

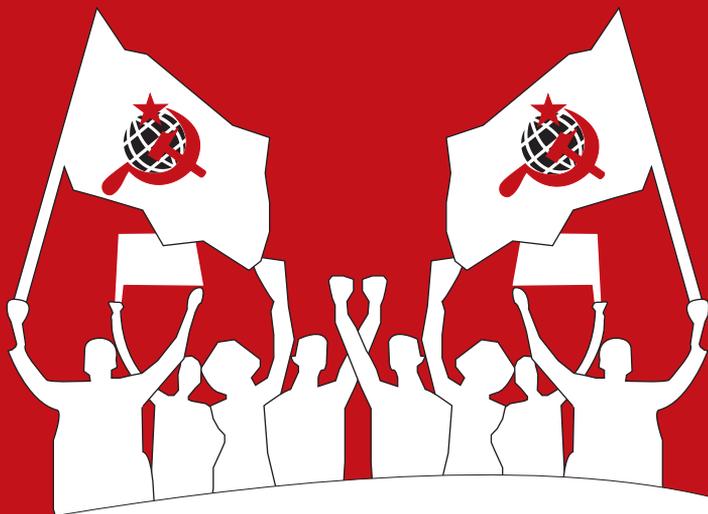
Prepare for the Coming Revolutionary Storms

**Unite in defence of the universal
rights of all workers!**

**Defeat the program of
privatisation and liberalisation!**

**Fight with the aim of establishing
workers' and peasants' rule!**

*Call of the Central Committee, Communist Ghadar Party
of India, 23rd Feb, 2012*



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Comrade Workers!

Numerous federations of workers' unions covering major sectors the economy, including banking and insurance, machinery and equipment manufacture, railways, port and docks, road transport, health and education, have announced their decision to organise an *All-India General Strike* on 28th February. It has been called to assert the common immediate demands of the working class, including enhanced minimum wages, protection and extension of pension benefits, rejection of proposed labour law reforms in favour of the capitalists, halt to privatisation, measures to bring down food prices and the demand for a universal Public Distribution System.

The Communist Ghadar Party welcomes this decision and calls on all activists of the working class to strive for the success of the All-India General Strike!

This mass action is being planned at a time when the crisis of capitalism is deepening all over the world. The capitalists of our country are investing less and speculating more with their capital. They are robbing more and more from the incomes of wage earning families through the rising food prices and additional taxation. They are exporting more and more of the surplus value extracted from us, to buy up companies in Europe, America, Africa, Asia and Australia, so as to become one of the big capitalist-imperialist powers of the world.

The livelihood and rights of workers have been severely attacked over the past 20 years of globalisation of Indian capital through privatisation and liberalisation. We workers are now facing a further round of all-sided assault by the big capitalists and the central government they control, in the name of responding to the global economic crisis.

Comrade Workers!

On 14th February, addressing the Indian Labour Conference, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh claimed that the existing policies "*unduly*" protect the interests of the "*currently employed*" and hinder the creation of new jobs. He claimed that the laws are not flexible enough for industrial units to hire more workers in a boom period and get rid of surplus manpower when market demand is falling. He applauded those state governments that have introduced reforms in their laws to lower the level of protection for workers' rights. He argued that similar reforms are needed in the central laws as well.

Facts show that during the boom period of capitalist growth in our country, i.e., during 2002-08, capitalists in export oriented industries and services hired a very large number of new recruits. And when global demand declined, they threw a large number of these workers out of their jobs. About 5 lakh jobs were destroyed in the organised industrial sector just during one quarter, October to December 2008. This fact alone exposes the myth that labour laws do not give capitalists the flexibility to hire and fire workers.

The reality in our country is that our young working population is not guaranteed the right to work and to social security. In the sectors that have grown most rapidly since 2002, such as automobiles and auto components, electronic components,

mobile phone services, IT and IT-enabled services including the news media and entertainment, workers are denied even the most basic rights. They typically work for extraordinarily long hours and can be dismissed at short notice. They have no job security whatsoever. Many of them do not enjoy any legal protection for their rights, even the basic right to form unions. For instance, the workers of Maruti, one of the largest auto companies in the country, have faced harassment, police repression and even dismissal for attempting to establish the union of their choice.

“Trade unions that fight for workers’ rights are bad for the investment climate”. This is the mantra with which the capitalist class has been taking numerous measures to lower the standards of what a worker can legitimately claim as his or her right. Contract labour has become the norm. This is the case not only in private companies; about half the workers employed in the state sector are on contract.

