

DECLARATION

# **India: Founding Statement of Ganamancha - “We come together to form a struggle platform: ‘Working People’s Movement for Democracy and Secularism’”**

Friday 4 July 2014, by [CPI \(ML\) Liberation](#), [Ganamancha](#), [Left Collective](#), [MKP](#), [Radical Socialist \(India\)](#), [SNVM](#) (Date first published: 2 July 2014).

**Declaration issued at Press Conference on 2/7/2014.**

We the undersigned political parties and organisations have decided to come together to form a struggle platform: “Working People’s Movement for Democracy and Secularism”.

## **BJP’s Rise**

We have felt the need to unite in a common platform in the backdrop of Modi-led BJP’s ascent in the country, particularly in West Bengal. BJP’s victory in the general elections was mainly because of the misrule, corruption and anti-people policies of the Congress-led UPA regime, which alienated and angered the people. While the Congress has been decisively rejected, other forces, including the Left, have failed to offer a credible, progressive alternative.

Narendra Modi has become the Prime Minister of the country with the full backing of the big corporate class and international finance capital on the one hand and the communal-fascist forces led by the RSS on the other. Even while the new PM was being sworn in, communal clashes were reported from Ahmedabad and Bijapur. A young software professional from the minority community was beaten to death by members of a Hindu extremist outfit in Pune. Provocative statements on article 370, Ayodha temple, Vedic texts being introduced in school textbooks etc. have already been made from different quarters. The BJP government has imposed Hindi in official communications in the social media and the Health Minister has launched a tirade against condoms and sex education in the name of “Indian values”. All these betray the communal, obscurantist and divisive agenda of the RSS-BJP.

While promising “achche din” during the course of the election campaign, the PM has now started talking of a “bitter pill”. The steep hike in railway fares on the eve of the budget indicate the economic agenda of the BJP government. Inflation is climbing, with sugar and vegetable prices rising sharply. The move to enhance the FDI cap beyond 51% in the defence sector is aimed at developing a foreign controlled military-industrial complex in India. Cuts in subsidies and welfare measures and aggressive neoliberal policies are also in the offing.

With the unfolding of a full-throated rightwing agenda, it becomes imperative for all progressive, democratic and Left forces to unite in building resistance in defence of democracy and secularism.

## **West Bengal**

The authoritarian and corrupt regime headed by the West Bengal Chief Minister over the past three years has frustrated the people. Attacks on democratic rights, state sponsored violence directed at opposition parties, atrocities against women and myriad crimes like murder and extortion carried out by the goons patronized by the Trinamul Congress have become the order of the day. People's hard earned savings have been looted through scams like Saradha. The state is witnessing the closure of factories like Jessop, Hind Motors, several tea gardens and jute mills.

Workers are suffering due to joblessness, rampant contractualisation, low wages and relentless price rise. Peasants are faced with the pincer attack of rising agricultural input costs and depressed output prices. The deprived sections like dalits, adivasis and Muslim minorities continue to suffer from neglect. Rather than implementing the substantive recommendations of the Sachar Committee and Ranganath Mishra Commission, the TMC government has indulged in irresponsible, non-secular tokenism. All this has contributed to growing discontent among the people.

The CPI(M)-led Left Front has failed to play the role of an effective opposition in West Bengal, in manifesting peoples' aspirations and building up struggles against the TMC government's misrule. The Left Front government, especially in its last decade of rule, had pursued neoliberal policies like building SEZs and coercive land acquisition in an aggressive manner. There were major violations of democratic norms by the CPI(M), as a ruling party, in various spheres alongside a rise in corruption and high-handedness by party leaders. Unfortunately, despite the defeat in the 2011 assembly elections, the CPI(M) has failed to rectify its ideological-political deviations.

The anti-democratic character of the TMC regime and the continuing decline of the CPI(M)-led Left Front have provided space for the BJP in West Bengal. BJP's rise in the state will lead to communal polarisation and destroy its secular and progressive legacy. We believe that the threat posed by the communal forces can be combated by mobilizing people in a mass movement and not by tailing discredited anti-people parties like the Congress.

### **Struggle Platform**

We are coming together in a common platform to build a movement to defend democracy and secularism. We are committed to:

- (a) Democracy and defence of democratic rights
- (b) Secularism and communal amity
- (c) Opposition to pro-corporate neoliberal policies which increases social inequality and leads to plunder of resources
- (d) Social justice for women, adivasis, dalits, minorities and other deprived sections
- (e) Upholding progressive and democratic values across the world and opposition to militarism and hegemony

We are inviting all progressive, democratic, secular and left political parties, organisations, groups and individuals, who agree with the above-mentioned principles and are willing to fight for them to join hands and strengthen the platform. We shall raise our voice against all instances of violation of democratic rights and crimes against women in the state and strive to stand by the victims of state-sponsored violence. We shall raise the issues of informal sector workers, organised workers, peasants, agricultural labourers, women, dalits, adivasis, Muslim minorities and fight against all

forms of exploitation and oppression.

We will be organizing a Convention in Kolkata on August 2, 2014 to finalise the Charter of Demands and chalk out the future course of action.

Sd/-

*Convenors of "Working People's Movement for Democracy and Secularism"*

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