSL)
at Dinkia of Odisha;**

**The State Of Siege &
Villagers' Struggle To Save
Their Livelihoods**

(We are publishing a report released by a team of Janhastakshep on the repression on the villagers struggling to save their land and livelihood in the Dinkia village of Dist. Jagatsinghpur of Odisha. Villagers had earlier struggled against takeover of their land by the Govt. for earlier proposed POSCO Steel Project. Team consisting of Convenor of Janhastakshep Delhi Dr. Vikas Bajpai, Sachin N. and Pankaj Kumar Mishra had released this report on 13.2.2022. We have omitted here the photos which were part of the Report. – Editor)

Right in the beginning we would like to acknowledge and give our salutations to the brave struggle of the people of Dinkia and other villages that fall under the erstwhile POSCO project and the proposed Jindal Steel Plant project, in defense of their

fundamental right to lives and livelihoods with dignity. It was their 12 years of tenacious struggle in the main which forced the steel major POSCO to abandon their proposal for setting up the steel plant that would have destroyed the lives and livelihoods of these people. Janhastakshep also respectfully acknowledges the support rendered by various political activists, mass organizations of the workers and peasants, and members of the civil society to the previous anti-POSCO and the ongoing struggle against the Jindal Steel Plant. We in our report also thank the human rights activists who have already brought out fact finding reports (*Fact Finding Report dated 18 December, 2021 undertaken by 'Civil Society Forum on Human Rights (CSFHR)'; 'Human Rights Defenders Alert – India (HRDA)'; 'Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF)', and the PUCL report on the struggle – 'Dhinkia-Chaaridesh Under Siege' of January 2022*) on various aspects of the struggle against the Jindal Steel Plant. While acknowledging that the facts brought on record by these reports, the news reports and other publicly available documents such as representations by the villagers, the official documents regarding Environmental Clearance and 'Jan-sunwai' (public hearing) etc. helped us in developing our perspective of the struggle, it shall be our endeavor not to repeat the information that is already available in the public realm.

The Janhastakshep team comprising of Dr. Vikas Bajpai (Assistant Professor, JNU), Mr. Sachin N (Associate Professor, Dayal Singh College, Delhi University) and Mr Pankaj Kumar Mishra (PhD Scholar, JNU) visited the proposed JUSL area on the 12th of February, 2022. Apart from the firsthand experience in the struggle area, the team had conversations with several people, among whom were the company and government sponsored villagers supporting the steel plant project; advocate Bichitrananda

Sena (the lawyer representing the arrested agitators); social and political activists who have been associated with the struggle being put up by the people in the area since the time of anti-POSCO struggle. Among these were Sh. Sudhir Pattnaik (editor of the Odia language magazine ‘Samdrushti’), Sh. Prafulla Samanthara (noted civil society activist and President, Lok Shakti Abhiyan), Sh. Niranjan Mohanty of AIUTUC (All India United Trade Union Centre), Sh. Prashant Paikray (Spokesperson of PPSS / Anti-Jindal and Anti-POSCO Movement) and some journalists. However, it is important to note that the team was denied the opportunity to talk to the villagers protesting the setting up of the steel plant through intimidating tactics of the company sponsored opponents of the project.

The following is a brief report of the experience of our team, what we found in the area of the struggle, and our conclusions from the same. We have taken care to not reveal the names of some of the resource persons for reasons which should not be difficult to understand.

The welcome upon reaching Dhinkia

The experience of Janhastakshep led fact finding team to Dhinkia could be summed up in just one sentence – **‘YOU ARE NOT WELCOME TO DHINKIA, THE SOVERIGN REPUBLIC OF JINDAL STEEL.’** It is another thing that this republic of Jindal Steel has the might of the Naveen Patnaik led BJD government in Odisha at its beck and call to muzzle any voice of reason in favor of the villagers resisting the project which shall lead to the ruin of the lives and livelihoods of the villagers who till now have been blessed by mother nature to make a dignified living for themselves from betel vine, paddy cultivation and pisciculture. It is

noteworthy that all of this abject subjugation and intimidation of people is happening in the background of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrating the 75th year of India's independence.