Special Economic Zones are one of the forms in which the rights of workers have been brazenly flouted. State governments have competed with one another to attract the biggest capitalist investors by offering them maximum flexibility in flouting the rights of workers.

When labour rights are being violated so brazenly, what is reason that the capitalist class wants to reform the central labour laws?

The central labour laws cover workers who are typically engaged in large-scale production, such as in state owned heavy industry, ports, railways, postal and banking services. They are unionised and have achieved the highest standards of recognition of workers’ rights and are also organised and experienced in defending them. The capitalist proposals to reform central labour laws are aimed at attacking precisely this most organised and

experienced section of the working class. The aim is to weaken the position of the working class as a whole. As long as there are central laws that define a higher level of benefits to some workers, other workers will have a benchmark, a point of reference in their struggle to affirm their rights and improve their conditions. The aim of the big capitalists and the central State is to lower the benchmark itself, so as to negate labour rights and raise the degree of exploitation of all workers.

While arguing that central labour laws need to be made more flexible, the central government is promising a separate set of benefits under a so-called *Social Security Act 2008*, for workers in the “*unorganised sector*”. This new Act is supposed to address the needs of workers who are not benefiting from any of the earlier labour laws. However, it actually excludes the largest sections of such workers. Agricultural workers are not covered. Nor are contract workers in the so-called *organised sector*. The extent of benefits is not specified but left to future decisions of the Central Government. All payments to workers under this Act are supposed to be financed by the central and state governments, capitalist employers and the workers themselves; but the Act does not specify who will bear what share of the cost.

The aim behind enacting a separate law with unspecified benefits for some selected “unorganised sector” workers is to divide our class, destroy our identity as workers and trample in the mud the rights that belong to all of us, by virtue of being workers.

Comrade Workers!

We, the workers, must boldly put forward our definition of the right to work and to social security, and other basic rights of workers, and demand that they are recognised in the fundamental law as being universal and inviolable, with severe punishment for

all violators. This is the first step in formulating the independent political program of our class.

Every person of working age, who is willing to work, has the right to participate in the social labour process. If such a person cannot find productive and remunerative work it cannot be just the individual's problem. It is the responsibility of the State to guarantee the right to work and to social security, including adequate compensation for the unemployed and adequate support after retirement age.

We who are the producers of social wealth can legitimately demand that our security is a social obligation. It is a matter of State duty. While capitalist employers must be obliged to bear the cost of social security benefits of their employees, the State must bear the ultimate responsibility of ensuring that social security is universally guaranteed, with no exclusions.

A wage-worker is not a slave. He or she does not belong to any employer full-time. A wage-worker sells labour-power for a fixed number of hours per day, for 5 or 6 days a week; the rest of the time is one's own to spend with one's family. Hence a strict legally enforced limit on the length of the working day is a right that belongs to ***all*** wage and salaried workers, without exception.

The wages paid for a day's work, or a month's work, must not be less than what is required to maintain the worker and dependents at home. Hence the right to receive a prescribed minimum wage, adjusted periodically to reflect cost of living and increase in minimum human living standards, is also a right that belongs to all workers, without exception. Every employed worker has the right to adequate breaks within the working day, to sick leave and annual leave, medical benefits and compensation for cost of living increase.

Women workers have the right to be paid equally with men for equal work. They have the right to adequate maternity leave, child care facilities at the work place and security protection when working late hours.

All employed workers have the right to form their unions and associations, to engage in collective bargaining with their employer. They have the right to strike, as one of the weapons in their efforts to ensure that their employer fulfils his obligations.

The rights enumerated above are universal. Universal means no exceptions. The right to work and to social security belongs to every person of working age. The right to minimum wages, fixed limit on the working day, to form unions and to strike work belong to every employed worker, without exception. Every working woman is entitled to the rights of women workers such as maternity leave with pay.

In summary, we workers must fight for the recognition of our basic rights as being universal and inviolable. We must demand an overriding central law that defends the modern definition of the rights that belong to every member of society, and the rights that belong to workers by virtue of being the creators of social wealth. We must also demand effective mechanisms to ensure that anyone who violates these rights is severely punished.

Comrade Workers!

Whenever the capitalist economy goes into a downturn, the appetite of the monopoly capitalists tends to increase for buying up state-owned assets at throwaway prices. The threat of privatisation of state-owned companies is once again increasing at this time. Workers of Air India and many other state owned companies are facing this threat. Privatisation remains a growing

threat in diverse areas including health, education, electricity, drinking water supply and other services that the people consider to be duties of the State to guarantee.

