

## **A STEP FORWARD ON THE WORKING CLASS' INTERNATIONAL DAY OF UNITY, STRUGGLE AND SOLIDARITY!**

The working class of the world is approaching May Day, the international day of unity, struggle and solidarity under extraordinary conditions this year.

In the recent period, many countries have been swept into the maelstrom of capitalist crisis and toiling peoples whose working and living conditions has become unbearable had been steering towards standing up against growing joblessness, poverty and misery. And for the last year, the capitalist world economy had entered a period of stagnation. Alongside dismissals, shorter working hours, the proliferation of flexible working methods involving only the partial or non-payment of wages and unwaged leave as well as poverty had already become the problem of almost all the workers of the world. Moreover, with primarily between the USA and China, the contradictions between major imperialist countries and in general, between the world bourgeoisie has been intensifying, with surging conflicts.

Working and living conditions compounded by the crisis approaching with a tendency to generalise, are trying the bounds of tolerance with the Coronavirus pandemic today. As for the pandemic, having led to the contraction of markets and restriction of production, it is reinforcing the factors for crisis.

The bourgeois propaganda is either tying the Corona pandemic to the virus produced in laboratory conditions or is mostly presenting it as the "*invisible enemy*" of the humanity with no connections with capitalism. This is despite the warnings from scientists 8 to 10 years ago that pandemics will emerge due to the destruction of nature and climate change. However, with primarily the USA bourgeoisie which withdrew from all treaties, the international bourgeoisie, consumed with greed for profit and having no regard for safeguarding humanity and life, did not flinch from progressing the destruction of nature. Capitalism and imperialism are driving humanity to calamity with pandemics and wars as much as with unemployment, misery and hunger.

It was not enough for the bourgeoisie to be the main culprit of the pandemic in the first degree. It has been rendering public health systems ineffective with its greed for excess profit. And in the aftermath of the pandemic, at first, getting rid of the jobless alongside the aged and the sick as it would reduce "*unnecessary expenses*"; especially in countries like the USA, Britain and Brazil, the bourgeoisie did not move a muscle against the pandemic. As the pandemic reached levels they did not anticipate and began to disrupt processes of production and capital accumulation, and swept them towards crisis, they resorted to interventions to save not humans but capitalism. They were unprepared. They cannot test health workers or even distribute masks to them; we can all see their shortcomings in fighting the pandemic.

The working class is experiencing the Coronavirus pandemic, spreading easily from worker to worker in factories and hospitals as well as in mail, transport, local services, the commercial field and the streets. The international bourgeoisie which has destroyed health institutions and facilities through cuts it has been implementing for decades, in almost all countries, is not going beyond making calls "*to stay at home*" against the pandemic. However, with primarily health workers, the workers of sectors in which production and services regarded as necessary such as food, energy, transport and cleaning, and workers from all sectors in many countries are forced to work, face to face with the risk of death and continuing to reproduce life under extraordinary conditions.

The continuation of production and the appropriation of the surplus value produced by the workers and the survival of capitalism is the fundamental priority for the bourgeoisie. Countries like China, the USA which has become the centre of the pandemic, Germany and even France and Spain began to relax pandemic measures and are getting the workers to start working on a large scale. This means that there will be a significant increase in worker deaths.

The reason for all this is clear: the main condition for high profit and accumulation of capital is the condemnation of the working class to produce an extremely high amount of surplus value in extremely severe working and living conditions!

Having declared humanity's war against Coronavirus, "*the invisible enemy*", the bourgeoisie is attempting to conceal the irreconcilable contradiction between labour and capital, and the class war it wages against the working class it ruthlessly exploits and those who live selling their labour.

In fact, the international bourgeoisie has been on a ruthless offensive against the working class with neoliberal policies for decades. Health, into which almost no investment has been made, has been rendered accessible in so far as the ability to pay. Now it is intensifying its offensive.