As the Janhastakshep team reached the entrance of the Dhinkia village on 12/02/2022 around noon, we found the entrance being blocked by about thirty to thirty five men who claimed that they were all from the Dhinkia village. From the word go, these men were very aggressive and appeared threatening. We were straight away denied entry into the village. The picketers asserted that they had managed to bring the situation in Dhinkia under control with great difficulty and that they will "not allow any outsiders to enter the village to have the peace in the village disturbed." These people seemed to be led by one middle aged person, who identified himself as Nirbhay Samantaray. Some others who identified themselves were Vivek Swain, Premananda Parida and Manas Dadayi. They insisted that since they were from Dhinkia village we can get all the information that we need about the village from them.

On the spot we saw another group of people, who we were told included the noted social and political activist Sh. Prafulla Samantara. He was accompanied by two very senior persons. Subsequently, we were to know that they were senior journalist Sh. Rabi Das, and Sh. Debaprasad Ray. The people who were claiming to be acting with the motive of maintaining peace in Dhinkia, pointed towards Sh. Prafulla Samantara and his colleagues and said that these 'bada-bada log, jo samajhte hain ki unke paas bahut dimag hai, bahar se aakar gaonwalon ka dimag kharab karte hain, unhein bhadkate hain' (these big people who think they have lot of brains, come from outside to spoil the brains of the villagers and instigate them). Hence, we will not be allowed to go inside.

A Fleeting Journey through the Three Villages

We persisted in our efforts to enter the village by stating that we did not have anything to do with the other group; that we were university teachers and researchers from JNU and Delhi University who are engaged with research regarding big development projects and their impact on people's lives. We persisted with our insistence that we were separate from the other group. After sharing our Identity cards and details with this vigilante group and suffering their intimidatory questioning, for a moment, we were told we could pass through, only to be brusquely denied the next moment by an unidentified person who pushed us into our vehicle. With our tenacity tested to its limit, we persisted in our requests, and were finally allowed to enter on the condition that we shall not stop in the village, and shall not seek to meet any villager. To ensure this, we were escorted by seven men riding motorcycles (three in number) ahead of and behind our car.

While passing through the village there appeared to be an eerie silence in the village, except for four to five people standing outside on the road in what seemed like an election campaign house visit. Knowing full well that panchayat elections were going on in different villages of the district, this silence seemed all the more disconcerting and deafening. Rather than convey a sense of peace, the silence was reverberating with a sense of morbid fear.

Conversation with the supporters of the JSW project

As we crossed the Dthinkia village, one motorcycle following our car dropped off and returned. We got out of the car to enquire certain things with the rest of our accosters, only to be rudely pushed back into the car by the same unidentified man, who then disappeared on one of the motorcycles. Our persistence with others

led to two motorcycles accompanying us further. After some distance, the trailing bike disappeared. We also noticed a police camp a little distance away and a police vehicle crossed us on our way before the road coming out of the villages turned towards Paradip Township.

Upon reaching the far end of the road, where it turned towards Paradip Port Township along the sea coast, we again stopped and got down from the car in order to engage those accosting our car ahead of us in a conversation to gather some information. The two people we talked to at some length gave their names as Premananda Parida and Manas Dadayi. It need be noted that both of these people extensively recorded the conversation with us on their mobiles. They told that they need to do so to show it to some other people. Of course, they did not name them.

The following points were asserted by these two persons:

- That all the demands of the villagers in Dhinkia will be amicably resolved by the company. That the people will not only be offered handsome compensation, both to the owners of betel vines and also the labourers who work on them, but will also be provided jobs in the company according to their qualifications.
- That there were only about five to six families in the village who did not want to give their land and the whole ruckus was being created by them.
- That they are trying to solve everyone's problems and they want to do so by requesting the government and the police. The police, after all, are meant for people's protection.
- That people like Prafulla Samantara are wicked people who instigate the villagers to indulge in disruptive activities like

digging up the road to prevent the entry of the government officials, to throw urine on the police, and that the women should become necked to turn the police away.

Premananda Parida even said that it is because of Mr Prafulla Samantara's age that they are not doing anything to him, otherwise "man karta hai ki main uss saale ko pakad ke peet ke ghutne tod duun" (we feel like giving him a thrashing and breaking his knees).

On cross questioning, not only did we find several contradictions in the version put out by them but the duo also became evasive. For example, they were not very categorical on the question of how many households had been given compensation, or whether those who had been given compensation had received the entire sum, or whether there is any written assurance to the villagers about compensation, jobs, sustainable livelihood to all and ecology. At the same time they also said that the JSW Company had not yet entered the area; rather the land acquisition was being done by Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO). Nevertheless, their faith was that JSW is a very nice company which will take care of the interests of the people.

