

Panchayat Poll '08: Defeat CPIM? Well ... but How?? A Preliminary Discussion

Nothing can remain the same all through. The masses of rural toilers were summing-up the past experiences on their own and has been feeling betrayed by the party that once the masses themselves enthroned. The feeling of despair was giving rise to wrath. The first sparks of rural spontaneous outbursts were seen in only four or five villages in 2004, and in 2007 it surfaced again more widely in various districts of West Bengal apparently against the corruption of party-govt (including panchayat)-rural bigwigs. Also we saw the Singur-Bhangar-Haripur-Nandigram during 2006 and 2007, where the villagers united to fight govt-party-police-admin nexus attempted to grab land for foreign and native capitalists. In many of these struggles we saw the *almost same trend (albeit weakly)* that is being witnessed among the workers, i.e., unity of the rural masses irrespective of or cutting across their former party affiliation or adherence, their dissociation from old established parties spontaneously unsettling the power equation of the villages, doing things and achieving feats which they themselves would have thought to be 'impossible' few days before, taking the rein of their own fight and organisation themselves, rebelling against the agonising life, etc. This is an important phenomenon that must be kept in mind before thinking of the tasks ahead of the rural toiling masses in the ensuing panchayat polls.

Against this backdrop the topic of 'Defeat CPIM' and/or 'Ensure 1:1 Fight in Panchayat poll' appeared. To start with let us time travel to a time 31 years back. That time the masses of toiling people thought of defeating the Congress. The rural vested interest and the oppressor class forces were at that time identified with the Congress. CPIM also tutored the toiling people that the 'Congress rule' (congressi shashan, indira soiroantro) was the root of all the evil. The masses of toilers ousted Congress with the help of CPIM, that is they installed a CPIM led govt ousting a Congress govt, clutching the hands of CPIM. After three decades' experience a good section of workers-peasants now feel cheated and they are irritated too by the arrogance, highhandedness, corruption etc of CPIM; CPIM was seen to be attacking protestors and struggling workers-peasants, and CPIM's alikeness with character of cadre-based fascist organisation came is a talked about subject. Now a significant section of them want to oust CPIM. Well, they may want that very much; but does it preclude chances of getting entrapped in another vicious circle? The masses of toiling people will now again cling to another established party or party-alliance to oust CPIM from govt power ... and then after another decade or so of awful experience the people will have no alternative than to repeat the same act again!! If the workers-peasants remain as inactive for next 10 years as they were before (and as majority of them still are), what else may await them!? By simply subscribing to that view of ousting CPIM (naturally by some other party or parties of establishment) and propagating only that among the masses of people can one play a conscious role? HOW to defeat CPIM is, therefore, a very pertinent question. For this purpose we need some more analysis.

Why and how the CPIM became as powerful as to emerge like an omnipotent devil, like an invincible power in West Bengal ? If we recount history we'll see that the toiling masses *voluntarily ceded their power to the party* of their choice; by their powerful movement the toiling people fortified the party and installed its govt, they spent sweat-n-blood for this party, by their activities, fights they made the party a strong social force. But the old way of thinking presented the case differently or inversely to themselves! They were tutored (*and they didn't protest to that*) that the power is *in* the party that party is benevolently running a govt to do something good for the poor! They were tutored that workers-peasants cannot do anything by themselves, the former are to depend on outsider 'educated' babu leaders, on MP–MLA–Ministers–Govt-Officers etc powerful strata, etc everything but not on themselves. Then, the prolong inactivity or passivity of the workers and peasants in the arena of class struggle only led to the 'atomisation', fission, breaking down of the toiling masses or 'the people' to pieces of 'individuals' or 'families' or *isolated beings*, and hence the idea of 'powerless' people vis-à-vis the powerful party had its sway in the society. BUT that myth of powerful party vs. powerless, hopeless masses shattered anytime and anywhere the masses burst out spontaneously, the old mirage of 'power equation' was toppled at least for time being. So, if anything is to be ousted, at first the people have to oust their own passivity and then the practice of dependence on outside forces, and if anything is to be established, at first the toiling people should establish their unity (cutting across or throwing down their erstwhile 'party' labels, throwing off their dependence on established parties) and their own organisation of struggle, *they have to establish their control over their fights and organisations*, they'll have to take the destiny in their hand, the lash and rein in their own hand rather than to establish the 'power' of just another party of the establishment. This is one among the two most important things to be taken into account while framing the tasks of the toiling people in the ensuing election. The message of awakening is to be spread, the panchayat poll is also to be utilised for taking few steps towards forming peoples own fighting organisation, depending on themselves and their own fighting unity, rather than joining or supporting a 'readymade' organisation or a big party with so many connections at 'high' levels or etc. However, so far we mainly saw the surface-level phenomenon, we must see the roots.

The logic of the Para above hinges on a fact that is yet unexplained here: "... *the prolong inactivity or passivity of the workers and peasants in the arena of class struggle only led ...*" and this was the same as what was written in another place as " *If the workers-peasants remain as inactive for next 10 years as they were before (and as majority of them still are), what else may await them!?* " Why the agricultural labourers and poor peasants remained inactive as far as 'struggle' is concerned? How the CPIM could keep the masses of people quiet and passive? The one-word answer is 'Reformism'. CPIM cunningly gave rise to a cult of 'be content with what you get without much hazard', 'be content with the tiny relief-kitties distributed by party-panchayat-government... and if you think something else you'll loose this too' in the society at large. Initially the 'left' govt could do some reforms, could carry out some relief-measures. Plus there is a de facto

absence of anti-reformist political 'force' in the society since a long lo-n-g time; bourgeois parliamentary reformism had its sway in the Indian society, including inside the lefts. And due to India 's backwardness here the dangers are more, here even getting a 'ration card' means getting a 'favour'! Paltry sops, petty loans, some days of work or few kilos of Antodaya or Annapurna rice could be used to 'purchase' allegiance! And don't blame the masses of people; they were trained to feel so by 60 years of 'democracy'! All this created the possibility for the masses of people to be instilled with reformism and possibility for the CPIM to dupe the masses. It will do much harm for the present social process of reawakening if people get the message of demanding and remaining content with just an honest distribution of paltry relief as against CPIM's corrupted practices, if the people demand only honest sympathetic panchayat leader instead of arrogant corrupt party babus of CPIM and so on so forth. Then the envisaged journey of the people becomes just from electoral activity (of voting-out CPIM) to passivity based on reformist illusions! Then there will remain a strong chance of getting trapped in the vicious circle we've discussed above, isn't it?

And just imagine how much painful it would be – if the activities of masses of people rising from slumber of passive submission to active participants in protests-resistances (and thus who are de facto re-examining and summing up the past) *does not or cannot merge with* the conscious anti-reformist politics (and conscious sum up)? How much painful it will be if the slowly rising wave gets lost in maze of illusions of petty reforms, gets tied to so many shackles of dependence? When history is taking a strange course of reawakening, shouldn't we introspectively carefully judge each step of ours that whether we are taking side with the forward stride of history or unknowingly hampering, impeding the stride of history?

http://www.foraproletarianparty.org/Panchayat_Poll_08.htm