

# **Parliamentary Democracy is an illusion for the masses! Revolution is their Reality!**

*To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter.*

--Marx

Once again the great Indian fraud is on—the spectacle of the farce of parliamentary elections. Even apologists of parliamentary democracy in India are quick to call it the most fragmented election ever to be fought. In this make believe world of the so-called largest ‘democracy’, even those who vouch by the system is not ready to say who their friends/foes are in this sham of representation. And this wisdom of the predicament ahead or the predicament of the wisdom of parliamentary ‘democracy’ in 21<sup>st</sup> century India is best summed up by none other than Lalu Prasad—one of the PMs in waiting—when he wryly observes that “when all of us want to win why contest separately?” If in the pre-poll scenario the running theme is the wisdom of Lalu to avoid multi-corner contests and hence fragmentation of votes, then the circus of musical chair that ensue the post poll scenario is as fluid as the craving needs of an abusive drunkard short of money. Anyone who has more than thirty seats in the next Lok Sabha elections will be a strong contender for the PM’s post in the dog-eat-dog world of Parliamentary politics.

Fully aware of the complete loss of face of a process that has hardly evoked confidence in the average citizen of the ‘republic’ all the parliamentary parties right from Congress, BJP to the parliamentary ‘Marxists’ are harping on the need for every citizen to cast their vote failing which they are set for doom. The electronic and print media are abuzz with a variety of advertisements exhorting every voter the need to utilize a non-existent weapon—their vote. Thousands of crores are being spent by central and state governments, politicians and money bags to instil a sense of urgency and belonging in every voter as if their ‘right’ vote would lift the sinking ship—the Indian republic. Sixty years after the transfer of power by the British to their servile counterparts in the subcontinent it has become inevitable for the comprador Indian ruling classes to conjure up some legitimacy among the masses, every five years, under the smokescreen of elections for their right to loot and plunder.

## **Elections or the politics of *charcha, parcha and kharcha***

Official estimate of expenditure on present elections is a whopping Rs.10000 crores. This does not include the advertisements indulged in by various ruling parties using the people’s money. A cursory look at the recently concluded elections to Kashmir assembly shows how much money is illegally routed by the state to manufacture consent from a people who have been consistently raising their voice for *Azadi*. It is an open secret that every new aspirant candidate in J & K was given ten lakh rupees by the Indian state. The Election Commission, a toothless wonder, can do little is evident when we look into the last assembly elections in Karnataka. Media reported that on an average each candidate of the BJP, Congress and JD (S) spent in their regions at least 5-6 crores. Most notably, for nine seats in the iron ore rich Bellary district and in almost all urban centres money spent by each candidate was to the tune of 15-18 crores. A conservative estimate of major contenders in all the 224 constituencies put the expenditure at a massive Rs.4000 crores. The big mining mafia of Bellary along with the real estate dons played a key role in bankrolling thousands of crores for the BJP. The real estate dons also became candidates for the BJP. Besides, liquor also played a key role in inducing voters from the economically and socially weaker sections.

In AP, just before the day of declaration of election schedule, the loyal babus of YSR government worked through the night at the secretariat literally burning the midnight oil with lights off to sign 3000 predated GOs doling out benefits to various sections. Not to be left behind the techno savvy former CM Chandrababu raised the jackpot by dishing out 1 crore colour TVs to the poor besides several such sops. So much for the triumph of the Indian democratic process!

The dubious role of black money and money bags in the every day life of the great Indian democracy is evident from the number of scams that have graced parliament since 80s: Lakhubhai Pathak cheating scandal, Bofors Scandal, St. Kitts forgery scandal, JMM bribery scandal, hawala scandal, telecom scam, coffingate, defence procurement scandal, cash for query scam, MPLADS scam, human trafficking scam, cash for vote scam. Due to want of space one is restrained to go into further details.