While talking with these persons, we observed that the work on erecting a boundary wall to enclose the area where the plant is to come up has already progressed to a considerable extent. Even as Premananda Parida was doing most of the talking, his companion Manas Dadayi was making a video of the conversation. On being asked about the purpose of the video, they both replied that 'hamein unko ye dikhana padta hai' (we have to show this to them). As to the identity of 'them' they simply replied 'aur logon ko' (to others). The trade union activist who was helping us during the visit told that these 'others' were the company officials and the police.

Conversation with Sh. Bichitrananda Sena, the advocate on record for the arrested villagers

We met Sh. Bichitrananda Sena outside the Panchyat Samiti office at Kujang, a tehsil town near Dhinkia village. The following are the salient points of the conversation with him.

Detailed chronology of events

- People's Protest against the announced steel plant with Jindal started in the month of January 2021.
- September 2021- Barricading of all the entrances of Dhinkia village started by Local Police. The police started checking of identity documents of those who were either going to the village or were coming from there. The lawyer claimed that this process of checking ID card of visitors or the villagers was done on purpose by the police to apprehend the local villagers and force them to sign an undertaking accepting that they will not oppose the JSW project, and will not agitate against it.

Apart from barricading the entrances of village, the police also started damaging Betel plantation of farmers.

- This unruly process went for nearly three months and on 4th December 2021, nearly 100 cops in three vans and a bus went to arrest Debendra Swain a village leader and panchayat committee member at 03:30 AM. When police personnel tried to arrest Debendra, most of the villagers gathered and opposed police personnel. The police had to return from the village, but later they claimed that the village people led by Debendra Swain attacked them and damaged police van and other vehicles.
- On 14th January 2022, more than three months after police atrocities, more than 3000 people from concerned village

participated in a peaceful Rally organized by Samyukt Kisan Morcha to protest against police and Jindal Steel Work.

The police registered three cases for the events at village on 4th December 2021.

1st FIR- allegedly for hurling of bombs by Debendra Swain and other villagers on some villagers from the adjacent Gobindpur village supporting the steel plant project, at 2 am on 4th December, 2021.- PS Case No- 125/2021

2nd FIR- for Snatching Police revolver- PS Case No- 126/2021

3rd FIR- for Vandalizing Police Van/Bus- PS Case No- 127/2021.

There are two other cases by the police on the villagers registered on 14 January 2022. Besides these FIRs, other reports have mentioned two other FIRs filed in the entire matter - FIR no 123/ 2021 and FIR no 124/2021 filed on 1st and 2nd December, 2021 respectively.

In total 19 people were arrested in 5 cases, 13 of whom have been released by the court. Six villagers and civil society members who continue to languish in the jail are – Shri Debendra Swain, Shri Narendra Mohanty, Shri Nirmai Malik, Shri Nanguli Kandi, Shri Tirtha Malik and Shri Murlidhar Sahu.

The sections imposed on the villagers under different FIRs are - 147, 148,149,307, 323, 324, 332, 333, 336,341, 353, 379,395,427 and section 506 of IPC; section seven of CRL Act, and sections 3 and 4 PDPP Act as informed by the lawyer of the accused.

Details of the events in a tabular form.

Date : 04.12.2021 Place : Dinkia Village

Description : Nearly 100 Police Personnel went to arrest Village leader Debendra Swain in the dead of the night, at 3 am. Villagers opposed Police personnel and police could not arrest Debendra.

Date : 6.1.2022 (Dhinkia Village)

A Mass rally organized under the banner of Samyukt Kisan Morcha that supported the farmers of the affected villages and opposed the barricading of entrances of village. Protesting Villagers seek support of SKM and requested them to send at least two people on daily basis to support them.

Date : 12.1.2022 (Nearby Dhinkia and concerned villages)

Police/ Middle Man started searching for representative of SKM by name in public transport and public places because of which they returned without entering Dhinkia.

Date : 13.1.2022 (Entrance of Dhinkia Village)

Two SKM representatives named Narendra Mohanty and Kalyan Anand were stopped by private vigilante at village entrance. More than 20 Platoons of police deployed at village entrance.

