

Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Manifesto for the 16th Lok Sabha Elections, 2014

Part I

Introduction

The people of India are going to the polls to elect the 16th Lok Sabha. These elections are being held at a time when parliamentary democracy is under onslaught from various quarters. Increasingly democracy is being undermined by the power of big money in politics. Rampant corruption at the highest levels of government and public life is corroding the vitals of the democratic system. The neo-liberal policies pursued by the Congress-led government for a decade has denigrated parliament with policies being determined by a nexus of big business, foreign financial institutions and pliant ruling politicians and bureaucrats. The communal forces headed by the BJP-RSS combine are making a bid for power which poses a threat to the secular –democratic values of the Republic.

The people, who have always vitalized the parliamentary system with their deep faith and participation in the democratic system, have to act. They have to assert their rights. They should fight to bring about a change in the policies, for ending the corrupt rule, for strengthening democracy and secularism.

Dismal Record of UPA Government

The two UPA governments have pursued neo-liberal economic policies which have led to a growing economic divide. This has resulted in pampering the rich and squeezing the people.

Effects on People's Lives

Despite the so-called high growth achieved under the UPA government's earlier years, the lives of the ordinary people have not changed:

36 per cent of women and 34 per cent of men are undernourished;

About half (48 per cent) of children under the age of 5 are under nourished and malnourished.

29 per cent of children drop out between class I and V and 46 per cent between class I and VIII.

80 per cent rural and 64 per cent of all urban households consume less than the recommended calorie norm.

Eighty per cent of out-patients and sixty per cent of in-patients have to resort to private medical services as India has one of the most privatized systems of healthcare in the world. Eight crore people are pushed below the poverty line every year because of the exorbitant costs of private healthcare.

Workers: Losing Out

Workers have been the main target of exploitation by the neo-liberal regime. The share of wages in net value added in the organized industrial sector is one of the lowest in the world. It was 30.36 per cent in 1981 and this came down to 10.6 per cent in 2007-08.

The growing contractualisation and casualisation of the work force is one of the main reasons for bringing down the share of wages enabling employers to increase their share of profits. The number of women workers have come down by nearly two crore during the period 2004-05 to 2001-12, as they cannot find work.

Non-payment of minimum wages, denial of equal wages and maternity benefits is rampant. The right to form trade unions is under attack as illustrated by the Maruti-Suzuki case. Both the Congress and the BJP governments in the states have a anti-working class record.

Farmers in Distress

The peasantry have borne the brunt of first the NDA government's policies and later of the UPA government's policies. Corporatisation of agriculture, cuts in subsidies and public investment in agriculture and trade liberalization have caused distress to large sections of farmers. Between 1996 and 2012, rural India witnessed the appalling phenomenon of more than 2.90 lakh farmers suicides. Reversal of land reform laws and forcible acquisition of agricultural land has driven away many farmers from agriculture. Fifteen million cultivators have quit the occupation since 1991 upto 2011. Without breaking from the neo-liberal policies, the farmers of India cannot be assured of a decent livelihood and a secure future.

Agricultural Workers: Most Exploited

The condition of agricultural workers has steadily deteriorated. Successive central governments have refused to bring in a comprehensive legislation for the fixation of wages and social security benefits for agricultural workers. Thus there is no statutorily fixed minimum wages for agricultural workers in many states. The number of work days per year is declining. In most states they have no house sites or houses. The plight of

agricultural women workers is worse. They have lesser days of work and suffer the most as they have to feed the family in the face of rising prices.

Unbearable Price Rise

The most striking failure of the Congress-led UPA government has been its total inability to check the unrelenting rise in the prices of food and other essential commodities. For seven long years since 2007, India has lived with persistent double digit food inflation. The Consumer Price Index inflation has mostly remained above 9 per cent per annum.

In the last four years from December 2009 to 2013, prices of rice, wheat and groundnut oil increased between 50 to 100 per cent; prices of potatoes have doubled and even quadrupled during this five year period; onion prices have on an average doubled from already high levels.

The price rise is in fact a result of government policies. The decontrol of petrol and diesel prices have led to continuous increase raising the cost of transport fuelling price rise. Diesel prices have almost tripled in the two terms of the UPA, from Rs. 20 in January 2004 to Rs. 55 in December 2013 (Delhi prices).

The people particularly the poor, have been ground down by the cruel and unrelenting price rise.

Curse of Unemployment

Apart from curbing price rise, the growing unemployment is the second biggest failure of the UPA government. Between 2005 and 2010, the rate of employment growth has been less than 1 per cent annually. Whatever jobs have been created are the low paid, contractual and without social security. Of the 15-29 age group of young people who number 330 million (33 crore) the unemployment rate is 13.3 per cent. One in every three graduates in this age group is unemployed.

The so-called high growth years have resulted in jobless growth. Such a bankrupt growth path should be rejected.

Economic Policies: Transfer of Resources to the Rich

The Congress-led UPA government has provided a bonanza to the corporates and the richer sections. From 13 billionaires (with net assets of Rs. 5,000 crore and above) in 2003, by 2012 there were 122 such billionaires. Between 2009 and 2013 a massive Rs. 21 lakh crores of central government tax revenues were given away as taxes forgone or in tax concessions. The government has resorted to massive disinvestment selling more than Rs. 91,000 crores worth of shares of public sector units between 2009 and 2013. The government has allowed the loot of natural

resources of the country whether it be land, minerals, gas or spectrum. Windfall profits have been made by big business houses and private companies through this plunder.

What the government has undertaken is a massive transfer of the resources of the people and the country into the hands of a few.

The government did not take measures to tap the tax potential – either by raising effective rates or cracking down on massive evasion of taxes by the wealthy. Tax-GDP ratio has remained lower than they were in 2007-08. Instead of raising resources, the curbing of government expenditure became a priority. There have been cuts in expenditure bearing on the lives of people such as on agriculture and rural development (which includes MNREGA); health and education. Fertilizer, food and petroleum subsidies have been cut down. Subsidies on food and fuel were cut by Rs. 78,000 crore in the last three years.

The entry of Foreign Capital (FDI and FIIs) has been allowed in all spheres. FDI caps have been enhanced in the banking, infrastructure, real estate, defence production and agri-business. The FDI in multi-brand retail is a graphic example of how the interests of Walmart and other foreign supermarket chains supersede the livelihood and employment of 4 crore (40 million) people in retail trade in India. To start with this executive decision has to be scrapped and FDI policy governed by the interests of national sovereignty, priorities of national development and the employment needs of the people.

Faced with an economic slowdown the UPA government seeks to woo foreign capital by giving more concessions and providing big business with further tax cuts and incentives. What is required is massive public investment in rural development, agriculture, infrastructure and social sectors. This would create demand and new jobs. But given its class bias, the government has refused to undertake this.

The pursuit of the neo-liberal policies by the six-year BJP-led government and the ten year Congress-led government, need to be reversed. What is required are alternative economic policies in the interests of the people and the country.

Food Security

India ranks 94th out of 199 countries in the Global Hunger Index. The shame of chronic hunger and deprivation of food constitutes a damning indictment of the policies pursued by the UPA government and the earlier NDA regime. Both have steadfastly refused to introduce a universal public distribution system as it goes against the World Bank and market prescriptions. The Food Security law enacted by parliament is cited as a major step towards food security. This is not true. It continues with a

targeted system. It provides for only 5 kg per individual per month. In urban areas 50 per cent of the people are excluded. The CPI(M) and the Left have consistently fought for a universal public Distribution System. We need to provide a minimum of 35 kg of foodgrains to all families at not more than Rs. 2 per kg. The citizen's basic right to food has to be ensured.

