

MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

(Marxist- Leninist) (Liberation)

For the

15th Lok Sabha Elections 2009

CPI (ML)'s perspective on the burning issues that confront us in this election

Economic Crisis

The UPA Government, betraying its promises to the *Aam Aadmi*, instead embraced America and corporates like Ambani .

According to the Govt's own admission half a million people lost jobs in the period between and December 2008, pushing many workers to suicide. The situation has vastly deteriorated since then.

The Government has tightened the stranglehold of MNCs on Indian agriculture, locking farmers into a dept trap, and opened up agriculture, forcing our farmers to compete with heavily subsidized farmers of the west and leaving them at the mercy of global price fluctuations. As a result of the UPA government's refusal to reverse these killer policies, farmers in Vidarbha (Maharashtra), Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Wynad (Kerala) continue to reap the harvest of suicides. In spite of Vidarbha suicides being linked with the failure of seed MNC Monsanto's Bt.cotton, the Indian Government has allowed Monsanto to conduct field trials of GM crops. Clearly the UPA Government is quite willing to risk our health and environment and sacrifice farmers lives in order to protected the interested of MNCs. The Manmohan regime's Indo-US Knowledge initiative on agriculture has singed away India's own independence in agriculture research.

The Government's policy of binding BPL to arbitrary limits, combined with callous and corrupt administrative machinery, of pushes the poor out the BPL lists even as prices of food and fuel soar, joblessness grows and PDS dealers and black-marketeers make a fortune. As a result, starvation stalks the whole of rural India.

Making matters worse is the rampant corporate land grab and the SEZ Act which are robbing poor farmers of their land and agricultural labourers of their livelihood. 'Development' is being defined as gifts for greedy companies and ruthless eviction for farmers.

On economic policies, rival state governments and parties have been marked by a remarkable consensus and commitment to the pro-rich, pro-US policy orientation. Corporate land grab and state repression against peasants' resistance has become the common language of governance-be it at Bajera Khurd and Noida in Mayawati's UP, Kalinganagar in Navin Patnaik's Orissa, Mudigonda in Congress-ruled AP or Nandigram and Singur in Buddhadeb's West Bengal.

The UPA's *Aam Aadmi* showpieces - 'human face' masks for the cruel impact of neoliberal policies and the resulting economic crisis - now stand exposed for eyewash. Far from acting as a safety net

for steeply spirally joblessness, NREGA has miserably failed even to deliver its promise of 100 days work guarantee. Inadequate budget allocation have 'guaranteed' axing of work and wages, combined by rampant loot by authorities. Activists leading struggles to expose and combat corruption in NREGA have been killed.

Even as labour laws and worker's right are blatantly violated, the Unorganised Worker's Social Security Act excludes large sections of workers in informal and contractualised jobs and in the absence of any fund commitment by the Government, fails to provide any effective 'social security'.

Procurement centres remained in the grip of a nexus of kulaks agents and corrupt officials forcing small and middle peasants to make distress-sales. The Rs.60000 crore loan waiver for debt-ridden peasants announced by the UPA Government in the fag end of its tenure turned out to be a big lie. Neither was it backed by actual allocations in the budget. Nor did it extend to loans taken from private money lenders-the main factor in farmers' suicides.

People's Charter for a way Out of Economic Crisis:

Ending agrarian crisis and peasant distress:

- India should walk out of the WTO-sponsored Agreement on Agriculture
- Thoroughgoing land reforms and lowering of land ceiling
- Subsidised agro inputs for small and medium farmers and regulation of prices of all inputs
- Vastly enhance public investment in agriculture and infrastructure and arrange for comprehensive crop insurance
- Zero-interest credit for farmers; a new Debt Relief Act to be enacted to curb usury
- Procurement guarantee at fair MSP (minimum support price)
- Ban on forward/futures trading in agricultural produce

Manifesto of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)(Liberation) for the 15th Lok Sabha Elections