### **The Parliamentary Marxists**

The most dubious role in legitimising the farce of parliamentary process lies with the so-called 'mainstream' left. The CPI participated in elections even before the transfer of power, gaining British colonial legitimacy. They have since graduated from being reformist to ruling class parties with the CPI (M) turning into social fascists. Their new partner this time is CPI (ML) (Liberation) the entrant to the electoral fray in the early 80s. Notwithstanding their radical pretensions they stand exposed as the most degenerate as they keep changing their partners in their eagerness to feel the *gaddi*. Liberation which made a song and dance of the CPI and CPM for their servility to imperialists and comprador big business houses like the Tatas, Jindals, Dove etc by brutally suppressing the people's protests and handing over land and wealth to these sharks in Singur, Nandigram, Salboni, Lalgargh etc. has joined hands with the same parties in Bihar to fight elections! Liberation had tried similar truck desperately with SP, LJP and even RJD in Bihar before.

But for the support of the social fascists the imperialist stooge Manmohan Singh could not have passed several anti-people policies and anti-national acts in the parliament. Thus after four years of hobnobbing with the UPA they had to pull out to save the last straw of eyewash of opposing the UPA in the nuclear deal. The third front that they managed with all crooks and gangsters like Chandrababu Naidu, Mayawati and Jayalalitha, Deve Gowda will collapse due to its own contradictions as the race to the government formation starts. The politics of convenient alliances just to get to the *gaddi* or to be a dominant partner has really brought out the opportunistic and anti-people nature of the parliamentary left—even their anti-communal pretensions. When it comes to the real problems of the people their subservience to imperialist interests have hardly made them different from the Congress and BJP.

### **The emerging scenario**

Whether it is the Congress led UPA with or without the support of CPM or the erstwhile BJP led NDA, all combinations of the parliamentary circus have—a mute testimony of their comprador nature—very faithfully implemented the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) dictated by the IMF and WB euphemistically called LPG. The outcome of this 'shining India' is for everyone to see.

As the world economy is reeling under the worst ever crisis since the Great Depression, India has been ever more deeply embedded in the imperialist web, particularly the US which has hit the *nadir* with the largest budget and trade deficits, the dollar hitting an all time low. The dominance of foreign capital is more than ever before. Even the smallest trough in the Western economies has deep repercussions in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country like India as 40 percent of her GDP comes from exports and imports. The stock exchanges that are in the vice like grip of FIIs have been devastated. With the FIIs withdrawing \$ 13 billion (Rs. 62,880 crores) from the country in 2008 investors in the Indian stock market lost Rs.36,50,000 crores in nine months. The ninety percent drop in real estate stocks and 80 percent in Mutual Funds where much of middle-class savings are put have further worsened the crisis.

In the equity of the comprador big business houses, share of foreign capital has gone up from an average of about 6 percent to about 25 percent. Even for its credit, the bulk of big business is dependent on foreign borrowings (in the form of ECBs, etc) as interest rates are much less abroad. The bourgeois media has unequivocally pointed out that total investor wealth, in terms of market capitalization, of all limited companies together dipped from Rs.73,00,000 crore in Jan 2008 to Rs.36,50,000 crore in Oct.2008. Since then it has dropped further. Today, half of the 2,699 quoted companies are below the book value. For the

first time in 15 years industrial output fell by 0.5 percent in January 2009. The signature Indian economy such as the car market, export industry (leather, textiles, IT and ITES) have slumped drastically.

The learned PM and the erudite FM have sought to take us deeper into the vortex of the imperialist beast as they reduced the restrictions on Participatory Notes, raised the interest rates on NRI loans; increased the equity capital allowed in insurance from 26 to 49 percent; allowed the take-over of India's largest pharmaceutical company, Ranbaxy, by a Japanese TNC; the list lingers. The policies being adopted—be it the Congress, BJP, CPM, TDP R/JD, BSP, SP, AGP, NC or any of their ilk—are nothing but a prescription for disaster for the people of this subcontinent, a prop for the imperialists (and their comprador agents within the country) to help them shift the burden of their crisis on the peoples of the backward countries like India.