Privatisation is pushed in various forms. Outright strategic sale of public companies, or selling them in small bits at a time under the banner of *disinvestment* are both forms of privatisation. It also takes the form of allowing private corporations to expand in sectors that were earlier the preserve of the State. In recent times it has taken yet another form, where profits are assured for private investors while losses are loaded on the government budget in the name of *public-private partnership*.

Whatever form it takes, privatisation is an offensive against the security of livelihood and other basic rights of the working class. It is based on giving primacy to “*monopoly right*” – that is, the illegitimate right claimed by big capitalist corporations to freely go after maximum profits wherever they please. It is an abrogation by the State of its responsibilities to provide essential public services.

The aim of privatisation is to convert every sphere of economic and social activity possible into a source of maximum private profits in the hands of the capitalist monopolies. This pressure is also operating in companies whose ownership remains in the hands of the government, as in the case of banks.

The program of the big capitalists to reform the banking sector is aimed at expanding the space for private banks and pressurising public sector banks to imitate the private banks and become “*globally competitive*”. Bank workers’ unions have rightly questioned why the state-owned banks should aim for the maximum rate of profit at all times, in competition with private banks. They have put forth the need to fulfil social goals such as

extending banking facilities to every village and remote corner of our country.

Far from contributing to the solution of the problems plaguing society, privatisation leads to their further aggravation and creates the conditions for even deeper crises in the future. It is not only an anti-worker offensive but an assault on the general interests of society as a whole.

Production of material goods and services is highly socialised in our country, while the claims on what is produced is based on private property rights, concentrated in the hands of big monopolies. Investment decisions are driven by the greed of monopoly capitalists for maximum profits. The fundamental contradiction between highly socialised production and highly concentrated private appropriation is the root cause of repeated crises. To hand over more and more assets into the hands of private monopoly corporations means to further aggravate the problem.

The capitalist class constantly spreads many myths and lies about privatisation, aimed at making workers reconcile themselves to it, thinking that it is inevitable. One such myth is that privatisation is the best alternative in the case of “*loss making*” public sector units. This is the logic that was used to justify the privatisation of Modern Foods in the year 2000. It is the same logic that is being used to justify the privatisation of Air India, the state owned airline formed out of the merger of the former Indian Airlines and Air India.

Workers’ unions in all state-owned enterprises must be vigilant about the deceptive tactic of branding healthy companies as being “*loss making*”, in order to justify their sale to some group of monopoly capitalists.

Facts show that the monopoly capitalists and the central government plotted to turn Air India into a loss making company. The most profitable routes were given up to private competitors, a large number of aircrafts were bought only to keep them idle. Many more such deliberate acts by the management contributed to the accumulation of losses. The workers' unions of Air India, led by the pilots' union, boldly exposed this plot of the ruling class. They succeeded in temporarily stalling the privatisation plans. However, the same plan has once again emerged on the agenda following the report of the Group of Ministers on Air India, headed by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee.

Parties and organisations of the working class must not accept any justification for handing over productive enterprises that are state-owned into the hands of private profiteering interests, under any pretext. To accept that "loss making" public sector units can be privatised means to compromise with the capitalist program. Such compromising lines of thought must not be permitted to spread in the working class movement.

The demand of the working class must be nothing less than an immediate halt to all forms of privatisation, followed by a review of deals already done and reversal wherever appropriate. We must also demand that banking be oriented to fulfil social needs, and private banks that fail to do so be nationalised.

A related issue is that there is no justification for a private owner of capital, who does not share his private profit when the going is good, to claim a "bail-out package" from the State when he makes losses. While the workers have a legitimate right to demand protection of their employment, the capitalist owners have no legitimate basis to claim anything from the State. We must not compromise on this question of principle, that capitalists do not deserve any bail-outs from the State.

Comrade Workers!

The spokesmen of the Central Government keep repeating the lie that inflation and rising commodity prices are inevitable in any rapidly growing economy. The truth is that inflation is inevitable only in a parasitic economy that is oriented to fulfil the unlimited greed and global expansionist aims of big monopoly capitalists.

When monopoly finance capital becomes the driver of economic decisions and of government policy, it results in unproductive drain of government revenues, growing deficits and money creation in excess of what is required for commodity circulation. If the economy is reoriented to meet the rising material needs of the working people, then the surplus generated by social labour will be reinvested to raise the productive capacity of the country. There will be no deficits, no excess money creation and hence no inflation. As the productivity of social labour rises over time in such a socialist economy, the prices of commodities will decline.