The 15th Lok Sabha elections have been announced. As the country gets ready to vote for the constitution of a new Lok Sabha, dark cloud of deepening crisis overshadow our entire economy. While the rural economy had long been reeling under an acute agrarian crisis, and soaring prices had been reducing the already limited purchasing power of the masses, now jobs have started vanishing even in the so-called growth sectors and wages are going down to make survival a challenge for even larger sections of the poor and working people. The government's pompous rhetoric of rapid economic growth and massive investment inflow has melted into thin air, and the people have been asked to get ready for a long period of recession. This is not a crisis that has resulted from some natural calamity or some sudden disruption or downturn in trade or industrial

production. It is disaster that has been wooed and shaped by our rulers through their relentless pursuit of elitist and pro-imperialist economic policies. Years of systematic neglect of agriculture, basic industry and services and unbridled freedom for big capital have led to the present situation. The rulers who had been promising economic growth through globalisation are now trying to explain away the crisis as a global phenomenon. Ten years ago when a major currency turmoil had broken out in East and South-East Asia, India had not been hit that hard. But today the crisis emanating from faraway US has delivered a much bigger blow on the Indian economy. Over the last two decades our entire economy has been increasingly integrated with the American empire. Today, every bit of the made-in-USA crisis is flourishing on the Indian soil.

Even after being hit by such a huge crisis, the government of India has taken no measure to protect the economy from the invasion of foreign capital. On the contrary more concessions have been announced for foreign capital in the last few months even as the US has adopted a series of protectionist measures for its own economy. Instead of launching any relief package to protect agriculture, peasantry the livelihood of the poor, the government has announced a massive bail-out package for big corporate houses and scamsters like Satyam. And this, when the government's own figures admit that 77% of the Indian people are compelled to live on a daily budget of less than Rs.20!

The recent Presidential election in the US saw the American people deliver a powerful mandate against the disastrous legacy of George Bush. But the UPA government described the same Bush administration as India's greatest benefactor. Now under Obama, the US is desperately trying to find a way out of the worst economic and politico-military crisis to have befallen on the country since World War II. But the Indian ruling classes continue to subject India to ever bigger dependence on the crisis-ridden US in every sphere.

Not only our economy, but our foreign policy is also mortgaged to the US. India is now regarded as one of the most loyal clients of the US-Israel axis in Asia. This has made India all the more vulnerable to terrorist attacks, and in the name of fighting terrorism our rulers are allowing the US to intervene increasingly in our strategic affairs and matters of domestic governance.

In this election we appeal to you to deliver a powerful verdict against this disastrous course and punish the political forces that have pauperized the masses, endangered the country and made a mockery of our national dignity and self-respect. We appeal to you to give a decisive verdict against the perpetrators of communal violence, regional chauvinism and social oppression.

The CPI (ML) seeks your support to strengthen the battle for India's self-reliance and self-respect, for the advance and assertion of deprived areas and weaker sections of the society and for the welfare, democratic unity and fundamental rights and dignity of the entire people. We seek your support and vote to raise the voice of the oppressed and down-trodden people within the Parliament also and resist every assault on democracy, secularism and people's livelihood.

- Scrapping of SEZ Act
- No to forcible acquisition of agricultural land
- No to introduction of genetically modified (GN) crops until after a rigorous and transparent scientific evaluation; immediate stop to all field trials of GM crops

More jobs, Enhanced Purchasing Power

- Immediately lift the ban on recruitment and fulfill backlog of SC/ST quota in banks public sector, central and state Government posts
- Expand NREGA to provide at least 200 days of employment

- Enact a law for Urban Employment Guarantee on the lines of NREGA
- Enlist all poor in the BPL list, ensure that the poor are given 50 kilograms of grains at the rate of Rs.2 per kg and 5 liters of kerosene at the rate of Rs.2 per liter every month, expand and strengthen the PDS system
- **Extend provisions of 6th Pay commission of minimum wages to unorganized sector workers and NREGA workers**
- Regularise all contract works and para-employees
- Enact law for Agricultural Workers
- Punishment for officials involved in corruption in NREGA/BPL/PDS and other social welfare schemes