Date : 14.1.2022 (Dhinkia Village/ Erasama Police Station)

More than 1500 people and farmers of villages went to visit their betel vine field where more than 1000 police personnel confronted and arrested Narendra Mohanty, Kalyan Anand, Debendra Swain and other protesting villagers.

Date : 15.1.2022 (Residence of Magistrate)

At 03:00 AM Police presented those arrested on 14th January in front of Magistrate at his residence and ask for remand for two weeks.

Date : 25.1.2022 (Additional District Judge (ADJ) Court, Kujang, Ersama Block, Dist. Jagatsinghpur)

IO could not present CD and LMC and ask for further remand. Next date of hearing fixed on 4th Feb 2022.

Date : 4.2.2022 (ADJ Court, Kujang, Ersama Block, Dist. Jagatsinghpur)

IO again pressed for time to present CD and Injury Report. Next date of hearing fixed on 11th Feb 2022.

Date : 11.2.2022 (ADJ Court, Kujang, Ersama Block, Dist. Jagatsinghpur)

Additional Session Judge gives last chance to submit CD and Injury Report by 15th Feb 2022 as again IO could not present CD and Injury Report and asked for more time. Next date of hearing is scheduled on 15th Feb 2022. Judge warns IO and asked him to present CD and Injury report by 15th Feb otherwise he will be issued show cause notice to him and will turn down case.

Date : 15.2.2022 (ADJ Court, Kujang, Ersama Block, Dist. Jagatsinghpur)

Bail was granted to all the six remaining persons including civil society activist Narendra Mohanty and the leader of Jindal Pratirodh Sangram Samiti, Debendra Swain, who belongs to Dthinkia village. Barring Debendra, all other persons are likely to be released by 16 February 2022. In the case of Debendra immediately after the bail the police slapped another case on him under section 395 of IPC (related to committing dacoity).

**Note: Our team had returned to Delhi on the night of 13th February, 2022. This development was subsequent to our return from Odisha, and significantly enough, after we had held a press conference at Lohiya Academy in Bhubaneshwar during the day on 13 February, 2022 to share our findings with the press. It is a*

matter of sheer providence that the timing of our press conference coincided with the press conference being held at the same venue by the other team led by senior journalist Sh Rabi Das that was visiting Dhinkia on the same day as that of our visit. Hence, it was decided to hold a joint press conference on the common issue.

It was only later that we learned that the release of our findings on Sunday the 13th of February 2022 could be influential in getting justice for the agitators still in jail in the matter of their bail application that was to come up for hearing on the 15th of February, 2022.

Breaking the resistance through systematic thuggery by the state

The local administration, the police and the JUSL have deployed devious tactics to break the unity of the overwhelming numbers of villagers opposing the setting up of the steel plant. We do realize that this is a time tested tactic of the governments' vis-à-vis peoples' movements for their democratic demands, yet it is important to note here the specificities of such tactics being used to break this struggle.

We were informed by a journalist that the superintendent of police dist. Jagatsinghpur, Sh. Akhileshwar Singh, had got prior information about the visit of the team led by senior journalist Sh Rabi Das to Dhinkia on 12 February, 2022. Resultantly, he had had the pro-project villagers mobilized earlier in the day to block the entry of this team. Our arriving at the spot was purely coincidental. The vigilantes guarding the entrance to Dhinkia seemed to be led by a middle aged person who volunteered his name as Nirbhai Samantara.

It was later learnt that Nirbhai Samantara, and some others present at the spot, had been supporters of the POSCO Steel project. For fear of facing the ire of fellow residents from Dhinkia village, they had been residing in the adjacent areas when the anti-POSCO agitation had stalled the project. Later when the POSCO project was shelved all together, they tendered apology to the villagers and returned to their homes in the village. However, when the state government revived the setting up of steel plant, this time under the aegis of Jindal Steel, elements like Nirbhai Samantara have again cropped up in support of the project and seem to be acting at the beck and call of the state government and JUSL. In order to keep Nirbhai Samantara under their control, the government had transferred his wife, who is a government servant, to the 'Naxal affected' Malkangiri district. However, Nirbhai Samantara has been rewarded by relocating of his wife from Malkangiri.

