

# 7<sup>th</sup> Left Front Government in West Bengal: Snapshots of Major Initiatives and Achievements

CPI (M) CAMPAIGN MATERIAL  
WEST BENGAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION  
APRIL-MAY 2011

# Land Reforms

- ❖ The Left Front government in West Bengal has the best record in implementing land reforms among all Indian states
- ❖ Upto January 2011, over 11.3 lakh acres of land has been distributed among 30.4 lakh poor peasants of the state and 15 lakh sharecroppers have been assured of tenurial security
- ❖ 66% of all land reform beneficiaries belong to SC, ST or minority households; 6.25 lakh joint patta and 1.65 lakh female patta have been distributed
- ❖ Homestead land has been distributed to 3.24 lakh landless labourers so far
- ❖ The 7<sup>th</sup> LF government (2006-2011) has added a further dimension to the land redistribution programme by purchasing land from willing farmers at a price 25% higher than the market price and redistributing it among landless households
- ❖ 739.37 acres of land were purchased and redistributed to 5476 poor and landless families in the rural areas

# Resilient Agriculture

- ❖ Due to the pro-peasant policies of the 7<sup>th</sup> LF government, agriculture has grown at 3.1% in West Bengal from 2006-07 to 2009-10, when agricultural growth at the national level was only 2.1%
- ❖ West Bengal produced 14.3 million tons of rice in 2009-10, which was the highest for any state in the country, accounting for 16% of all-India production
- ❖ West Bengal is also the first among all states in the production of vegetables (12.8 million tons in 2009-10)
- ❖ Empowerment of the small and marginal peasants has been the bedrock of the alternative policies of the LF government, which has also laid a strong foundation for the agricultural economy in the state
- ❖ As a result, agriculture in West Bengal has shown greater resilience at a time when the neoliberal policies of the Union government has adversely affected agriculture across the country

# Food Security

- ❖ Despite high food inflation affecting people's livelihoods across the country, the Union government has refused to strengthen the PDS by increasing food subsidy
- ❖ In contrast, the 7<sup>th</sup> LF government started supplying rice at Rs. 2 per kg to 2.65 crore poor persons in the state from March 2009
- ❖ The LF government has increased food subsidy by Rs. 434 crore to provide cheap rice to the poor
- ❖ Rice offtake from the ration shops has increased from 88% in previous years to 96% in the current year
- ❖ Sugar, edible oil and pulses have also been supplied through the PDS at prices 10% lower than market prices during the festival time
- ❖ The LF government spent another Rs. 400 crore in the current year to procure potatoes at an assured price of Rs. 3.50 per kg to prevent the losses of potato growers; Potatoes were sold at cheap rates through ration shops to benefit the consumers

# Industrial Development

- ❖ Industrial investment in West Bengal has increased significantly over the past few years
- ❖ Between 2006 and 2010, investments of over Rs. 36000 crore have materialized in 1313 large and medium industrial units, creating direct employment opportunities for 1.41 lakh persons
- ❖ Out of this, 322 units materialized in 2010, 80% of which were medium scale enterprises
- ❖ The IT sector has also witnessed rapid expansion with employment in the sector growing from 32000 in 2006 to 105000 in 2010
- ❖ While most of the internationally reputed IT/ITES firms are operating from West Bengal, nearly 80% of the IT units in the state are small and medium units, which have been proactively encouraged by the LF government
- ❖ The number of new small-scale units in the state has increased from 19884 last year to 23000 in the current year, creating employment opportunities for 2.2 lakh persons

# Workers' Social Security

- ❖ The 6<sup>th</sup> LF government had introduced a provident fund scheme for the workers in the unorganized sector in 2001-02 for the first time in India
- ❖ The 7<sup>th</sup> LF government added health insurance coverage to this scheme and expanded its coverage to 56 more categories and professions, benefiting 25 lakh workers in the unorganized sector
- ❖ Another 10.5 lakh agricultural labourers have also been covered under a provident fund scheme; Separate welfare schemes have also been adopted for construction workers, transport workers and beedi workers
- ❖ The state government transfers a minimum amount of Rs. 240 annually to all workers covered under the provident fund scheme besides providing other benefits
- ❖ Over 38 lakh workers have been brought under social security coverage during the tenure of the 7<sup>th</sup> LF government
- ❖ The 7<sup>th</sup> LF government has also increased the monthly assistance for workers of closed factories to Rs. 1500 per month.

# Human Development

- ❖ The death rate in West Bengal (number of death per thousand population) stood at 6.2 in 2009, which was the lowest among all states in the country
- ❖ The decline in infant mortality rate in West Bengal is the second fastest in the country
- ❖ 73% of all patients in West Bengal undergo treatment from the public health system, while the national average is 40% only
- ❖ Annual population growth rate in West Bengal reduced from 1.77% between 1991-2001 to 1.39% between 2001-2011, which is now the fourth lowest in the country; Child sex ratio in West Bengal at 950 in 2011 is the second highest in the country
- ❖ The literacy rate in West Bengal improved from 68% in 2001 to 74% in 2011 and is now the fifth highest in the country
- ❖ Net enrolment ratio in primary education in West Bengal reached 98.95% in 2009-10; Drop-out rate declined to 8.66% in 2009-10 which is below national average
- ❖ 5 new universities, 73 new degree colleges and 36 new engineering colleges were established in West Bengal under the 7<sup>th</sup> LF government

# Development of Minorities

- ❖ The 7<sup>th</sup> LF government implemented 10% reservation in government jobs for 53 backward communities among Muslims, which account for 86% of the total Muslim population of the state
- ❖ Rs. 264 crore was spent on Multi-Sectoral Development Programme for Minority Concentrated Districts in West Bengal in 2010, which was the highest in the country
- ❖ The West Bengal Minorities Development and Finance Corporation has the best record in the country for the disbursement of term loans and micro-credit to Muslim beneficiaries, whose cumulative number till date exceeds 1.8 lakh
- ❖ The number of *madrasahs* has increased from 238 in 1977 to 605 in 2010 and the number students have increased from 4000 to 4.7 lakh during this period
- ❖ Students from minority communities now comprise over 30% of all primary school students in the state and over 21% of secondary and higher secondary school students

**TO DEFEND AND FURTHER THE GAINS MADE BY  
THE WORKERS, PEASANTS AND MIDDLE CLASS  
IN WEST BENGAL**

**&**

**TO ENSURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AND PRO-PEOPLE  
ALTERNATIVE POLICIES**

**VOTE FOR THE LEFT FRONT IN THE  
FORTHCOMING ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS**



**THANK YOU**