Increased Public Spending

- An end to the privatization and contractualisation of health services and higher investment in public health
- Enhanced expenditure on rural infrastructure
- Guaranteed housing for rural and urban poor

Checks on Corporates and MNCs

- seeks details of money stashed by Indian corporates in Swiss banks and reclaim the same, recovery of unpaid loans defaulted by big business houses
- Confiscation of assets and nationalization of enterprises of fraudulent corporations
- Punishment for corporations guilty of pesticide poisoning and recovery of damages from them under the principle of “polluter pays”
- Reverse the trend of steady relaxation of FDI caps in retail, insurance and other sectors impose strict curbs on foreign capital
- No to sops subsidies, tax waivers etc... for corporates

Imperialist Domination

In the past five years, the UPA Government has inflicted shameful blows to India’s sovereignty and self-respect. The Indo-US Nuke Deal is claimed by the UPA Govt. to be the jewel in the crown of its diplomatic achievements. The very foundation of this deal – the claim that India lacks fuel supplies for its nuclear programme-now stands exposed as a huge lie. The recent report of the CAG has revealed that India in fact has enough uranium for 40 years-data that was falsified and distorted by the UPA Government in order to push for the Nuke Deal. This Deal has enormous political costs-if India fails to have a foreign policy that is ‘congruent’ with that of the US, the US can unilaterally cancel the Deal. In order to ‘qualify’ for the Deal, the UPA Govt. took steps to break with India’s long-standing foreign policy orientation, by voting against Iran at the IAEA twice. Alongside the Nuke Deal, the UPA Govt. has also brought India closer to extending military support to the USA.

Even as the country is rendered more insecure to terrorism as a result of the UPA Government’s policy of embracing war-mongering killer regimes like USA and Israel, the Government is using the bogey of terrorism to massively hike spending on purchases from the global arms industry of these very countries.

The Nuke Deal vote in parliament exposed the unprincipled, opportunist and corrupt character of the ruling class Government and ‘Opposition’ alike in Parliament. Issues of crucial national interest with enduring implications for our country’s independence cannot be left in the hands of such forces.

For an anti-Imperialist and independent foreign policy

- Scrap Indo-US Nuclear Deal
- De-link Indian foreign policy from the US-Israel axis- work towards dismantling of US bases and withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan; diplomatic pressure on Israel to end its blockade and aggression on Palestinian land; proactive support for Palestinian liberation struggle; end military buying from Israel
- Firmly oppose US intervention in South Asia
- No to big-brotherly hegemonic approach and war-mongering against neighbouring countries; an end to military and strategic support to military dictatorship in Burma and war on Tamils in Sri Lanka; diplomatic pressure to restore democracy in Burma and for a political solution to the Tamil question in Sri Lanka
- Building of closer cooperation and anti-imperialist solidarities with Latin American and Asian countries

Communal Violence, Caste Oppression and Regional Chauvinism

The UPA Government rode to power on the promise of curbing communal violence, and promised to enact a Law against the same. But it remained a mute spectator when the Sangh Parivar organised a pogrom against poor Christians in Kandhamal, Orissa. The UPA's communal Violence (prevention) Bill undermines its own stated purpose.

The investigation into the Malegaon blasts points to the involvement of the Sangh Parivar in acts of terrorism. Yet the UPA Government has refused to impose a ban on organizations like the Abhinav Bharat and Bajrang Dal – which have a proven record of terrorism and communal violence.

In Maharashtra, the MNS and Shiv Sena unleashed chauvinistic frenzy against poor North Indian migrant workers and students. The Congress Government of Maharashtra and the UPA Government turned a blind eye and refused to take any action to protect the hapless migrants or punish the perpetrators.

Dalits who achieve a measure of economic security or who choose to assert their dignity have been victims of caste atrocities – Gohana, Khairlanji and the assault on CPI(ML) activist Bant Singh in Punjab are three of the worst instances, all of which occurred in Congress – ruled states. During Bihar CM Nitish Kumar's recent 'Vikas Yatra' too, a Dalit settlement was torched in Darbhanga.