In the so called "*packages of measures against Coronavirus*" there is almost nothing for workers. All the measures seek to support and save the monopoly bourgeoisie and its companies. Not even a tenth of the support is apportioned to workers, with primarily those left jobless despite their size in terms of population.

Health workers, without being able to be tested, bereft of equipment and sacrificing many victims from amongst themselves, are working heroically.

Without coming to terms with the need to struggle against the bourgeoisie which has been imposing intolerable conditions and against its extensions like the trade union bureaucracy that has been using workers' dues on the bourgeoisie's behalf, nothing has changed or will change.

What is needed for success is united organised struggle. And the prerequisite of the struggle against the pandemic is the mobilisation of all means possible for measures to be taken to safeguard workers and labourers amongst whom the pandemic has spread first and with most ease, starting with health workers. The bourgeoisie never wished anything good upon workers. The taking of measures safeguarding labourers can only be possible by the unity and struggle of workers and labourers to defend their rights against the rule of monopolies and finance capital and bourgeois states. Organising as committees in workplaces, forming connections with other factories and aiming to lead trade unions to end their function as a means of reconciliation with capital has become necessary and crucial.

"*Nothing will ever be the way it was,*" it is said. Yet nothing changes by itself. Moreover, if we do not intervene, it is inevitable for everything to become worse! The capital and capitalism do not change by themselves; exploitation and repression do not end on their own. The law of value which is the basis of commodity production and the law of surplus value which is the basis of capitalism are each laws of the jungle! In the world of the bourgeoisie, the workers only have freedoms of work and death and for the sole purpose of adding to capital!

The prerequisite for being rid of the rule of the monopolies; of the brutal impositions of the bourgeois state, the protector and guardian of the conditions of exploitation which is a dictatorship over the workers and labourers; of the unfair and negative results of capitalism such as joblessness, being forced to work long hours for low pay, poverty and social injustice; and of the threat of pandemics, is revolution and the organisation of the working class as the ruling class.

We, those who create life with our labour, can realise social transformation.

We can achieve this. The pandemic has once again laid bare that life cannot continue if workers and labourers do not produce. We have the power in our hands and tested this again with the pandemic.

Many things have been rendered utterly visible with the pandemic. We have begun to feel and perceive the bourgeoisie's attitude towards us more clearly than in the past. What we lack is uniting and organising against capitalism which is the source of all the ills we experience.

This year, we are going to celebrate May Day, owning up our urgent issues, in a way which will serve to develop the struggle against Coronavirus and its culprit, capitalism, and for working peoples to be safeguarded against the pandemic. Our means of celebration will accord with this. We call on all workers and all those exploited to observe May Day with slogans and marches in their workplaces if they are working or at home if they are not, and to read out statements where possible.

- The administration and control of all health enterprises including all private health institutions, factories and workplaces producing medical equipment and medicine should be transferred to the representatives of trade unions, professional organisations, associations and health workers in the health field.
- Health cannot be subject of commerce or profit. The privatisation of health services should come to an end, people's access to quality and free health services should be secured.
- Production and services during the pandemic except those necessary such as health facilities, food and energy should be stopped. Workers should be given paid leave.
- In sectors where work is necessary, transport services should be provided for workers to be safeguarded against pandemic. Protected working conditions should be provided in factories and workplaces.
- Comprehensive testing should be carried out in all risk areas with primarily factories, workplaces and living spaces where the pandemic is detected, masks, gloves and disinfectant should be distributed free of charge.
- Health workers should be provided with the necessary protective equipment. Their tests should be carried out as a priority.
- Dismissals from work throughout the pandemic should be proscribed.
- An end to the practise of unpaid and low paid leave.
- Necessary financial support should be provided to families of workers left jobless who have inadequate or no income to address their essentials. Rent payments, electricity, water, gas bills should be undertaken by the state. The debts of workers in this situation and of the small producers and business owners should be written off.
- Unity, struggle and solidarity against the pandemic and exploitation, and for a humane life.
- Long live May Day. Long Live Socialism.

International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations (ICMLPO)