In fact there have been divisions of opinion within the families and those family members who have been supporting the project have been used to break the resistance by other members of their family. Among the vigilantes blocking the entrance to Dhinkia were also some people who until just a few days back had been steadfast in their opposition to the project. One case in the point is that of Latika Parida, a 70 year old lady who has been steadfastly and bravely opposing any proposal of setting up a steel plant which shall uproot the highly rewarding traditional livelihoods of the people of the area based on paddy and betel wine cultivation and pisciculture. Owing to her steadfast opposition as many as 27 cases have been filed by the police against her since the time of the anti-POSCO movement.

President of the Lok Shakti Abhiyan, Sh. Prafulla Samantra informed us next day i.e. on 13 February, just before our press conference at Lohiya Academy in Bhubaneshwar, that one of the persons in the vigilante mob at Dhinkia, Premananda Parida, who claimed to be the son of Latika Parida, had brought Latika from the village and made her confront the team of which Prafulla Samantra was a member. This was strange as Latika had played a pivotal role in mobilizing the village women against the project, and had actively participated in the rally organized by the villagers on 14 January, 2022 against JUSL. It was also reported that many of the villagers had been issued dire warnings by the police and the pro-project villagers that unless they changed their stance, they shall be slapped with various criminal cases. The prolonged incarceration of the leadership of the struggle, as is evident from the case of Debendra Swain mentioned above, and that the majority of male members of households have had to flee from the village to nearby areas to avoid arrest has also helped the police who seek to crack the solidarity among the villagers.

Our conclusions

The abovementioned findings of our brief interaction with the people during this visit show that very little seems to have changed since the time POSCO packed up from India. Among other things that were revealed in extensive conversations with the cross section of people mentioned above, one thing that came through prominently is that since the time the POSCO project came a cropper, the Naveen Pattnaik led BJD government in Odisha seems to have invested quite some political capital in giving an edge to its tactics for breaking the will of the people.

The truthfulness of the alleged crimes mentioned in these FIRs slapped against the agitators and the intention behind them

can be judged from the fact that since the time of anti-POSCO movement close to 400 FIRs have been registered against the project affected villagers and their leaders coming under the jurisdiction of Abhayachandpur police station. However, not even one conviction has occurred in any of these cases till date, which only proves that as in case of other peoples' movements, Odisha government is using the provisions of the CRPC to browbeat the project affected villagers into submission, who have been making a living by the sweat of their brow.

There is more to the proposed JSW plant than what meets the eye, and it goes far beyond the repression the people are facing through the collusion of the state agencies and the private army of the company. There is no MoU between the state government and Jindal Steel that is available in the public domain. The government has not revealed it even in response to applications filed under the RTI Act. This shrouds the entire project under inscrutable circumstances. Various accounts exist to show that the public hearing held on 20 December, 2019 to elicit the concurrence of the local villagers was a sham with the government turning itself into a campaigner for the company. The efforts to take up the matter in public are institutionally repressed.

There have been news reports regarding a virtual conference on 'South Korea and Odisha: Promoting Bilateral Business Opportunities' which was organized by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and Industrial Promotion and Invest Corporation of Odisha Ltd (IPICOL) on 19 April, 2021 wherein the South Korean Ambassador to India spoke of POSCO's renewed interest in investing around 12 billion dollars in India for setting up of a Steel Plant in Odisha. Simultaneously, the Naveen Patnaik-led government is all out in support of the Sajjan Jindal-led Company.

It need be recalled that one of the specific insistence by POSCO was the permission to ship the high quality iron ore from the project area to South Korea for further enrichment. For this purpose it was even allowed to set up a captive port at the mouth of Jatadharmohan river despite the Paradeep port being barely at a distance of 11 km from the site of the captive port. Such a permission not coming through due to the voices of protest against the project is said to have been one of the causes for POSCO deciding to move out.

The executive summary of a 'Pre-Feasibility Report' of '13.2 MTPA Integrated Steel Plant with Captive Jetty and 30 MTPA Iron Ore Grinding & Desliming' capacity, published by JSW Utkal Steel Limited states:

The ISP would be served by a Captive jetty of handling capacity of 52.0 MTPA, to be located adjacent to the steel plant near the mouth of Jatadharmohan River Creek. The captive jetty would cater to the import and export requirements of the ISP helping it reduce the infrastructure cost for the production of steel.

It raises fresh concerns as to why Jindal has been allowed to build a captive port for itself at the same spot despite the proximity of the Paradeep port? Is this destined to provide a backdoor mechanism for satisfying POSCO's greed for Odisha's iron ore which first and foremost is the property of the people of Odisha? Things get all the more dubious when those pro-POSCO people transform into pro-Jindal villagers, even after being extorted by the villagers and then apologizing to return to it after the POSCO exit. It may still not be too late for the Naveen Pattnaik government to address these concerns in earnest.