Unfortunately, things have not been much better in Mayawati-ruled UP where Dalit college student Chakrasen was lynched to death at Pratapgarh, and his killers protected by leaders of Mayawati's own BSP. Emboldened by Mayawati's 'sarvajan' shift, feudal-mafia forces in UP have intensified their assaults on Dalit women.

For Secularism and Justice:

- Communal profiling, stereotyping and economic crimes against minorities to be classified as communal violence
- A law to penalise Governments and responsible police officials for failure to curb communal violence, regional chauvinism and caste atrocities
- Exemplary punishment for perpetrators of communal violence, caste atrocities and regional chauvinism
- A thoroughgoing enquiry into the involvement of the Sangh parivar in acts of terrorism
- Bans on Bajarang Dal, MNS and other outfits involved in communal and chauvinistic violence
- Constitution of a National Commission for Migrant Labourers on the lines of SC/ST Commission: enact Atrocities on Migrant Labour (Prevention) Act on the lines of the similar act for dalits.

Assaults on Democracy

The UPA Government has failed utterly to contain terrorism – and India has hit again and again with terrorist attacks – the worst yet being at Mumbai in November 2008. Past experience has proven that draconian laws cannot help to curb terrorism: though they do come in handy to crush dissent and strangle democracy. In spite of this, the UPA Govt. which had scrapped POTA with much fanfare has again brought back POTA in another guise (the amended UAPA) in the name of curbing terrorism.

In the wake of massive protests in Manipur against the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), the UPA Government appointed the Jeevan Reddy committee, but ignored its recommendations to scrap the AFSPA.

Movements for autonomy and separate statehood – in Karbi Anglong and NC Hills, Gorkhaland, Telengana, Vidarbha, Bundelkhad – have been betrayed time and again at the altar of political opportunism. Parts of the North East and Kashmir have witnessed powerful mass movements for self-determination have been met with repression, clampdowns and curfews.

Political assassinations of activists and radical voices have abounded. In Jharkhand, CPI(ML) MLA Mahendra Singh was murdered during BJP rule – while in UPA rule, NREGA activists of the CPI(ML), Langtuk Phangcho was kidnapped and killed by a ‘ceasefire’ militant group, in collusion with the ruling Congress Government.

The Salwa Judum – a private vigilante army which terrorizes tribals and is aimed at facilitating corporate grab of tribal land – has been patronized by the Congress and BJP alike in Chhattisgarh on the pretext of countering Maoism, and its critics like Dr. Binayak Sen languish in jail. The UPA Government at the Centre has failed to take any measures either to ban Salwa Judum or to free Dr. Sen in spite of an international outcry against his incarceration.

Every time the rural and urban poor raise their voice in protest, they are met with severe repression – lathicharge, arrest, custodial torture and even police firing. Movements demanding ST status – by the Gujjars in Rajasthan and tea tribes of Assam – too have faced severe repression. The Namasudras in UP and Uttarakhand, demanding SC status, are branded as ‘Bangladeshis’ and face harassment and evacuation.

CPI (ML) is committed to struggling for:

- Implementation of Article 244-A of the Constitution to grant the long-pending demand for autonomous statehood to Karbi Anglong and NC Hills

- Speedy constitution of a second State Reorganisation Commission to address aspirations for separate statehood in Telengana, Gorkhaland, Vidarbha, Bundelkhand etc
- Withdrawal of the draconian provisions of UAPA, other undemocratic laws like the AFSPA
- Banning Salwa Judum and release of Dr. Binayak Sen
- Exemplary punishment to the police-politician-anti-social nexus responsible for Kalinganagar-Nandigram-Mudigonda type of massacres
- Unconditional acquittal of all rural poor and peasant activists who have been implicated and imprisoned in false cases.