Prices of many essential food articles in our country, such as dal, milk, eggs and meat have doubled or trebled since 2004. The wholesale price index for primary articles, taken together a group, has risen by almost 100% during 2004-11, while the WPI for manufactured products rose by only 40%. This reflects a growing imbalance between the annual production of many food articles and the annual demand for their consumption. The economy, while producing rapidly increasing quantities of goods and services for the global market, is failing to meet the rising and changing demand for diverse food articles on the part of the growing working class.

The drive towards globalisation through privatisation and liberalisation has not only led to lopsided and imbalanced production. It has also led to the increasing penetration of

agricultural trade by capitalist monopolies, while the Public Distribution System has been drastically scaled down in the name of targeting to the very poor. Hoarding by private traders and speculation in futures markets are further aggravating the problem of soaring food prices.

Adjustments in the wages of labour have lagged far behind the rate of increase in food prices. As a result, the working class has become poorer even as GDP has grown at record rates. The capitalist class has become enormously richer, especially the monopoly houses that are expanding their global empires.

Why is increased demand for food articles not being met by increased supply? The reason lies in constraints both in the system of production and in the system of trade. The small and medium-scale peasants have limited capacity to increase production, and receive too little a share of the increased price of the commodity they produce. The big capitalists and banks want to invest only in ventures that will yield maximum profits. Food prices are rising towards the level when importing processed and packaged foods can become a profitable business.

At the present time, the big capitalists are waiting for multi-brand retail trade to be opened up to Wal-Mart and other global monopolies, which the Manmohan Singh government has promised to implement once the UP state assembly elections are over. Meanwhile, they are making money speculating in commodities whose prices are rising, thereby aggravating the problem.

The solution to the problem of unaffordable food prices lies in reorienting the economy, from being geared to ensuring maximum profits for monopoly capital, to being geared to constantly enhance the standard of living and productive capacity of the

working population. The first step towards this solution is the establishment of a universal Public Distribution System, covering all essential articles of mass consumption and accessible to all.

A universal PDS means that society and the State must take responsibility for procuring, storing, transporting and supplying essential consumption articles, especially basic food items. They must be available at affordable prices to the working population, while those who grow and produce the food must be assured stable and remunerative prices.

The capitalist class and its politicians want to limit the scope of PDS to only wheat and rice, and mainly targeted to the so-called “*Below Poverty Line*” families. The point is that the problem of food availability is no longer mainly about wheat and rice. The most rapid price rise has been in the case of dal, milk, eggs and meat; and the most volatile price movements have been in the case of vegetables. Purchasing power has been squeezed for the vast majority of workers, not only the so-called BPL families.

Large-scale organisation of agricultural production as well as investment in cold storage are both required to stabilise prices, reduce the shortages and the high degree of wastage of perishable food items in our country. The demand of the working class is that this should be socially organised and not handed over to private profiteers.

The key to a universal PDS is the establishment of social ownership and control over trade. The major share of physical stocks of essential commodities must not be left in the hands of private profiteers.

Comrade Workers!

In order to reorient the economy we need political power in our hands. We need to establish workers' and peasants' rule to ensure that the production, procurement, storage and distribution of food are oriented to serve the general interest of society, while protecting the interests of both workers and peasants.

Life experience shows that we cannot get anywhere close to political power by merely voting out one party and replacing it by another. Governments have changed numerous times over the past 20 years, but the course on which our country is headed has remained the same. Whether it is a government headed by the Congress Party, BJP or the Third Front, the program of privatisation and liberalisation has continued. This is because the capitalist class, headed by the monopoly houses, has firmly established its hold over the State and the entire political system.

As revealed by the Radiia tapes and numerous other scams, it is the Tatas, Ambanis and others who are running this country. They play a decisive role in every government formation, selection of ministers and formulation of policies. The existing democracy is in reality the dictatorship of the capitalist class, headed by the monopoly houses.

The monopoly capitalists regularly finance the major political parties and their electoral campaigns, bribe ministers and senior bureaucrats, in exchange for lucrative contracts, licences and other benefits. The State is a legacy of alien colonial rule, and intervenes in the economy to benefit the biggest monopoly houses.

Sovereignty, the supreme decision-making power, was transferred in 1947 from the hands of the British Crown to the President

and Parliament of India. It has not reached where it belongs, in the hands of the toiling masses of people.

The existing system of parliamentary democracy is designed to concentrate decision-making power in the hands of one or another capitalist party or front. The ruling party or coalition becomes the supreme authority and acts in the interests of the big capitalists while people have a marginal role, only on polling day.