Corruption & Mega Scams

The last one decade of UPA rule has set an unprecedented record for corruption with one mega scam after the other from the 2G spectrum to the coal allocation and the KG basin gas pricing. The government's neo-liberal policies has spawned a nexus of big business-ruling politician-bureaucrats.

CAG has estimated that the 2G telecom has cost the exchequer Rs. 1.76 lakh crore while the coal scam around Rs. 1.86 lakh crore. The KG basin gas deal and the earlier concessions to Reliance for increased gas price had led to a loss of around Rs. 100,000 crore to the government. The current revision proposed by the government, is twice this amount. The Commonwealth Games scam was worth around Rs. 60,000 crore.

Contrary to the claim that privatization and free market reduce corruption, evidence shows that the "black economy" and the propagation of corruption has expanded under such policies, and is now almost 50 per cent of the GDP of the country. (Global Financial Integrity, 2010)

Resources that belong to the people are being looted through a range of corrupt practices. Illegal flows to tax havens and offshore accounts have grown rapidly along with black money; the post-reform annual flows are five times the pre-reform flows. The total accumulated capital and assets held by Indians abroad is estimated to be in the range of half a trillion dollars (Rs. 25 lakh crore) to 1.4 trillion dollars (Rs. 70 lakh crores).

The outrage among the people and the protest against corruption finally compelled the UPA government to bring an amended Lokpal legislation which was adopted in parliament. However, the Lokpal Act needs to bring within its purview the PPP projects and the contracts given out to corporates involving public funds. More importantly, the big business-politician-bureaucrat nexus spawned by the neo-liberal regime needs to be broken. The CPI(M) calls for the reversal of the neo-liberal policies which have spawned such a nexus.

Foreign Policy: Tilt to the US

The decade long UPA government has shifted the course of foreign policy towards a pro-US orientation. In the first term, it surrendered the independent basis of foreign policy by entering into a strategic alliance

with the United States of America, military cooperation and signing the Indo-US nuclear deal. The consequence of these steps have unfolded in its second term.

India acted against its own interests by curtailing its relations with Iran. The Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline was scuttled at the behest of America. India drastically cut down oil imports from Iran to conform to the illegal US sanctions. India adopted an ambivalent stand on Syria and refused to condemn the Western backed forces to instigate a civil war and destabilize the Syrian government. India has strengthened its military and security ties with Israel and consequently downgraded its support to the Palestinian cause. The UPA government has joined a India-Japan-US trilateral security relationship – a US sponsored move to counter China.

India has not utilised its weight in the BRICS, IBSA and the multilateral forms to strengthen South-South cooperation and multipolarity.

The foreign policy stance of both the Congress and the BJP have to be rejected so that an independent foreign policy is charted out which is in tune with the country's national interests.

Congress: Ignominious Record

The Congress-led UPA government has registered an ignominious record. Betrayal of the people's trust by nurturing corruption among those who exercise power; pursuing policies which have resulted in perpetuating price rise and high inflation; turning its back on the millions of farmers who are unable to earn a decent livelihood; failure to take firm measures to curb communal forces; compromising national sovereignty by allying with the interests of the USA.

The Congress and the UPA have to be called to account for its misdeeds and ousted from the government.

Combat Communalism

Various communal forces have been active in fomenting communal tensions during the past five years. The aim of the Hindutva outfits is to create and widen divisions between Hindus and Muslims. From 2009, communal violence has occurred in Hyderabad, Nanded, Ahmedabad, Belgaum, Dhule, Bodoland territory, Kishtwar, Nawada, Barielly, Kosi Kalan, Pratapgarh, Faizabad and Muzzafarnagar. The list is endless. In Rajasthan, after the BJP lost power in 2008, a series of communal incidents took place in the following years. In Uttar Pradesh, after the Samajwadi Party government came to power in 2011, a number of riots erupted. The Muzaffarnagar violence was the worst in recent times. In most of these riots, there is the common pattern of the involvement of the RSS and its outfits.

The attacks on religious minorities, both Muslims and Christians grew in number and intensity under the BJP governments in Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka.

In the year 2013, 828 communal incidents took place all over the country in which 133 people died and 2269 were injured. The truth is blunt and it cannot be ignored – such riots were manufactured to create a communal polarization to make electoral gains in the 16th Lok Sabha election. They are a warning to all secular democratic forces, that communal politics needs to be firmly countered with political will and determination. Only then can communal amity, people's unity and progress be assured.

Terrorism

Terrorist attacks have continued to take place in different parts of the country. The source of terrorism is religious extremism of various varieties. While there are continuing instances of terrorist violence involving some extremist elements from the Muslim community, it was extremist Hindutva elements who were behind terrorist blasts in Malegaon, Mecca Masjid, Ajmer Sharief and the Samjhauta Express. Ethnic chauvinist groups have indulged in terrorist violence in the North East.

There has to be a concerted campaign against the forces of religious extremism, communalism and chauvinism from which terrorist groups emanate. Firm measures have to be taken to preempt terrorist attacks and track down the terrorist networks. But the bias and targeting of innocent Muslim youth in the name of tackling terrorism should stop. Action should be taken against the security and police authorities who have implicated youth in false cases. The State should compensate those youth who were imprisoned for long periods of time and acquitted by courts. The draconian provisions of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act should be removed.

Curb Divisive Forces

The country has witnessed forces of regional chauvinism, narrow parochial interests and ethnic and caste tensions rising in different parts. Attacks on North Indians in Mumbai and Maharashtra by the MNS and the Shiv Sena; the demand that outsiders leave the state affected the lives of many Indian citizens. People from the North-East were subjected to hate mail and threats causing them to flee from certain centres in South India. Recently there have been racist attacks against people from the North-East in the capital city of Delhi. In the North East, extremists have targeted poor Hindi-speaking workers and killed them. These divisive and reactionary attacks should be firmly put down. The organisations and leaders behind such attacks should be prosecuted. The right of Indian

citizens to reside, study or work in any part of India should be firmly protected.

Violence on Women

The period since the last Lok Sabha election has been one of unremitting and alarming rise in the crimes against women. This has become a major national issue. Rapes and gang rapes of women and young girls are taking place all around the country. Sexual assaults and violence against young girls and children are particularly horrific. The Nirbhaya case in Delhi led to the appointment of the Justice J.S. Verma Committee which submitted a comprehensive report with well considered recommendations to bring about changes in the laws concerning violence against women. As a result the Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed by Parliament which provides for more stringent punishment for gang rape, child rape and other sexual offences. But it has fallen short of the holistic recommendations made by the Verma Committee.

The struggle against violence against women must occupy a central place in the political and social spheres. It is not enough to pass laws, there has to be the political will on the part of the central and state governments to firmly tackle crimes against women. It is shocking that in a state like West Bengal there has been an alarming increase in the number of crimes against women in the last three years. This indicates the importance of the state machinery tackling the problem seriously and with determination.

SCs and STs

Neoliberal policies have accentuated the social oppression, caste discrimination and violence against adivasis and dalits. There has been a 18 per cent increase in the registered cases of violence against dalits between the years 2010 and 2012. Untouchability practices still continue. Not only have the number of reserved jobs for SC and STs available in the Government and public sector suffered a drastic reduction because of abolition of posts, ban on recruitments and privatization of many services, the Government has failed to introduce reservation in the private sector. The plunder of natural resources and takeover of adivasi inhabited land and violation of the protections under Fifth Schedule and PESAA have had a drastic impact on the lives and livelihoods of adivasis.