The cold brutality embedded in the government's motivation and insistence on this project is reflected in the little

remorse that it has exhibited in the manner it continues to unleash terror and repression on the people, perhaps more than it did in the time of POSCO. The repression hardly requires further exposition than the facts that have already been mentioned. The time gone by since the exit of POSCO could have been used to win the confidence of the people by effectively addressing the perceived threat to their livelihoods as a result of the project by initiating concrete steps on ground in accordance with the wishes of the people. But, such can be the trajectory only if people rather than the profit motive are at the center of the development process.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report of the project by different experts has sounded dire consequences regarding the environmental impact of the project. The 22,000 people living in the project affected villages in Dinkia Charidesh shall directly bear the brunt of dangerous cumulative emissions of greenhouse gases along with scarcity of clean drinking water. The consequences of this for the health and wellbeing of the people need hardly be overestimated.

Whether the interests of the country: those of the people of Odisha, and those of the local villages will be safe-guarded or not will depend on how we as a society rise up to oppose such predatory nature of development being unleashed on the people throughout India to further the interests of a few crony capitalist industrial houses. There is ample evidence from across the country which attests to the devastating effects of such development model. For the section of the Odia people harboring dreams of a prosperous future were the project to be set up in the state, they would do well to learn from the experience of those who were so enticed before them, only to end up being the sacrificial lambs.

Our demands

- The reign of terror and intimidation being unleashed on the villagers by the sponsored vigilante goons and the state security forces should be stopped forthwith. The police camps should be immediately withdrawn from the area and the private goons should be booked under appropriate sections of law for criminal intimidation. These are the necessary conditions for the villagers to exercise their legitimate constitutional rights to peaceful assembly and protest under any circumstances, and have the first say in the decisions impacting their lives and livelihoods as a result of this project.
- All cases fraudulently slapped against common villagers, protestors and the leaders of the anti-POSCO and anti-JSW committee leaders must be withdrawn immediately by the Government of Odisha.
- The administrative officers who had been involved with imposition of POSCO project and have been deployed to implement the JSW project should be immediately replaced. The state and district administration should engage in dialogue with the local villagers and their leadership to address their concerns and demands. This dialogue should be conducted in demonstrable democratic spirit as ingrained in the various provisions of the 'Forest Rights Act', 'Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013' (LARR, 2013) and other relevant constitutional provisions.
- An independent team comprising of leadership of the struggling villagers, eminent people from field of human rights, law, forest rights, agriculture and development affairs must be formed to examine the actions of the administration and police in Dinkia,

Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha to determine whether the processes mandated in the law were followed in the case of permitting JUSL to establish its project.



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CPI(ML) Organs

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Sangrami Ekta	Odia

Truth of alleged genocide of Kashmiri Pandits exposed through RTI

● **P. P. Kapoor**

Hitler's propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels famously said that if a lie is repeated over and over again it becomes a truth. Hitler's political progeny of fascism in India - the RSS and BJP are quite effectively doing the same work of spreading lies until these are established as truth. These forces have an expertise in spreading rumors and lies against minorities, especially the Muslims and the Christians, in a systematic manner to spread hatred in the society for the purpose of polarizing votes in elections.

In the year 1990, with the rise of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir in which innocent common people started getting killed, the RSS and BJP activists started projecting these killings as a very big massacre of Kashmiri Pandits not only in India but also in the world. The capitalist media lent its full weight to this propaganda. As part of a well-orchestrated propaganda campaign the Kashmiri Muslims were projected as villains and terrorists. By propagating such claims, the RSS-BJP put into effect their agenda of polarizing the society and garnering votes in elections across the country.

To know the truth of this alleged massacre of Kashmiri Pandits and verify the claims made by the Modi government to resettle the Kashmiri Pandits back home in Kashmir, I filed an RTI application in July 2021 under the Right to Information Act-2005, in the office of Manoj Sinha, the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, administering directly under the supervision of the Modi government ruling at the Centre. It had been asked in the application to tell the total number of Kashmiri Pandits killed in Jammu and Kashmir since 1990, the year when militancy raised its head in the state, till the date of reporting. Along with this, information had also been sought regarding the total number of persons of other communities killed by the Militants in the same time period. Apart from this, it was also asked that how many Kashmiri Pandits and people of other communities had migrated out of Jammu and Kashmir till date, and from among those Kashmiri Pandits who had migrated out of the state, how many Kashmiri Pandits had returned to the state, or had been resettled in the state.