The Criminal Procedure Code, the legal framework for detection and punishment of crime in our society, is the same as defined and promulgated by the British colonial rulers. So is the Land Acquisition Act. The entire state machinery -- the bureaucracy headed by the Indian Administrative Service and the armed forces headed by officers trained in British colonial values – retains its character as an instrument to harass, repress, extort and plunder the land and labour of our people.

Successive Prime Ministers have promised to renew Indian society, reduce corruption and make it fit for the 21st century. The reality, however, is that the economic and political system is becoming increasingly parasitic, exploitative and unbearably corrupt day by day.

The recent decision of the Supreme Court of India to cancel 122 licences issued to mobile phone operators is being touted as an “*anti-corruption*” measure. But the fact is that only one set of capitalists have had their licenses cancelled, while another group of capitalists stand to gain enormously from the Supreme Court decision. The highest court has been used in inter-corporate warfare under the cloak of “*anti-corruption*”.

The renewal and all-round progress of Indian society requires the complete elimination of the legacy of colonialism. Neither

the intensity of exploitation and plunder nor the degree of parasitism and corruption can be reduced without getting rid of the existing State.

We need to replace the outdated State that defends capitalist exploitation, colonial and feudal oppression and imperialist plunder, with a modern democratic State that the working class can use to uproot capitalism and build a socialist society. We need to make a fresh start with a new Constitution, new political institutions and mechanisms for vesting sovereignty in the people.

The new Constitution must be based on the principle that the elected body as a whole is responsible and accountable to the electorate for all decisions and for their execution. The toiling majority of people must be able to control those they elect and hold them to account.

In the present system, people are asked to choose between candidates whose selection is without their approval. The modern democracy of the working class will have laws and mechanisms to ensure that every worker and peasant actually enjoys the right to elect and be elected. The new Constitution will guarantee that the rights of workers, of peasants, and of all human beings are protected and never allowed to be violated under any pretext.

Organised in their places of work and residence, the working people will enjoy the right to select, approve and reject candidates for election. They will have the right to recall those elected at any time, and to initiate new laws and propose policy decisions.

In 1857, the heroes of the Great Ghadar declared, "*Hindustan belongs to us; We are her masters!*" In modern times, "**we**" stands for the workers, peasants, women and youth. We are the ones who produce the wealth of society. We are the ones who

reproduce and nurture human life itself. Hindustan belongs to us. We are her masters!

We who are engaged in large-scale production using modern technology have to play the leading role in the struggle to vest sovereignty in the hands of the people.

Comrade Workers!

The struggle against privatisation, liberalisation and all-sided attacks on our rights is a not a struggle of only some sections, but of the entire class. So is the struggle to establish a modern proletarian democracy. Unity of workers, as workers, cutting across all sectors, is urgently required to advance our struggle. We have to resist the capitalist offensive with the spirit that “*An attack on one is an attack on all!*”

We must be vigilant about parties and union leaders who are out to manipulate our struggle in their narrow pursuit of parliamentary gain for their respective parties. Our united struggle has suffered in the past as a result of the line of relying on the Congress Party as the “lesser evil” and “secular alternative” to the BJP. We have also suffered as a result of illusions being spread about a Third Front of parties that would allegedly serve both the capitalist class and the working class.

We need to build the political unity of our class in uncompromising opposition to the program of liberalisation and privatisation. We need to unite firmly around our own independent program, aimed at establishing the rule of workers and peasants. We need to champion the rights of our peasant brothers, who are being robbed and ruined by the capitalist offensive, including the corporate land grab.

Uniting as a class and forging a stable alliance with the peasantry are key political tasks facing the working class movement.

Let us organise gate meetings to discuss the program and aim of our class to become the master of India, in alliance with the peasantry!

Let us uncompromisingly fight for one common set of programmatic demands, with the aim of replacing the rule of monopoly capital with the rule of workers and peasants!

Recognise in law and defend in practice the universal rights of all workers!

Oppose all proposals to reform labour laws to benefit capitalists!

Defeat the program of privatisation and liberalisation!

No bail-out to any capitalist at public expense!

Nationalise and socialise banking and trade!

Establish a Universal PDS covering all essential articles of mass consumption!

Down with capitalist democracy! Fight for proletarian democracy!

Fight with the aim of establishing workers' and peasants' rule!

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Communist Ghadar Party of India
New Delhi

Fortnightly paper of the Communist Ghadar Party of India

Mazdoor Ekta Lehar (English Fortnightly)



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