Rhetoric and Reality

In order to cover up the brutal reality of repressive and insensitive rule, the UPA Government at the Centre as well as various states ruled by UPA, NDA and others have resorted to the rhetoric of “good governance.” Slogans of ‘youth power,’ ‘women’s empowerment’ are part of this misleading rhetoric. The ‘Jai Ho’ and ‘Slumdog Millionaire’ slogans moved by the Congress deserve the same fate as the ‘Feel Good’ and ‘India Shining’ campaigns of the NDA.

Navin Patnaik in Orissa and Modi in Gujarat, helped along by obliging and admiring corporates, all projected the notion that ‘good governance’ was compatible with communal pogroms against minorities, custodial killings, as well as police firing on protesting adivasis. In Bihar, Nitish Kumar’s vaneer of ‘good governance’ was washed away by the flooding of the Kosi – which exposed not only the sheer criminal negligence that caused the flood but also the corruption, callousness and political opportunism that marked the inadequate and insensitive relief and rehabilitation measures. In UP too, Mayawati’s promises of ‘crime-free governance’ have proved hollow, with Minister after Minister in the BSP Government involved in murders.

Let us take a look at the reality behind the rhetoric:

“Youth Power”

Such slogans suggest, not-so-subtly, that the concerns of youth are adequately addressed as long as Rahul Gandhi enjoys power! But this cannot mask the fact youth in India are facing and all-round offensive.

Young people bear the brunt of joblessness and resulting insecurity. Schooling as well as higher education is being ruthlessly privatized – ‘reserving’ quality education for the rich. The UPA Government’s much-touted Right to Education (RTE) Bill recently tabled in Parliaments is blatant betrayal and subversion of the Constitutional promise of right to education. The Lyngdoh Committee recommendations are being used to crack down on students’ union elections, against their own stated purpose of ensuring campus democracy. Campus violence is the pretext, but the real aim is to get rid of organized student resistance which is the main hurdle in the path of unbridled privatization and commercialization. Failure to curb ‘ragging’ is claiming the lives of innocents like Aman Kachroo.

Youth from North India and the North East, migrating to other states in search of education and employment are at the receiving end of regional chauvinistic politics and violence. The suspicious ‘encounter’ of Rahul Raf in Mumbai showed that the police protects the chauvinists and targets their victims.

Youth people like Rizwan-ur Rehman who embrace the values of freedom and reject communal and caste borders in personal relationships have lost their lives at the hands of powerful politicians

and businessmen. In Karnataka, young people have been the targets for a series of assaults by Sangh Parivar outfits – and one schoolgirl Ashwini was driven to suicide after one such instance of public humiliation.

Innocent Muslim youth are the target of a communal witch-hunt in the name of counter-terror operations. Governments of all hues announce competing ‘masterminds’ for the same offences. The total denial of transparency is underlined by the Government’s adamant refusal to order a judicial enquiry into the suspicious Batla House encounter.

An Agenda for Youth and Students:

- At least 6% of GDP on education
- No to fee hikes, commercialization of higher education, strict regulation of fees in private institutions and professional courses
- Introduction of Common school system; each school to be declared a ‘neighbourhood school’ and to provide low- cost schooling of the same good quality to every child in the neighbourhood
- Implementation of the recommendations of the Muchkund Dubey Committee Report in Bihar
- Regularisation of para teachers
- Ensuring of regular and democratic Students’ Union elections in all campuses, thorough review of Lyngdoh Committee recommendations
- Curbing ‘ragging’ on campuses through democratic participation of students and teachers
- Judicial enquiry into the Batla House encounter and exemplary punishment for every instance of fake encounter, custodial torture or framing of innocents

“Women’s Empowerment”

The UPA Government, like its predecessor the NDA Government, has betrayed the long-pending promise of 33% reservation for women in Assemblies and Parliament. Women workers are bearing the worst brunt of price rise, job-cuts and wage cuts. Equal wages are routinely denied to women in most sectors, while in NREGA, women are denied their right to employment. Women workers are overwhelmingly confined to work that is casual, insecure and exploitative. Entire health services and social services of the ASHA and anganwadi variety are run on the unpaid labour of women. Migrant women workers face extreme insecurity and exploitation.