Minorities

The tokenist implementation of the Sachar Commission recommendations have resulted in continuing discrimination against Muslim communities in major spheres. The Government diluted the recommendations of the

Ranganath Mishra Commission concerning 10 per cent reservation for Muslims in jobs. In addition the targeting of innocent Muslim youth and their incarceration as undertrials for years together. This has led to a widespread feeling of insecurity in the community.

BJP: A Retrograde Divisive Force

The Bharatiya Janata Party offers no alternative to the Congress. In fact it is an ardent adherent of neo-liberal policies. There is no difference in the outlook of the BJP as far as economic policies are concerned. It is a pro-big business rightwing party which is based on the Hindutva ideology.

The BJP and its progenitor, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh espouse an ideology which is inimical to the vision of a modern secular State. Hindu majoritarian platform is the main source of communal politics and communal violence. It is this majority communalism which feeds into minority communalism and threatens the unity of the people.

Narendra Modi who is projected as the Prime Ministerial candidate and the Gujarat model that is touted by the BJP represents a dangerous mix of patronage for the big business and corporates combined with rabid communalism.

The Gujarat model is based on largesse for corporates. It is marked by lowest wage scale of workers and poor social indicators such as high malnourishment, high maternal and infant mortality.

The BJP is steeped in high level corruption. The origins of many of the mega scams like the telecom and coal block allocations began in the period of the NDA government. The notorious BJP government headed by Yeddyurappa in Karnataka perpetrated the mining scandal with the mining mafia itself being part of the government. Minister after minister in the BJP government in Madhya Pradesh was indicted by the Lokayuta on corruption charges. The BJP's record in privatization and allowing the loot of natural resources matches that of the Congress.

The BJP has a shameful legacy of letting communal politics run amok. The 1992 demolition of the Babri Masjid, the 2002 horrific violence in Gujarat and the recent Muzaffarnagar riots are testimony to this dark record.

The Hindutva ideology is intrinsically based on *Varnashrama Dharma* and socially conservative and regressive. It is not an accident that the highest number of atrocities on scheduled castes and tribes take place in states where the BJP rules or is strong as in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

However much the BJP may present its model of development and good governance, the reality is that its model is a reactionary and retrograde one.

Alternative Policies Put out by the Left

The country needs to be rescued from the politics and policies of the Congress and the BJP. What is required are alternative policies in the realm of the economic, social and political. The CPI(M) and the left parties have set out such an alternative. These alternative policies have the following major components:

(i) Defence of secularism and national unity (ii) for a democratic transformation of agrarian relations and land reforms; ensuring remunerative prices for farmers; (iii) for a self-reliant economic system and path of development which will develop the productive forces, maximise employment and reduce economic and social disparities; (iv) for a democratic and federal political system with necessary Constitutional changes; (v) defence of the rights of the working people, their minimum livelihood and social security; (vi) planned development and balanced growth; (vii) social justice, end to caste discrimination and protection of rights of women, dalits, minorities and tribal people; (viii) firm measures to curb corruption; judicial and electoral reforms; (ix) adopt non-aligned, independent foreign policy.

These alternative policies are spelt out in full in Part II of this Manifesto.

The Left-led governments at various times in Kerala, for 34 years in West Bengal and the seven Left Front governments in Tripura have shown some facets of the alternative policies that can be pursued. They include effective implementation of land reforms; decentralization of powers to the panchayat system; expansion of the public distribution system; protecting the livelihood of farmers and workers; maintenance of communal harmony and secularism.

Role of the CPI(M)

The CPI(M) has been a consistent fighter against the neo-liberal policies, against communalism and the pro-imperialist approach of the ruling class parties.

The CPI(M) has stood firmly with the working people of the country. It has fought for the rights of the working class, peasants, agricultural workers, artisans and employees both in the organized and unorganized sector.

The CPI(M) has been the democratic champion of the rights of the rights of the dalits, adivasis, women, minorities and the backward classes.

The CPI(M) will fight for alternative policies in parliament and voice the demands of the different sections of the working people.

The CPI(M) and the Left parties will cooperate with other secular non-Congress parties to ensure that there is an alternative before the people as against the Congress and the BJP.

We appeal to the people to reject the Congress and the UPA.

Defeat the BJP and its allies and prevent them from coming to power.

**Strengthen the CPI(M) and Left:
For an Alternative**

We appeal to the people to support and vote for the CPI(M). A strong CPI(M) and Left presence in the Lok Sabha will be the basis for strengthening the secular-democratic foundations and for pro-people alternative policies.

Reject Congress, Defeat BJP

Vote for the CPI(M)

Strengthen the Left

For a Secular and Democratic Alternative

PART II

FOR ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIC POLICIES

Alternative Trajectory of Growth

The CPI(M) will work for economic policies that

- Integrate growth with employment generation towards creating full employment and money in the hands of the people to boost demand
- Enlarge the resource base by taxing the rich, corporate profits, crackdown on tax evaders, black money, money laundering, higher taxes on luxury goods, thereby generating resources for growth
- Increase public investments in agricultural production and research.
- Allocate resources for providing physical and social infrastructure – electricity, public transport, ports, schools, colleges, and public hospitals
- Favour the production of goods for mass consumption and not unsustainable luxury goods
- Public provisioning and subsidies for inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, electricity/diesel
- Provide incentives for research and development and special initiatives to increase competitiveness of small and medium enterprises that provide much greater employment
- Increase annual plan Expenditure amounting to 10% of India's current GDP
- Scrapping the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act and setting a minimum floor for social sector spending as a binding constraint in fiscal exercise for both centre and state governments.
- Re-imposing controls on the outflow and inflow of finance capital
- Halt any further dilution of Government equity in public sector banks and strengthen the public sector in banking and insurance with strict adherence to priority sector lending norms.
- All regulatory authorities of the financial sector should be accountable to Parliament and legislative oversight.

Resource mobilization

The CPI (M) will

- Tax speculative capital gains by restoring Long-Term Capital Gains Tax and increasing Securities Transaction Tax
- Launch a drive to unearth black money, especially those stashed in Swiss banks and other offshore tax havens
- Increase wealth tax for the super rich and introduce inheritance tax
- Plug the Mauritius route by reviewing Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement with Mauritius and other countries

- Corporate profit tax should be increased by increasing statutory rates so that effective tax rates are not low causing huge loss of revenue
- Taxation of capital gains from the international transfer of shares in foreign company with underlying assets in India
- GST to be implemented only after ensuring a higher rate for the states so as to at least partially correct the present fiscal imbalance

Financial Sector Regulation

In order to maintain predominant state control over finance and revival of development finance, the CPI (M) stands for:

- Reversing moves towards Full Capital Account Convertibility (Tarapore Committee recommendations); reimposing controls on the outflow and inflow of finance capital
- Prohibiting Participatory Notes used by the Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs); discourage speculative finance
- Immediately halting the process of issuing fresh licenses for banks in the private sector and review of the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Act 2012;
- Preventing takeover of Indian banks by foreign banks
- Strict measures to ensure that big business houses are prevented from transferring the risks of their projects to banks and strict action against defaulters
- Withdrawing the proposal to increase the FDI cap in the insurance sector from 26 to 49%
- No privatisation of pension funds; No diversion of pension and provident funds to stock market

Infrastructure

The CPI (M) stands for

- Increasing public investment in infrastructure; Adequate Plan outlays for power, communications, railways, roads, ports and airports
- Stop and reverse privatising water resources
- Reviewing energy and telecom policies in tune with the interests of self-reliant national development; using the domestic market to develop power and telecom equipment manufacturing in the country
- Reversing the trend towards private power producers, privatising distribution companies; stop the franchising of towns to private players
- Reviewing the Electricity Act 2003
- Changing telecom policies to promote telecom penetration and connectivity in rural areas;
- Increasing broadband penetration and universal access to Internet
- Reviewing of privatisation of infrastructure through the PPP route

- No further PPPs in domestic Airports already modernized by Airport Authority of India. No FDI in railways.
- Placing emphasis on rural infrastructure; Increased outlays on rural roads, electrification etc.