### **Agrarian distress—awaiting a social explosion**

The violent brutality of the policy of LPG consummates in the story of more than 180000 peasants who have committed suicide in the last ten years due to the mounting agrarian crisis when the Vajpayees and Manmohans were shamelessly peddling the story of 'Shining India'. Annual growth rate in agricultural production has further dipped from 3.8 percent in 2006-07 to 2.6 percent in 2007-08 owing to criminal neglect *ala* India Shining where prime agricultural land is allotted for the real estate bubble and bio-diesel production. Centre's expenditure on agriculture has fallen by 20 percent between 1990-91 and 2004-05; on irrigation and flood control by 15 percent. The neglect of various governments is despite the fact agriculture still provides 70 percent of employment while the service sector which accounts for 55 percent of the GDP gives only a paltry 0.5 percent of employment. This shift in priority is also in the interest of multinational agri-based industries that have seen a burgeoning market in the world food crisis. Today over 70 percent of our people live in the rural areas in utter backwardness and penury weighed down by varied forms of feudal, semi-feudal and now 'modern' forms of exploitation and loot. As per a study sixty years of the 'largest democracy' have done little to over 77 percent of the population who live on Rs. 20/day on average.

### **Land grab, displacement and destruction in the name of development**

The 600 odd SEZs which are all set to grab a massive 1750 sq km of land will displace 1.14 lakh farming households and 82000 labouring households i.e. a minimum of one million people thus pushing the rural population to the brink. Further, hundreds of thousands of MoUs on mining, mega-dams, super highways, etc. signed with imperialist and comprador capital is nothing but total sell out of valuable resources of the people while displacing lakhs and lakhs of them from their livelihoods. The opening up of the huge retail market in India for multinational retail giants like Walmart will displace 4-6 lakh families from their livelihoods.

### **Fleecing the people**

The masses are the worst hit under the policies of LPG. In these two decades all political parties blamed each other for the ills of the economy while faithfully implementing policies of LPG without any discontinuity which saw the rich getting richer and the lives of the poor going from bad to worse. The policy of industrialization tailor made for the coffers of the comprador bourgeoisie have largely concentrated incomes in a few hands of top promoters and majority shareholders. The share of corporate sector in the national income shot through the roof as it rose by 290 percent in the last five years.

This model of development has created billionaires like Mukesh Ambanis, one lakh millionaires and a parasitic upper class eating off the crumbs of the super rich. India has the dubious distinction of having the largest number of poor in the world while at the same time also housing the second largest number of billionaires.

The rupee declined by as much as 15 percent in the few weeks ending October 2008. If we also take into account retail prices especially of basic necessities, the double digit inflation that was persistent throughout—actually around 20 percent—wreaked havoc among the poor and middle class. The near blind faith of the policy pundits on jobless growth could not be sustained with the worst decline in employment opportunities

including absolute decline, slashed wages/salaries and unprecedented price rise. Do any of the parliamentary parties approaching for vote have a concrete solution for this whirlpool of crisis that they are party to? The answer is in the air.

### **Repression on the people**

The UPA government was little different from NDA in unleashing a reign of terror on various sections of the people. Fake encounter killings of Maoists, innocent Muslims, and struggling nationalities like Kashmiri Muslims, Assamese, Nagas and Manipuris were on the rise. Muslims continued to be targets of witch hunt as every party vied the other in their favourite game—to appease the Hindu majority; to create a sense of insecurity to resort to fascist methods to suppress all just and democratic struggles of the people. Hindu fascist gangs and saffron terrorists like BJP-RSS-VHP-Bajrang Dal-Shiv Sena-RJM-Abhinav Bharat, etc. are allowed a free run in inciting anti-Christian riots and massacres while Muslim organizations such as SIMI are banned.

The people of Kashmir had poured into the streets in lakhs demanding *Azadi* despite unprecedented measures of curfew and force resorted to by the military might of the Indian state. The panic stricken Indian state could only respond with force by killing and maiming the defiant masses.