Women are the worst victims of the communal fascist forces: be it women of the minority communities at Gujarat and Kandhamal or young working women in Karnataka.

Dalit and adivasi women continue to face social humiliation and violence – as the incident at khairlanji reminded us. Women have also been targets for custodial killings and rape by security forces – the case of Manorama in Manipur sparked off a massive movement in 2004. Women have been at the forefront of movements against corporate land grab – and have been punished with rape and murder (for instance Tapasi Malik and the women of Nandigram).

CPI(ML) for Women's Equality and Freedom:

- Put 33% Reservation Bill to vote in Parliament
- Secure employment, fixed and adequate remuneration and employees' benefits for women employed in ASHA,anganwadi, mid-day meal and other services
- Ensure legally mandated jobs for women, crèche facilities at worksites, and introduction of separate bank accounts for women under NREGA
- Stern punishment for each instance of moral policing or coercion of women in inter-caste or intercommunity relationships

“Social Justice”

All tall claims of social justice cannot cover up the fact that it is dalits and adivasis who form the overwhelming majority of victims of starvation deaths, displacement, eviction and corporate land grab. The neoliberal policies pursued by the UPA Government and all manners of State Governments have intensified this offensive on this most vulnerable section. Movements of Dalits and adivasis for their right to land. Forests and natural resources like water face the most brutal repression: Kalinganagar and Chengara are stark examples.

The UPA Government is trying to make tall claims of ‘social justice’ based on its long overdue introduction of OBC reservation in higher education, but the same Government, at the fag end of its tenure, shamefully pandered to the ‘meritocratic’ arguments of the elitist anti-quota lobby by tabling and passing the scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation in Posts and services) 2008 Bill which proposed to scrap reservation at the faculty level for SCs, STs and OBCs in institutions of ‘national importance’. It is another matter that the Government was forced by vociferous protests to promise to delete the latter clause from the Bill.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006, passed under much pressure from adivasis and forest dwellers, has failed to offer effective protection to the sections most vulnerable to illegal eviction from forests and other natural resources. In Orissa, the Act has failed to prevent the massive eviction of adivasis from the Niyamgiri forests to make way for mining MNCs. In Jharkhand, another state where adivasis predominate, panchayat elections are yet to be held; this has robbed the adivasis of the right of democratic role in implementing the Act. In Mayawati's UP too, the Forest Rights Act is being blatantly violated.

C PI (ML)'s Charter for Dignity and Rights of Dalits, Adivasis and Backward Classes:

* Resistance to any attempt to negate or truncate reservation for SC/ST/OBCs in jobs and education

- * Stern action against perpetrators of atrocities on SC-ST communities
- * Full right on land, water and forest resources
- * Full implementation of PESA provisions in areas with sizable tribal populations

“Inclusive Development” for Minorities

The Sacchar Committee report revealed the extent of marginalization of Muslims across the country – not just in BJP-ruled states but even in states ruled by so-called ‘secular’ forces. The UPA Government, however, has failed to implement the recommendations of the Sacchar Committee – and has therefore criminally failed to address the burning question of deprivation and marginalisation of minorities. But at the same time, in the wake of the Sacchar committee report, the Congress and UPA are trying to divorce the question of education and empowerment of

minorities from that of justice. Education and other aspects of development are no doubt important. But is any empowerment for Muslim minorities possible without ensuring justice in cases of organized communal violence and ending the widespread stereotyping and communal witch-hunt in the name of countering terrorism? No amount of 'inclusive' rhetoric for Christian minorities can replace the questions of full freedom of religion; punishment for the perpetrators of Kandhamal; and scrapping of communally-motivated 'anti-conversion' laws.

When Muslims join movements against corporate land grab (as at Nandigram) or against pro-imperialist foreign policy, they are branded as 'communal' by those in power. This is nothing but a blatant denial of their rights of citizenship.

Nitish Kumar in Bihar has tried to mask his partnership with the communal BJP, but his pro-minority mask has been ripped apart by the collusion of JD(U) goons in recent communal violence in Gopalganj.

