

ICOR resolution:

## **Long live the struggle of farmers, workers and toilers of India**

We support the ongoing protest of the Indian farmers and other toilers. Gathered in their tens of thousands in cold of winter, camping in the outdoors, the farmers are opposing three acts which were unconstitutionally passed in parliament under the aegis of the ruling BJP – the party in support of Hindutva fascism.

Covid has exposed the fragility of the world capitalist system. Everywhere people are desperate to get work and income. People all over the world are dying, not only due to the pandemic directly but also due to the economic stress caused by capitalist policies in the background of the pandemic. The only people who have made massive profits from this pandemic are the big corporates. Apple, Tesla, Amazon, etc. have seen their shares rise to unprecedented heights while the level of unemployment all over the world has equally shot up. Even so, many governments see the only relief for their economies to be further implementing and intensifying the capitalist policies by giving massive doleouts and concessions to the employers.

In India too, the government, under cover of covid has decided to further curtail the rights of workers, farmers and other toilers by various policies. Not least among these are the four labour codes, three farmers acts, the electricity bill and other acts which are going to further increase the economic distress of the toiling masses while further enriching the big corporates.

The labour codes were first introduced in the name of consolidating an unwieldy number of labour laws. However, in reality they allow “fixed-term employment” (whereas, earlier workers had a right to permanency and protection from arbitrary lay-offs, retrenchments and closures upon completion of 240 days of continuous service). They also allowed individual settlements of disputes by workers, bypassing the unions, and allowed lay-offs, retrenchments and closures in all establishments having less than 300 workers (earlier this figure was 100). They made legal strikes impossible and reduced the already meagre protections given to contract workers by restricting them to establishments where more than 50 contract workers were employed (earlier this figure was 20). Besides this, many large state owned corporations like Air India, BPCL (Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd), the military ordinance factories, many state owned banks, etc are being put up for privatisation. All central trade unions and federations have opposed these moves and are in the process of struggle against these steps.

On the same day in September when the four labour codes were passed, the ruling party also passed three farmer bills. By these bills the protection given to farmers (like the Government setting up a “minimum support price” for produce, allowing marketing of farm produce only in Agriculture Produce Marketing Committees (APMCs) where the weighing and price were monitored, allowing contracting of farmland only under certain conditions etc) have been removed. The Government’s argument is that all these were only restrictions on the individual farmers right to contract for himself or herself. In reality they are protections against the farmers being exploited and being bound into slavery by contracts. In a country like India where people with even 10 hectares or more are considered rich farmers and where the average land holding is hardly a hectare, such laws are disastrous. In short, these laws are aimed at enslaving the farmers to big corporates as much as the labour codes are aimed at enslaving the workers. Similarly the new Electricity act also dismantles the whole protective electrification scheme which is current in India and gives the electricity sector over to private

players.

All these acts are also clearly unconstitutional. For example, the federal structure of India requires that laws on Agriculture are only to be made by the State Governments. Using a loophole in some other entries, the Central Parliament now seeks to make these laws. Similarly, India is a signatory to ILO resolutions calling for tripartite consultation (workers, employers and government) for making changes in certain labour rights. These have clearly been violated. The rights of states are also sought to be curtailed and the Central Government is seeking to take over all power.

In this situation the workers and farmers have been protesting. Following on a series of protest days in the atmosphere of Covid-19, keeping with the restrictions of social distancing, masks and sanitization, November 26th saw a massive strike all over the country. The unions are still in protest mode and have vowed to join the farmers' protests.

It is the farmers' protest, however that has taken the breath away. Hundreds of thousands of farmers have descended on Delhi from various parts of the country and have besieged the national capital. They are still coming in buses and tractors and camping at the Delhi borders. Many protest programs are planned. 13th January is to be a day for burning the new farm acts and the labour codes. 16th January is to see protests by minorities all over the country which will also include protest against the new Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019 which blatantly discriminates against Muslims. 18th January is to be a day of women's solidarity with the protesting farmers. The culmination is to be on 26th January which is celebrated as India's Republic Day with a grand parade in Delhi and in state capitals. The farmers have given a call to march into Delhi after the Republic Day parade to have their own parade into the heart of Delhi. There will also be such parades in all state capitals. In preparation for this there will be protest demonstrations in all state capitals from 23rd January. All trade unions except those directly controlled by the ruling party have called to support these protests. A showdown is in the offing. The struggle is not only for the rights of workers and farmers but also for the very essence of democracy and for retaining the rights of the masses of the people of India from marauding international and national corporates.