The information furnished by the Jammu and Kashmir administration in response to this RTI application has exposed to the whole world the reality of false claims made by the RSS-BJP and capitalist media regarding the alleged genocide of Kashmiri Pandits in the state. The DSP (Headquarter) and Central Public Information Officer in the Police Headquarter, Kashmir, told under RTI that in the 30 years period from the year 1990 to the year 2021, a total of 1724 people had been killed by the Militants in the state. Of these people, Kashmiri Pandits accounted for only 89 of those killed, while the remaining 95 percent i.e. 1635 were largely Muslims along with a few Sikhs. A total of 1.54 lakh persons migrated in the last 30 years, out of which 1,35,426 (i.e. 88 percent)

were Hindus, while 11,212 were Muslims, 5013 Sikhs and 15 others migrated. Even though the RSS-BJP governments never tire from beating the drum of being the biggest well-wishers of Kashmiri Pandits, but even after six months having passed since this RTI application was filed, neither the Modi government nor the state administration have been able to tell as to how many Kashmiri Pandits who had migrated from the state have been resettled in Jammu and Kashmir.

This RTI disclosure has made it clear that the RSS-BJP have only encashed Kashmiri Pandits by making them pawns of their communal polarization politics. It is because of their politics of dividing the people and enchasing their votes that RSS-BJP systematically instigated Kashmiri Pandits to flee the Valley in the year 1998. Kashmiri Pandits became victims of this provocation and fled from the valley in huge numbers. It is for this reason that in the last 30 years, out of the total 1724 people killed by the Militants, only 5 percent i.e. 89 are Kashmiri Pandits, while out of a total of 1.54 lakh people who migrated from the state during this period, the highest i.e. 88 percent (1,35,426) are Kashmiri Pandits. On the other hand, Muslims accounting for 95 percent i.e. 1635 people of the total people killed during this period at the hands of the Militants, the Muslim community did not migrate in large numbers. Only 11,212 Muslims and 5013 Sikhs migrated from the state.

These figures and the RTI disclosure expose the grand lie spread by the RSS-BJP in full public view. This RTI disclosure has started a new debate about the false impression and false claims of alleged genocide of Kashmiri Pandits all over the world including in Jammu and Kashmir. A section of the media including The Telegraph, Free-Press Kashmir, and Hindi daily Dainik Bhaskar has published this information prominently.

Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhatt, President of RTI Movement Jammu-Kashmir, in his detailed article published in the Kashmir Observer on this revelation, has described in detail as to how the right wing pro-Hindu organizations had defamed Kashmiri Muslims in the world by spreading lies continuously for the last 30 years. This RTI disclosure is an eye-opener for the elements who without rhyme or reason defamed and made fun of Kashmiri Muslims.



72nd Republic Day Eve Scenario

Employment Seekers Thrashed !

- RRB, Announce Amended Results for NTPC Recruitment !
- NDA Govts, STOP Police Repression on Agitated Students and Youth !
- Modi Govt = Increasing Unemployment !
- Students and Youth of India Come out in Protest !

Thousands of youth in Patna, Muzaffarpur, Chhapra, Buxar, Nawada, Fathuha, Biharsharief, Sitamarhi and other districts of Bihar and of Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh have been pouring out on the streets in protest against the inaccurate results of the NTPC (Non Technical Popular Categories) competitive exam 2021 announced by the Railway Recruitment Board and against second exam announced for Group D recruitment.

These exams held in 2021 were due to be held in 2019 and were an earlier unannounced, second mains exams. This is common to the way Central Govt. recruits; unemployed asked to deposit fees with forms, unannounced delays, repeat exams and finally bribes rampant in selections.

See the face of unemployment. 1.25 crore candidates appeared for the exam for 35, 000 vacancies for jobs from level 2 to level 6 paying between 19, 900 to 35,000 per month. Minimum qualifications for the jobs also differ and candidates are perturbed that those with higher qualifications are being considered for jobs needing lesser qualifications. Rampant unemployment and underemployment in the country, as it is has been further increased by demonetization and by the inhuman anti-people lockdowns announced by Modi Govt.