WTO and Trade Issues

The CPI (M) stands for:

- Protecting Indian interests and that of the developing countries in the ongoing Doha Round of WTO; no further tariff cuts in agriculture and industrial goods
- Reviewing of Bali WTO Ministerial decision on public procurement and food policy by Parliament and no acceptance without their approval.
- Restoring measures to protect small and marginal peasants, including quantitative restrictions
- Keeping sectors like health, education, water resources, banking and financial services out of GATS; Press for review of the TRIPS agreement
- Reviewing existing Free Trade Agreements (FTAs); Reconsider the FTA negotiations with EU and EFTA in view of their pressures on IPR issues, opening up of Banking and Insurance, etc.

Strengthening Federalism

For a thorough restructuring of Centre-State relations the CPI (M) stands for:

- Amending Articles 355 and 356 to prevent their misuse
- Governors to be appointed by the President from a list of three eminent persons suggested by the Chief Minister of a State
- Review the Terms of Reference of 14th Finance Commission and seek approval of the same from the Inter-State Council.
- Devolving 50% of the total pool of collection of Central taxes to the States; Raising States' share of market borrowing to 50%
- Make non-tax revenues of Central government a part of the divisible pool and introduce constitutional amendment for this
- Conditionalities imposed upon the States like the passage of FRBM Act to be withdrawn; States to have a say in the composition and terms of reference of the Finance Commissions
- Transferring Centrally Sponsored Schemes under the State subject with funds to the States
- Constitutional amendment to make the decisions of the Inter-State Council binding on the Union Government; National Development Council to be granted Constitutional status; Planning Commission to act as an executive wing of the NDC
- Setting a target minimum level of Local Self-Government expenditure to GDP; funds devolved to the local bodies to be routed

through the State Governments

Industry

The CPI (M) stands for

- Strengthening and expansion of the public sector in the core and strategic areas by injecting fresh capital and technology; promoting autonomy and efficiency in the public sector
- Manufacturing sector growth to be given priority through a long term industrial policy that strategize investment, creates incentives for employment generation
- Creating a national policy framework to set minimum norms and standards for setting up industries in the states so that competition between states would not drive a 'race to the bottom'.
- Complete halt to disinvestment and privatisation of profit-making and potentially viable PSUs
- Encouraging small and medium enterprises in labour intensive sectors with adequate incentives, infrastructure support and sufficient credit from banks
- Protecting of domestic industry from indiscriminate lowering of import duties and takeover of existing Indian companies by foreign companies; Encouraging the private sector to invest in manufacturing and services sectors; providing incentives to the private sector linked to job creation and R&D efforts
- Prohibiting FDI in Retail Trade; Regulating domestic corporate retailers through a licensing policy
- Reversing FDI guidelines to prevent backdoor entry of FDI and prevent FDI through acquisition route of domestic industries; Foreign capital to be channelled for building productive capacities and acquiring new technology
- Amending SEZ Act and Rules to do away with myriad tax concessions and regulate land-use; Ensuring strict implementation of labour laws in all SEZs
- Halting further liberalization and privatization of the mineral sector; return of all unexplored coal blocks allotted to private sector for captive use to Coal India Ltd; Prohibiting export of iron ore; Increasing royalty rates on coal and other minerals.
- Making Coal India Ltd a unitary company and only agency for mining coal and supplying to industries and the customers.

Artisans, Weavers and Traditional Industry

The CPI(M) stands for

- Protecting traditional industries such as textiles, carpets, handicrafts, leather, handloom, coir, etc.
- Providing inputs at controlled rates to workers in this sector; improving design, technology and skills, and extending adequate facilities and extension services for the marketing, etc.
- Designing a package for distressed artisans like handloom weavers

to ease financial distress' malnutrition and starvation and provide debt waiver and secure livelihoods.

Revival of Agriculture

In order to reverse the agrarian crisis, make agriculture remunerative and ensure enhanced incomes of the peasantry, the CPI (M) proposes steps to:

- Effect a substantial increase in public expenditure on the rural sector to enhance purchasing power of the rural poor and increase productivity in agriculture
- Increase public investment and expand public institutions for agricultural research and extension
- Re-impose trade restrictions to prevent both dumping and excessive exports that jeopardize national food security
- Revive commodity boards to set floor prices for commercial crops
- Provide cheap institutional credit to the agricultural sector at a maximum 4% rate of interest.
- Expand public investment in power supply in rural areas and stop privatization of electricity; Ensure uninterrupted supply of power to agriculture; Expand irrigation facilities.
- Provide basic amenities and improvements in rural infrastructure.
- Scrap the Nutrient Based Subsidy regime in fertilisers; repeal the Seed Bill and introduce farmer-friendly seed legislation
- Repeal the model APMC Act which advocates contract farming; bring farmer-friendly reforms in agricultural markets
- Shun unequal Foreign Trade Agreements and all trade related negotiations based on the principle of national economic sovereignty, and subject it to Parliamentary scrutiny
- Reverse changes in the intellectual property regime that favour big business; Ensure strict regulation of private agricultural research with regard to protection of biodiversity

Land Issues

The CPI (M) shall:

- Reverse the current thrust to dilute land-ceiling laws; Speedy and comprehensive steps for implementing land reforms
- Prevent the encroachment and takeover of common lands like pastures, community forests, scrublands, etc.
- Protect all government and public sector land held in public trust from transfer by lease, sale, diversion or any other manner to the private sector
- Takeover and distribution of all surplus land above ceiling and handing over of cultivable wasteland to landless and poor peasant

households free of cost, with priority to SCs and STs; Joint pattas to be distributed including equal right of women to the land

- Provide house sites and homestead land to all sections of the rural and urban landless
- Record tenancy and defend the rights of tenants in all states where this has not been done
- Prohibit land grab for real estate speculation;
- Amend the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013 to ensure its universal application on all laws requiring land acquisition, rigorous definition of public purpose, full and prior informed consent from all affected persons, binding social impact assessment and compensation and R&R in such manner as to ensure a far better quality of life and share in enhanced land value.

For Food Security and a Hunger Free India

To work towards a hunger free India the CPI(M) will

- Enact a Right To Food law with the following features:
 - Elimination of the present targeted system and establishment of a reformed and strengthened universal public distribution system excluding only income tax payees
 - Provision of a minimum of 35 kgs of foodgrains for a family or 7kgs of foodgrains per individual, whichever amount is higher, at a maximum price of two rupees per kg of foodgrains
 - Support initiatives of State Governments in this sphere
 - Along with foodgrains, the PDS will supply essential commodities such as pulses, edible oil, sugar, kerosene at controlled prices.
 - The food supplies through ICDS and Mid-Day Meal Schemes will get higher allocations to ensure hot cooked nutritious meals and be brought under the Food Security law as a legal right.
 - Entitlements for food and nutrition for pregnant women and lactating mothers will be included in the law.
 - Special measures like free kitchens for vulnerable sections of the population such as migrant workers, destitutes, widows, disabled persons
 - Strengthen the rationing system in remote and hilly areas to ensure that adivasis and other vulnerable sections in those areas have easy access to food security
- Expand and strengthen the FCI with emphasis on building more modern godowns throughout the country particularly in the neglected eastern and north eastern regions, to prevent the monumental wastage of foodgrains due to poor storage.
- Set up procurement centres in all States in cooperation with State Governments to prevent distress sales.
- Oppose cash transfers in lieu of foodgrains

- Deliver twelve LPG cylinders at subsidized rates as earlier with no linkages with AADHAR.