Salwa Judum is a gruesome reminder of such an assault of the state on the revolutionary masses of Chhattisgarh who have opposed tooth and nail the policies of loot and plunder. Moreover, the authoritarian fascist methods of the state came out in sharp relief through new draconian laws and even without it.

When people protest against such blood thirsty policies they are brutally suppressed through the barrel of the gun. The barrel of the gun again returns to the same battlegrounds—Kashmir, Assam, Manipur, Chhattisgarh, Bihar-Jharkhand—albeit now to elicit the consent of the people as vote to loot them further! Did anyone say the battle of the ballot?

### **The democratic alternative as emerging in Dandakaranya**

What then would a real democracy entail? It would involve a genuine assertion of peoples' power from the grass roots. People themselves will determine their future. All wings of the state—parties, political institutions, bureaucracy, judiciary, *et al*—will be answerable to the people; they having the right to recall. It would usher a society where all are educated and are conscious of their duties as well as their rights. Moreover, a system where every single person has the minimum—food, cloth and shelter.

The initiative of the masses of Chhattisgarh under our party the CPI (Maoist) is a definite step in this direction. Organised under the Janatana Sarkar they have fought the efforts of the state to implement the pro-imperialist model of development in their immediate social formation. In Dandakaranya, this struggle started with the establishment of *Gram Rajya Committees* (GRC) as the primary units of power and today it has taken deep roots in the form of Revolutionary People's Committees and the Revolutionary Peasant's Committees as the embryonic forms of people's assertion at the village level, block level and division level. It is through these organs of political power that the revolutionary masses have successfully destroyed the reactionary power of the oppressive and exploitative ruling classes in an extensive area under the leadership of the CPI (Maoist) party thus ensuring the production and reproduction of everlasting methods of equitable distribution of resources and produces.

The 8 departments under the sarkar are:

(i) Development (ii) Defence (iii) Justice (iv) Forest protection (v) Culture & Education (vi) Health (vii) Finance (viii) Public Relations (ix) Mass Organizations.

And remember these sarkars are run by adivasis—once illiterate—now educated by the party and have become politically conscious through class struggle. These RPCs are taking shape in our guerilla zones playing an effective role, where a strong party capable of leading people's war with a battle hard PLGA and its three

consolidated forces have organized the people of the area in the form of mass organizations and people's militia. The leadership of village party organizations are established up to the village level. This embryonic people's governments with four class united front in the guerilla zones is unflinchingly fighting the white terror of the reactionaries and destroying its armed forces wiping out its power. It is through this organized resistance the genocidal attempt of Salwa Judum on the adivasi population—by the murderous rulers like Manmohan Singh to Raman Singh—was beaten back.

The RPCs have enabled the people evolve a better living by new farming techniques, water management through small check dams, bio-fertilizers, seed sharing and preservation, soil conservation, poultry farming, fish farming, health education, prevention of all curable diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, malnutrition, etc. The underlying principle is equitable distribution sans disparities/unevenness. The lives of the people have considerably transformed. The role of superstitions in their lives has considerably reduced with education playing an important role. The struggle to decide their own destiny has become their world view; songs; stories.

Relative to all the state powers so far formed in India, these RPCs are the highest and truly democratic systems that would unleash the initiative of the broad masses of peasantry, develop their creativity and collectiveness in the people's war. These will work towards establishing the joint dictatorship of all the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti-Comprador Bureaucratic Bourgeois forces based on the worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the working class through out the area with the aim of New Democratic Revolution.

With the financial crisis fast engulfing the Indian subcontinent India is moving towards a social explosion. None of the political parties have a definite answer for this imminent spectre. Rest assured, they might be overconfident, complacent and numb as even without a crisis they could kill more than one and a half lakh farmers, displace millions through their warped development policies, reduce the health conditions of masses to silent deaths, massacre thousands through state terrorism on revolutionaries, nationalities, Muslims, dalits and all struggling people. The toiling masses of India have only one path. The robust road of revolution! To paraphrase Mao, the masses of the Indian subcontinent have to be *practical* and do the *impossible!*



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