We call upon all democratic forces all over the world to come out in support of this movement. It is the task of all such democratic forces in a world which is being ever more beleaguered by fascism which is being fostered by imperialism. We wish the greatest success to the struggle of the workers and farmers of India.

**For work, land, freedom, democracy and socialism!**

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Signatories (as of 22 January 2021, further signatories possible):

1. PCPCI Parti Communiste Proletarien de Côte d'Ivoire (Proletarian Communist Party of Ivory Coast)
2. ORC Organisation Révolutionnaire du Congo (Revolutionary Organization of Congo), Democratic Republic of the Congo
3. UPC-Manidem Union des Populations du Cameroun - Manifeste National pour l'Instauration de la Démocratie (Union of Populations of Cameroon - National Manifesto for the Establishment of Democracy)
4. CPK Communist Party of Kenya
5. MMLPL Moroccan Marxist-Leninist Proletarian Line
6. CPSA (ML) Communist Party of South Africa (Marxist-Leninist)
7. PCT Parti Comuniste du Togo (Communist Party of Togo)
8. PPDS Parti Patriotique Démocratique Socialiste (Patriotic Democratic Socialist

- Party), Tunisia
9. MLOA Marxist-Leninist Organization of Afghanistan
  10. CPB Communist Party of Bangladesh
  11. CPI (ML) Red Star Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Red Star
  12. PPRF Patriotic Peoples Republican Front of Nepal
  13. NDMLP New-Democratic Marxist-Leninist Party, Sri Lanka
  14. CPA/ML Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist)
  15. БКП Българска Комунистическа Партия (Bulgarian Communist Party)
  16. PR-ByH Partija Rada - ByH (Party of Labor - Bosnia and Herzegovina)
  17. MLPD Marxistisch-Leninistische Partei Deutschlands (Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany)
  18. UCLyon Unité Communiste Lyon (Communist United Lyon), France
  19. UPML Union Prolétarienne Marxiste-Léniniste (Marxist-Leninist Proletarian Union), France
  20. BP (NK-T) Bolşevik Parti (Kuzey Kürdistan-Türkiye) (Bolshevik Party (North Kurdistan-Turkey))
  21. KOL Kommunistische Organisation Luxemburg (Communist Organization of Luxemburg)
  22. RM Rode Morgen (Red Dawn), Netherlands
  23. MLP Marksistsko-Leninskaja Platforma (Marxist-Leninist Platform), Russia
  24. MLGS Marxistisch-Leninistische Gruppe Schweiz (Marxist-Leninist Group of Switzerland)
  25. KSC-CSSP Komunistická Strana Československa – Československa Strana Prace (Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – Czechoslovakian Workers Party), Czech Republic
  26. MLKP Marksist Leninist Komünist Parti Türkiye / Kürdistan (Marxist Leninist Communist Party Turkey / Kurdistan)
  27. KSRD Koordinazionnyj Sowjet Rabotschewo Dvizhenija (Coordination Council of the Workers Class Movement), Ukraine
  28. PCC-M Partido Comunista de Colombia – Maoista (Communist Party of Colombia - Maoist)
  29. PCP (independiente) Partido Comunista Paraguayo (independiente) (Paraguayan Communist Party (independent))
  30. BDP Bloque Democrático Popular (Popular Democratic Bloc), Peru
  31. PC (ML) Partido Comunista (Marxista Leninista) (Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)), Dominican Republic
  32. PCR-U Partido Comunista Revolucionario del Uruguay (Revolutionary Communist Party of Uruguay)