Curbing Price Rise

The CPI(M) proposes a series of measures to control rising prices of essential commodities. These include:

- Reversing the deregulated regime of pricing of petroleum products and establishing an administered price control mechanism
- Reducing the central excise and customs duties on petroleum products
- Controlling prices of natural gas and reversing gas price increase in the KG gas basin
- Banning futures trade in agricultural commodities as recommended by the Parliamentary Standing Committee
- Acting strictly against hoarding and black-marketeering of essential commodities and strengthening provisions of the Essential Commodities Act for this
- Strengthening disclosure norms for private stocks of foodgrains held in godowns and warehouses
- Strengthening PDS and using buffer stocks judiciously as a countervailing measure against rising market prices
- Controlling export of foodgrains when prices are high and rising
- Ensuring control of the prices of essential medicines

Foreign Policy

CPI (M) will work for:

- An independent and non-aligned foreign policy, promoting multi-polarity. Strengthen BRICS and IBSA. Join the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation as a full member.
- Strengthening multilateral forums like the UN to deal with all disputes between countries; democratizing the Security Council and the UN structure
- Opposing interventions and regime changes imposed by the United States and NATO as it happened in Libya and now taking place in Syria and Ukraine.
- Strengthening relations with West Asia and South East Asia and establishing close ties with the Community of Latin American and Caribbean countries (CELAC).
- Continued dialogue with Pakistan to resolve all outstanding issues; promote people to people relations between India and Pakistan.
- Special efforts to build relations and ties with Bangladesh. Approve the land boundary agreement and settle the Teesta waters agreement.

- Engage with the Sri Lankan government to devolve powers to the Northern and eastern region so that the Tamil speaking people can have autonomy within a united Sri Lanka. Work for an independent credible inquiry into the atrocities committed in the last phase of the war.
- Extend full support to the cause of a Palestinian state; sever military and security ties with Israel.

Security Matters

The CPI (M) stands for

- Revising the Indo-US nuclear agreement; no import of foreign nuclear reactors; pursue self-reliance in civilian nuclear energy based on domestic uranium and thorium reserves
- Pursuing universal nuclear disarmament through the UN; Providing parliamentary sanction for moratorium on testing; Striving for a de-nuclearised environment in South Asia; Seeking removal of nuclear weapons from the US military base in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean
- Pursuing policies for de-militarisation of cyber space
- Protecting Indian Internet and telecommunications networks from cyber attacks and surveillance by building indigenous capability
- Not renewing the Defence Framework Agreement with the US. Stopping further steps to enter into military collaboration agreements with the United States. Promoting the policy of no foreign military bases in South Asia
- Creating a national security apparatus, which will work within the framework of the parliamentary democratic system
- There should be coordination between the central government and the state governments in tackling the Maoist violence. At the same time, specific measures have to be taken to tackle the socio-economic problems faced by the people, particularly the tribal people in the Maoist affected areas. The Maoist problem cannot be treated as just a security issue.

In Defence of Secularism

The CPI (M) stands for the separation of religion and politics and for the passage and implementation of all legislative measures necessary to make this effective and necessary legislative measures to firm up this separation. Communal violence should be dealt with firmly. Secular values should be promoted by the State in all spheres. The CPI (M) will work towards:

- Enacting a comprehensive law against communal violence; ensuring

speedy justice and adequate compensation to the victims of communal violence without infringing on the federal framework

- Ensuring exemplary punishment for perpetrators of communal violence regardless of their public or official position
- Protecting the rights of minorities to lead a life of equality and dignity without any fear or discrimination
- Purging all school textbooks of content reflecting communal bias and prejudices
- Enactment of appropriate legal measures for reining in and taking action against organisations and institutions involved in spreading communal hate and attacking minorities through appropriate legal measures

Against Terrorism

The CPI (M) stands for:

- Revamping the intelligence machinery and enhanced coordination between security and intelligence agencies
- The National Investigating Agency functioning without violating the federal structure and ensuring association of State Governments for investigation within a particular State
- Modernisation of the Police forces
- Amending the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act to remove draconian provisions like detention without bail for 180 days, three years imprisonment for withholding information, etc.

Jammu & Kashmir

The CPI(M) is committed to

- A political solution to the Kashmir problem based on maximum autonomy for the State based on the full scope of Article 370 of the Constitution; autonomous set-up to be created with the regions of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh being given regional autonomy
- Strong steps to be taken to prevent excesses by security forces against innocent people; steps to undo the travesty of justice in the Patribal case by reverting to judicial review of the case.
- Ensure economic development of the State, focusing particularly on generating employment for the youth and reconstructing the damaged infrastructure

North-East

The CPI(M) is committed to

- The North East be declared a priority region for development; Developing physical infrastructure and special employment schemes for the youth; Border fencing to be completed expeditiously
- Protecting and expanding the administrative and financial powers

under the Sixth Schedule; protection of the identity of the various ethnic groups and nationalities

- Enactment of anti-racist law and other measures to ensure greater security for people from the North-East in other parts of the country.

FOR PEOPLES' RIGHTS, SECURITY OF LIVELIHOODS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Working Class

The CPI (M) stands for

- Ensuring that statutory minimum wage for workers is not less than Rs 10,000; minimum wage to be linked to the Consumer Price Index'; wage fixation to be based on 15th ILC recommendations and the supreme court judgment on Raptakos -Brett case; revise outdated price indices
- Ensuring strictest implementation of all labour laws including the law on inter state migrant workers; Strengthening labour departments and enforcement agencies including labour/factory inspectorates with adequate manpower and facilities, filling up vacancies of judges and supporting staff in all industrial tribunals and labour courts
- Improving the legislation on Unorganized Sector Workers and implement the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Labour in this regard; Special social security measures for migrant workers and plantation workers, amending the law to move away from rigid industrial and occupational classification of Boards with a single window access for all workers; Constituting national fund for unorganised workers with adequate budgetary financial allocations' Universal coverage of all unorganised workers, irrespective of poverty line stipulations, with minimum social security benefits including old age, health including maternity, and child care benefits, accident and life insurance
- Scrapping of the "New Pension Scheme" and the PFRDA Act and putting in place a benefit-defined pension scheme with adequate funding by employers and government for all workers/employees ensuring at least a pension of 50% of last pay drawn with indexation.
- Ensuring recognition of trade unions through secret ballot and protection of trade union rights; Making recognition of union mandatory by law in all establishments; ratification of ILO Convention no 87 and 98 relation to right to freedom of association and collective bargaining; Adopting an effective scheme for workers' participation in management in both public and private sector
- Discouraging contractualisation and casualisation of work; Stringent implementation of The Contract Labour (Regulation And Abolition) Act, Paying equal wages and benefits for contract

workers as the regular workers for doing the same and similar job; Protecting the right of contract workers and workers in the unorganized sector to form unions, have full fledged membership and voting rights in trade unions and exercise their fundamental right to unionize and strike

- Ensuring equal remuneration for women workers in all areas of work; adopting social security measures for working women including maternity benefits, pension and health insurance for women workers in the unorganized sector including home based workers; crèche facilities for all women workers.
- Adopting steps to prevent sexual harassment of women workers at work place and setting up local and workplace committees as mandated under The Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act with elected representation; inclusion of all workplaces including homes and farms under the Act
- Recognising all workers employed in different central and state government schemes like the anganwadi workers and helpers, ASHAs, mid day meal workers, para teachers, NCLP staff etc as 'workers' as per the recommendation of the 45 ILC and providing them with all attendant benefits including statutory minimum wages, social security benefits like pension etc and ensuring their trade union rights