Now the youth and students protesting against distortions in recruitment exams are getting no patient hearing; rather the NDA Govts in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have unleashed lathi wielding police against them. The Central Govt's Railway Dept has grandly issued threats to these youth that they will be identified by videos, police cases will be foisted and they will be debarred for life from serving in railways!! Tution centres which these youth haunt to prepare for elusive jobs are being harassed to rein in protestors and identify youth. Yogi Govt's police unleashed barbarity in a lodge where youth stay to attend coaching!

Naujawan Bharat Sabha and PDSU condemn the police violence and demand that

- RRB results be amended forthwith. No fresh exam for Group D
- Release all Detained !
- Suspend all police officers who ordered lathicharges !

- Action Against RRB officers for distorted results !

We call on all student and youth organizations, especially PDSU, PSU, NBS and PYL units to Support this Struggle of the Youth and Students and organize solidarity actions.

Build Struggles for Jobs for All, Job Security, Against Corruption in Job Selections!

(Issued by Dhiraj (NBS Delhi) and Rajeeve (PDSU Delhi) on 26th January 2022



Birbhum (West Bengal)

AIKMS Condemns Repression on People Opposing Deucha Panchami Coal Mine Project

(Press Release issued by AIKMS on 24 February, 2022)

- Stop police and TMC goons from attacking opponents of Deucha Panchami Coal Mine Project.
- Release all arrested, withdraw cases.
- Project passed without SIA and EIA, Cancel project.
- There is NO Fair Compensation when people are unwilling to give up land.
- NO to Displacement.

Central Executive Committee of AIKMS has condemned the WB police and TMC goondas who have launched a series of attacks on activists protesting the improperly approved Deucha-Panchami (Birbhum) Coal Mining Project. This is set to uproot more than 4300 families, of them nearly half are Tribals, the rest being Minorities, Dalits and OBCs. Police have arrested 9 persons, including intellectuals and foisted criminal cases on them.

During last few days a series of peaceful protests and peoples investigations have been undertaken in Deucha Panchami where there is a 'Mass Forum Against Politics of Hatred'. These were attacked by the police in Bolpur of Birbhum District on February 18, who seized their microphone, chairs etc. The next day Trinamool Congress hoodlums directly attacked the March, beating and harassing participants in Shantiniketan area. Later, after a protest public meeting was organized by "Birbhum Jeevan Jibika Prakriti Bachao Mahasabha" at Dewanganj village on February 20, the police carried out night raids and arrested some of the villagers including tribal activists.

These attacks have been launched only to force implementation of this anti-people, anti-environment coal mining project and to forcibly displace villagers. It thoroughly exposes the hollowness of Mamata Banerjee Government's promise that it will not forcibly take over land for this project.

People are clearly opposed to the project. Even Mamata Banerjee has been forced to admit that only 1600 out of 4300 have consented to give their lands. The administration has been forcing individuals to sign on acceptance, which is totally illegal. No public hearing has been done; the project does not have any proper approval from the Gram Panchayats; there are no proper Social and

Environment Impact Assessment Reports; and there is no clearance from National Green Tribunal based on these.

While the government appears determined to impose this project it will lead to massive displacement of local people and will cause large-scale damage to the environment. Adani group has shown keen interest in this project being started in the Deocha-Panchami-Harinsingha-Dewanganj area of Birbhum District.

Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) has repeatedly made it clear that peasants cannot be compelled to give up their farmlands, pastures, homestead and farm livelihood for the sake of mining and industry and where people reject giving up their land, there is no question of any Fair Compensation.

As per the LARR Act, 2013 the govt. has to follow the process of holding hearings, prepare Social and Environment Impact reports and assess alternatives to such projects where people are unwilling to give up their land.

(Issued by Dr. Ashish Mital, General Secretary of AIKMS and Member of SKM)

- Against this attack by TMC goons and cases by police, protests are taking place. Protests are being planned at different centres.

□ □ □

Organ of the Central Committee, CPI(ML)

NEW DEMOCRACY

February - 2022

Price : Rs.20



To demand implementation of Land Ceiling Act, Zameen Prapti Sangharsh Committee held a Rally and Meeting at Bhawanigarh, Dist. Sangrur, Punjab on February 10

Editor : Com. Y. S. Rao

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