

## We came Together to Save the Constitution and the Country's Democratic Fibre : Former Rivals Jitendra Chowdhury, CPI(M) Tripura Secretary, and Birajit Sinha, State Congress President

### Election Promises of the Front

Jobs for retrenched school teachers, one of the main issues the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had flagged in 2018 to come to power in Tripura, and the highest possible autonomy for areas under a tribal council, were among 81 promises in the Left Front manifesto released in Agartala on Friday (03-02-2023). The front comprises the Communist Party of India (Marxist) contesting 43 seats, the Communist Party of India, the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the All India Forward Bloc contesting a seat each. The fifth constituent of the front, the CPI (Marxist–Leninist) fielded a candidate on its own after it was not allotted one.

Narayan Kar, the Tripura Left Front convener outlined the promises that included jobs for at least 2.5 lakh people in government, semi-government and private sectors in the next five years, free electricity for up to 50 units per family, land allotment to landless people and a ban on the privatisation of government-run educational institutions.

“We shall also ensure jobs for the 10,323 retrenched school teachers and contractual employees fired during the BJP regime and the highest possible autonomy for the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) through a constitutional amendment,” he said.

“We shall work to amend the Constitution to provide maximum economic and political autonomy to the TTAADC without disturbing the territory of the State,” Mr. Kar said.

Among the other promises in the manifesto are the restoration of democratic, religious and political rights, and general law-and-order “curbed under the BJP regime” besides a war on drugs and efforts to ensure 200 days of work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

Jitendra Chowdhury, the CPI(M)'s State secretary said the Left Front and Congress, which worked out a 47-13 seat-sharing agreement, will soon announce a common minimum programme.

“Everything cannot be written down in a manifesto, which has been designed to run based on available resources and not falsehood as resorted to by the BJP. For instance, we shall take steps to ensure criminals who carried out attacks on the media are punished,” he said.

(Courtesy with 'The Hindu' 04-02-2023, With no Comment)