Peasantry

The CPI(M) stands for

- Implementation of the pro-farmer recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers to ensure that agriculture becomes remunerative
- Ensure stable and remunerative crop prices covering all costs and crops; Increase MSP to cover full costs including family labour and give a return of at least 50 per cent above costs.
- Assuring timely and sufficient procurement of all crops in all regions by expanding procurement facilities.
- Ensure comprehensive debt relief and loan waiver to the distressed farmers covering both institutional and private debt owed to money-lenders.
- Institute a crop insurance scheme for crop and cattle covering all farmers including tenant farmers and sharecroppers with additional subsidies for small and marginal farmers
- Ensure provision of high quality inputs at affordable prices to all cultivators in a timely and reliable manner
- Safeguard the peasantry's right to traditional seeds and biodiversity as well as to save and reuse all seeds
- Launch a National Soil Amelioration and Replenishment Programme along with sustainable management of water resources.

- Extend labour subsidy to the small and marginal farmers under MNREGS
- Promote and strengthen co-operatives for water use, input purchase, crop storage, output marketing and dairy

Agricultural Workers

The CPI (M) stands for

- Increasing minimum wages for agricultural workers to Rs 300 per day; Ensuring equal wages for women agricultural workers
- Revamping the regulatory and implementing mechanism for effective and strict enforcement of the minimum wages act.
- Removing the cap of 100 days in MNREGS; Ensuring payment of unemployment allowance when workers are not provided work.
- Enacting a separate and comprehensive legislation for agricultural workers to ensure minimum wages, the right to bargain collectively and measures of social security such as pensions, accident compensation etc. with central funding
- Redistributing land to agricultural workers, free of cost; Providing homestead land to all rural households; Constructing rural dwellings for all rural workers
- Recognizing the rights of agricultural workers as persons affected eligible to full compensation and Resettlement & Rehabilitation in all cases of land acquisition and displacement.
- Banning the use of poisonous insecticides injurious to health like endosulfan and ensuring free medical treatment for agricultural labour suffering from their ill-effects.
- Safeguarding the constitutional rights of dalit and adivasi workers and ensuring the development of dalit and adivasi habitations
- Providing full and universal social security for all agricultural labourers through decentralized tripartite boards with a single window system with pan Indian eligibility to protect migrants

Fishworkers

- Setting up special welfare board for fish workers and providing them identity cards and social security schemes;
- Banning foreign trawlers and destructive fishing practices by big trawlers;
- Amending the Coastal Regulation Zone Act and Notification (2011) to protect the habitat and livelihood of coastal people and fishworkers and their right to fishing in water bodies';
- Providing a Scheme for loan waiver.

Women

The CPI (M) stands for

- Passage and adoption in the Lok Sabha of the One Third reservation Bill for Women in Parliament and State Assemblies, which had been adopted in the Rajya Sabha as a priority
- Putting in place a series of measures to prevent, curb and punish those responsible for the horrific increase in violence against women and children. These include:
- Accepting the Verma Committee recommendations which have been left out of the present amended law; changes in educational curricula to include subjects related to gender equality; steps to make public spaces safer for women; ensuring safe access to all public places for women with disability; increasing punishment for caste based crimes against scheduled caste and scheduled tribe women; penalties on any personnel including police personnel who sabotage or delay cases; setting up of fast track courts; support to victims of sexual violence and acid attacks through a fully funded rehabilitation scheme especially for children who are victims of sexual violence; adequate budgetary allocations for implementation of the laws against domestic violence and against sexual harassment. Strict implementation of the PCPNDT Act (against sex determination tests and female foeticide) and the activation of defunct monitoring committees.
- Enacting the following new legislations: a stand alone law against so-called honour crimes; a law against trafficking of women and children; a law for joint matrimonial property rights; strengthening the law for maintenance of women and children including a scheme such as the one initiated by the Left front in Tripura for an allowance for deserted women; special schemes for single women including widows and female headed families; a law to ensure linkages between SHGs and banking institutions and guarantee of subsidized interest rates of not more than 4 per cent with special concessions for SHGs of SC/ST women, protective legislation for domestic workers and for homebased workers.
- Promoting and fighting for social reform against prevalent anti-women, anti-girl child practices including those which occur in the name of religion or tradition and against the cultures of violence against women both in public and domestic spheres.
- A code of conduct for all elected representatives in different spheres to adhere to standards of decency in public comments and discourse about women and against sexist and misogynist language which demeans and insults women.
- Increasing allocations for women in all gender budgeting to at least forty per cent of allocations from the present claims of 30 per cent.

Children

The CPI(M) strongly advocates and will work for the rights of children. It is committed to

- Universalization of the ICDS to cover all children from the age of 0-6 years. It will reverse all measures towards privatization of the ICDS; more allocations per child to ensure nutritious meals for children in anganwadis and in schools
- Expansion of The Right to Education Act to include all children from the age of 3-18 years. Special provisions for the inclusion of children with disability,
- Amendments in the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation Act) to remove the distinction between hazardous and non-hazardous work in order to ban all forms of child labour and to ensure implementation of schemes with additional allocations for the rehabilitation of all working children
- Special measures to close the continuing gap between adivasi, dalit children and socially vulnerable groups and communities and others through specific measures including additional allocations for setting up residential schools and hostels with modern facilities for scheduled tribe and scheduled caste children; stringent action against discrimination at any level
- Complete coverage of basic services, such as supplementary nutrition, immunization, pre school non-formal education, regular health check ups and quick referral services.
- Take effective steps to trace missing children ensuring public reporting of the status of search
- Strict implementation of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act
- Delegation of finances and powers to the National and State Commissions for the Protection of Children
- Provision of shelter and social services to street children.
- Ensuring a total re-haul and reform of the juvenile justice system and institutions to sensitize them towards helping them reintegrate into society as responsible citizens.

Youth

The CPI(M) is committed to

- The inclusion of the Right to Work as a constitutional right.
- Provision of jobs or unemployment allowance
- Lift the ban on recruitment in central government and state government services. All vacant posts to be filled in central and state governments within a time bound framework.
- Drastically amend the ‘National Youth Policy 2014’ to properly address the concerns of youth
- Set up Sports Missions sponsored by both central and state governments to promote sports activities and training facilities for youth.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

The CPI(M) is committed to

- Enactment of a central legislation for Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes and for the Tribal Sub-Plan which will provide for Plan outlays at the Centre and the States equivalent to the SC population at the national and State level for the SCP and the ST population at the national and State level for the TSP respectively. Establishment of a standing committee to monitor the implementation of the Plan with direct benefits for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.
- Enactment of a central legislation to provide reservations to the private sector for SCs and STs.
- Strengthening of the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act with appropriate amendments to include expanded ground that constitute discrimination.

Scheduled Castes

The CPI(M) is firmly committed to the abolition of the caste system and all forms of caste oppression.