While Congress regimes in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh have conducted custodial tortures and communal witch-hunts of Muslim youth as cold-bloodedly as Modi in Gujarat, Mayawati in UP too has presides over the stereotyping, witch-hunt and framing of innocent Muslim youth from Azamgarh and other parts of UP.

CPI (ML) is committed to struggling for:

- Implementation of recommendations of the Sacchar Committee Report
- Judicial enquiry into each instance of police encounter
- Exemplary and time-bound punishment for perpetrators of communal violence
- Ensuring of the Constitutional provisions of religious freedom and protection of rights of minorities

Vote For Real Change

Against the Anti-people, Anti-poor Ruling Consensus

Since 1996, coalition governments have become the norm at the Centre. While the UF government formed in 1996 and the NDA government formed in 1998 lasted only a few months, the BJP and the Congress both have since managed to survive two full terms at the head of their respective coalitions. The kind of Congress monopoly that existed at the centre till 1977 has become a thing of the past and the ruling classes have been forced to reconcile themselves with this new political reality. With single-party domination becoming elusive, the ruling classes would now like to impose a two-party or two-coalition system.

This ruling class design to subject the polity to a duopoly of the UPA and NDA must be frustrated. But a rag-tag 'third front' that offers no policy alternative and is crowded by forces with dubious track record cannot face this challenge. Only a powerful Left and democratic camp drawing its strength from the struggles and aspirations of the Indian people for a better tomorrow can be the most effective bulwark against the ruling classes' attempt to regiment the polity.

The 14th Lok Sabha had the biggest ever representation of the CPI(M) and Left Front partners, but any hope that this would lead to a powerful Left assertion in national politics and strengthening of the Left and democratic camp was belied. The CPI (M)-led Left allowed itself to be shackled programmatically to the Congress-led UPA for most part of the UPA government's tenure. The CPI (M) failed to demarcate itself over the issue of SEZ, a sinister pretext for corporate landlordism, and the SEZ Act 2005 was allowed to be passed without any protest. Worse still, the CPI (M)-led government in West Bengal became infamous for the most coercive attempts to acquire agricultural land in the name of industrialization and SEZ.

The growing derailment and degeneration of the CPI (M)-led regimes in West Bengal and Kerala has come as a shock to the will-wishers of the Left even as it has emboldened the Congress and other rightwing forces all over the country to try and tarnish the image of the Left. Any real advance towards an effective third front to take on both the UPA and NDA calls for rejuvenation of the Left movement and this in turn cannot be achieved without a firm and sustained struggle against the lapses and blunders and mistaken priorities and policies of the Left in power.

At the same time, the CPI (ML) also recognizes the need and possibility of forging broader unity on issues of common concern. In Bihar, the CPI (ML) has taken initiative to unleash united action of diverse Left forces against the misrule of the NDA government in the state and in this election it has been possible to ensure seal adjustment among the three parties in Bihar.

CPI (ML) has mobilized the working poor and spearheaded powerful struggles on issues of NREGA, BPL cards and right to land. CPI (ML) has been an outspoken voice against communal violence, regional chauvinism, communal witch-hunts in the name of countering terrorism, pro-imperialist foreign policy and corporate land grab. CPI (ML)'s elected representatives have been the bold voice of people's resistance in the Assembly in Bihar and Jharkhand – braving false cases, arrest, and even murder.

The sCPI (ML) appeals to you to vote against UPA and NDA and also reject the ruling parties and coalitions in different states that have betrayed the aspirations of the people. Vote for CPI(ML) to strengthen your struggle against the pro-rich pro-US policies of the ruling classes.

Vote for CPI (ML)

So that the bold voice of people's resistance resonates in Parliament.

Vote for CPI (ML)

for a fighting Left opposition within Parliament.

Vote for CPI (ML)

to rebuild and revitalize the Left movement in the country and forge a fighting unity of Left and democratic forces.

Vote for real change! Vote for CPI (ML)!