In all spheres of basic human rights such as the universal right to health, education, employment, decent living conditions and security, it will promote special measures specifically for the advancement of the rights of scheduled castes including additional allocations

The CPI(M) is committed to

- Filling all backlogs in reserved seats and posts and in promotions through a special recruitment timebound drive; creation of vocational training facilities for scheduled caste youth; ensure credit facilities for all self employed and scheduled caste enterprises and assist in developing market linkages
- Strong and strict punishment against practices of untouchability, atrocities and discrimination against scheduled castes.
- Amendments to remove loopholes in the legislation for prevention of manual scavenging and timebound rehabilitation scheme with adequate allocations;
- Regularization of contract labour in safai services
- Ensuring house sites, houses, sanitation, water, health, electricity connections to all scheduled caste families and scheduled caste inhabited areas in a special drive with budgetary allocations to close the continuing gap between SCs compared to other communities as far as housing and civic facilities are concerned
- Extending reservations to dalit Christian and Muslim communities

Scheduled Tribes

The CPI (M) stands for:

- Filling all vacancies for ST reserved posts in all Government services within a legally mandated time framework; Extending reservation to the private sector
- Protecting land rights of adivasis and restoring land illegally alienated from them
- Implementing the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006, in full; Amending the Act to include other traditional forest dwellers with 1980 as the cut-off year
- Setting up a National Commission for determination of minimum support price for minor forest produce and undertaking procurement of minor forest produce with adequate financial provisions,
- Extending Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act to all development blocks with high tribal concentration in all states and districts of India; extending similar protection to urban areas and municipalities in states where it does not exist
- Ensuring recognition, protection and development of tribal languages and scripts. Tribal languages such as Bhili and Gondi etc to be included in the eighth schedule of the Constitution; the concerned State Governments must recognize the language of adivasis as the State's official language
- Automatic inclusion of adivasis in the declared domicile list of the state governments with their ST identity and rights irrespective of their migration from one state to another.
- Including all tribals in the Food Security Act entitled to subsidized foodgrain;
- Expanding drinking water and sanitation facilities, health centres, schools and hostels in the tribal areas
- Immediately release of all innocent adivasis languishing in jail under false cases and their rehabilitation

Minorities

The CPI (M) stands for

- Making the Minorities Commission a statutory body with enhanced powers and jurisdiction and enhancing the status of its Chairmen and members.
- Formulating a sub-plan for the Muslim minorities on the lines of the tribal sub-plan in order to implement Sachar Committee recommendations; Special initiatives in the sphere of employment, education and health to be undertaken targeting districts where the Muslim population is concentrated
- Implementing the recommendations of the Ranganath Mishra

Commission report. As an immediate measure all OBC Muslims which form the vast majority of the Muslim community to be included in the OBC quota with specific State wise allocations

- Earmarking 15% of priority sector lending by banks for the Muslims; subsidised credit to be ensured for the self-employed Muslim youth
- Special emphasis to be laid on the education of Muslim girls; scholarships and hostel facilities should be substantially increased for Muslim girl students
- Promoting the teaching of Urdu in schools; Publishing good quality textbooks in Urdu and filling vacancies of Urdu teaching posts
- Ensuring compensation and rehabilitation to all those Muslims acquitted of cases of terror and also ensuring punishment of officials responsible for implicating them in false cases, subjecting them to torture etc. Setting up of fast track courts to try all such cases.

OBCs

- Ensuring proper implementation of 27% OBC reservation in Central educational institutions; Extending OBC reservation to all private educational institutions
- Strengthening the National Commission for Backward Classes
- Simplifying procedures for issuing OBC certificate
- Designing comprehensive package of schemes, on the lines of those drawn up for SCs and STs, for employment and poverty alleviation of OBCs from the economically weaker sections

Persons with Disabilities

The CPI(M) stands for:

- Amending and passing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill and other laws in consonance with the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities taking into consideration various concerns expressed by the disability sector. Reviewing and amending the National Disability Policy
- Simplifying the process of certification. Providing a universally valid Identity Card for the disabled that would be valid across states and departments.
- Clearing backlog in vacancies in all government departments in a time bound manner.
- Making all buildings, public places, transport, information and other avenues fully accessible and barrier free for people with disabilities; provision of sign language interpreters; making TV accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing through same language captioning
- Enhancing the pension to at least Rs. 4000/- for the disabled
- Free provision of aids and appliances

- Making education at all levels inclusive
- Making Health facilities accessible and free for persons with disabilities.
- Extending the assistance under the MPLADS fund to other assistive devices and facilities for the disabled and not restricting it only to the purchase of tricycles, wheelchairs and artificial limbs for the disabled.

FOR PEOPLES' WELFARE

CPI (M) will work for:

Employment Guarantee

- Enactment of a legislation for employment guarantee in all urban areas.
- The employment guarantee to be extended to cover all adults and for as many days as demanded.
- The list of permissible works under the MNREGA to be expanded to include all activities that improve the quality of life in rural areas
- Statutory minimum wages have to be paid within the stipulated time; fair and objective Schedule of Rates shall be notified; wages shall be inflation indexed and revised periodically; wages shall be disbursed in a timely manner without insistence on bank accounts or UID; provision of unemployment allowance will be simplified and assured

Education

- Public expenditure on education to be 6% of GDP
- Implementing the Right to Education Act to provide free and compulsory elementary education; Amending the RTE to institutionalize the concept of neighborhood schooling, Extending it beyond the elementary level and providing free education for all continuing students; Stringent action against private schools and elite institutions who fail to provide admission to children from economically weaker sections, Improving quality of schools and teachers, Central Government to assume the major part of the financial commitment for its implementation
- Expanding secondary education to reduce dropouts; Improving quality of education and infrastructure in SSA schools, allowing flexibility of rules, timing and other aspects to ensure retention of pupils in backward areas and for otherwise marginalized groups
- Enacting legislation to regulate fees, admissions and curricula in private educational institutions
- No FDI in higher education; Scrapping Bills such as “Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010”, “The Higher Education and Research Bill (THER) 2011, and “Universities for Research and Innovation Bill, 2012”

- Scrapping the Four Year Bachelor's Program Suitable regulation of private higher education institutions, including of fee structures and teacher norms, to ensure quality and access
- Formulating progressive and democratic curriculum and syllabi at all levels of education in a way that recognizes India's social and cultural diversity
- Regularise teachers currently employed as contract or para teachers.
- Ensuring democratic rights of students, teachers and non-teaching staff in all educational institutions; Students' union elections to be made mandatory in all higher educational institutions

Health

- Public expenditure on health to be raised to at least 5% of GDP, which would include a significantly enhanced allocation from the centre
- Strengthening, expanding and reorienting the public health system so that it is accountable to local communities and guarantees free and easy access to a range of comprehensive health care services.
- Immediately and effectively reversing the trend of privatisation of health care services and outsourcing of services through PPPs.
- Extending and recasting the ESI scheme to effectively protect workers' health.
- Regulating the private health care sector, especially the corporate owned hospital sector through urgent and stringent measures.
- Ensuring uninterrupted supply of all medicines, free of cost, in all public health facilities; Hazardous formulations of medicines to be weeded out from the market
- Controlling price of essential drugs by adopting a cost-based pricing formula; Minimum Cost-MRP margin and removal of all taxes on medicines in National List of Essential Medicines(NLEM; reduce huge excise duty on medicines by reversing from MRP-based to Cost-based collection..
- Reviving the public sector pharmaceutical units to harness them for production of essential drugs and vaccines.
- Strictly controlling and regulating clinical trials and prohibiting unethical clinical trials by foreign pharmaceutical companies.
- Removing US government's drug law enforcing agency USFDA's offices and officials from India; No enforcement of US law on Indian soil
- Defend India's patent laws and ensure no dilution
- Ensure priority for the setting up of new colleges to train doctors and nurses by Government. Public funding of such colleges as a priority in underserved areas such as in the north east and in poorer States. Training institutes to be set up for health workers.

AADHAAR

- Stop implementation of the Aadhaar project till it is approved by Parliament; initiating a privacy law and a data protection law to be passed by Parliament prior to implementation of Aadhaar
- Barring the use of Aadhaar in the provision of social services and reversing all decisions to make Aadhaar compulsory for the provision of any rights, economic and social services to citizens
- Constituting an independent high level expert panel for an appraisal of the technology of biometrics used in the project

Pensions and Senior Citizens

- Enabling senior citizens to live with dignity by immediately establishing a publicly-funded, universal and non contributory Old Age Pension System with a minimum amount of monthly pension not less than 50% of minimum wage or Rs 4000/- per month, whichever is higher; as an individual entitlement for all citizens of India except income tax payees or those receiving higher pension from any other source.
- Indexing the pension to consumer prices for automatic annual revision
- Setting up a single window system for Old Age Pensions
- Providing a similar allowance to all widows, destitute and disabled persons with no age limit
- Upgrading pensions of all categories of pensioners in consonance with the cost of living; one-rank one-pension for ex-servicemen
- Building a network of old-age homes/day care centres with State support.

Urban Issues

In view of the swelling ranks of poor and working people in India's urban areas, the CPI(M) is committed to

- Promoting planned urbanization; increasing public investment in public utilities and facilities in the cities to accommodate the growing migration by the working people;
- Ensuring affordable basic services like drinking water, sanitation, power, transportation, ration shops, health facilities, schools, street lighting, etc., for the urban poor;
- Running adequately provisioned night shelters, homes and community kitchens for the most vulnerable and destitute.
- Halting demolition of slums; Ensuring in situ development of slums with facilities; Ensuring that slum areas are not transferred to real estate developers;
- A complete ban on uprooting and relocating workers to the outskirts of the city far away from their place of work;
- Expanding public provisioning of housing with full civic amenities; curbing unbridled real estate development catering to the affluent classes;

- Ensuring modern and affordable public transport and Mass Transit Systems; planning roads and transport with greater rights for pedestrians, cyclists and other slow moving vehicles; Checking air pollution and road congestion through these measures;
- Paying special attention to solid waste management of recyclable/reusable waste; hazardous electronic/chemical and bio-waste through cooperatives of SWM workers without PPP;
- Ensuring protection for street vendors.

Environment

- Making the system and processes of Environmental Clearances at State and Central level effective, time-bound, transparent, accountable and free of conflict of interests;
- Taking steps to reduce emission of greenhouse gases through effective regulation, energy efficiency in all sectors of production and consumption; promotion of renewable energy such as solar and wind; reducing energy inequality and promoting energy access for economically weaker sections;
- Strengthening States to tackle natural and climate-related disasters, and to adopt and implement climate resilient development strategies addressing the needs of vulnerable populations
- Checking pollution of rivers and other water bodies through effective regulation and enforcement especially by strengthening Central and State regulatory authorities
- Initiating immediate measures to prevent degradation and destructive development on river beds and flood plains
- Stopping implementation of Madhav Gadgil and Kasturirangan reports and set-up a broad based expert committee to arrive at a “comprehensive plan for protection of fragile eco systems in the Western Ghats and people’s livelihoods” through public hearings and wide consultations with stakeholders.

Water Resources

- New National Water Policy to be formulated treating water as a scarce public good, in such a manner as to increase water re-charge and water conservation while simultaneously enhancing water availability for domestic use, irrigation and industry through effective regulation and demand management; equitable provision of potable drinking water to all habitations to be accorded priority
- No privatization of water resources
- Tackling depletion of ground water through more effective regulation, strengthening regulatory bodies and appropriate legislation

Science and Technology

- Enhancing public funding of indigenous research in science and

technology to 2 % of GDP as against 0.8% to promote self-reliance; strengthening the university system in research and development; Fundamental research in the sciences to be accorded priority

- New initiatives with adequate funding in emerging technologies such as solar
- Create capability in electronics, including microelectronics
- Initiating programs to break the monopoly of drug multinationals in critical areas
- Focussing on agricultural research to break monopolies of companies such as Monsanto in seeds
- Promoting free software and other such new technologies, which are free from monopoly ownership through copyrights or patents; “knowledge commons” should be promoted across disciplines, like biotechnology and drug discovery
- Revamping the functioning of the Patent offices to ensure strict adherence to the Indian Patent Act; Stop training and orientation of Indian Patent office personnel by the US and European Patent offices

Culture and Media

- All languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution to be equally encouraged and developed
- Promoting secular, progressive and democratic culture; attacks on cultural personalities and productions by the communal forces to be firmly dealt with
- Curbing glorification of violence and commodification of women and sex
- Strengthening the Prasar Bharati Corporation to make it a genuine public broadcasting service for TV and radio; States to have a say in the programmes aired by the public broadcasting service
- Prohibiting cross-media ownership to prevent monopolies; Reversing the entry of FDI in the print and electronic media
- Setting up of a Media Council which can act as an independent regulatory authority for the media
- Taking Internet governance out of US control to an appropriate international body; promoting a people-centric Internet which builds in social justice and free from control of global corporations; promoting a global Internet regime that protects the right to privacy and does not allow mass surveillance by either governments

FOR INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

The CPM stands for adopting measures to prevent and control corruption of all kinds, especially in high places; effectively redressing grievances, protecting whistle blowers; making CBI and CVC independent, making access to justice speedy and

affordable and reforming electoral process to rid it off corporate and money control by

Fighting Corruption and increasing accountability

- Amending and strengthening the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Lokpal Act to widen its purview and bring all contracts, agreements or MOUs of any kind between the government and the private sector within its purview.
- Empowering regulators and investigating agencies to thoroughly probe corporate crimes
- Private Financial sector institutions, banking and insurance sector in particular, and all public-private partnership projects brought under the purview of Lokpal Act, Whistleblowers Protection Act and other related anti-corruption legislations
- Passing an Act for grievance redressal with powers to have detailed citizen's charters prepared for each public authority
- Instituting effective mechanisms for providing protection to RTI users and anti-corruption crusaders and passing an effective Whistleblowers Protection Act.
- Strengthen the Right to Information Act

Major Constitutional & Legislative Reforms

- Amend Article 3 of the Constitution to provide for the consent of the state legislature concerned before a state is to be bifurcated or reorganized by parliament.
- Amend the Constitution to make parliamentary approval mandatory for any international treaty.
- Repeal the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and replace it with a suitable law which provides a legal framework for the operation of the armed forces without the draconian provisions.
- Amend Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code so that it does not criminalize adult consensual relationships irrespective of sexual orientation.
- Amend the Indian Penal Code and other statutes to remove the death penalty from the statutes.

Judicial Reforms

- Constituting a National Judicial Commission to be constituted as an independent Constitutional body comprising of representatives from judiciary, executive, legislature and bar for appointment, transfer and dismissal of judges and to ensure judicial accountability
- Reforming the judicial system to provide speedy relief at affordable cost to the common people; Filling up vacancies in the judiciary

- Suitably amending the definition of criminal contempt in order to prevent its misuse in suppressing dissent
- Public declaration of their assets by the Judges to be made mandatory

Reform of the Election Commission

- Members of the EC to be appointed by the President on the advice of a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and Chief Justice of Supreme Court
- The Election Commissioners must be legally debarred from enjoying any office after their retirement either under the Government or as a Governor or MP
- The Representation of the People Act needs to be amended to specify the jurisdiction of election observers
- Constitutional amendment to specify EC's jurisdiction vis-à-vis law and order in order to avoid conflict with elected State Government

Electoral Reforms

- Proportional representation with partial list system
- Effective steps to prohibit persons with criminal background from contesting elections
- State funding in the form of material for recognized political parties
- Prohibition of corporate funding to political parties