

CONSTITUTION

OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA



Adopted at the Seventh Congress
Oct. 31 to Nov. 7, 1964
CALCUTTA

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OF THE
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OF
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*ADOPTED AT THE SEVENTH CONGRESS OF
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
CALCUTTA, OCTOBER 31—NOVEMBER 7 1964*

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Article I

NAME

The name of the Party shall be the Communist Party of India.

Article II

EMBLEM

The emblem of the Party shall be a crossed hammer and sickle in white against a red background with a circular inscription in white : "Communist Party of India."

Article III

FLAG

The flag of the Party shall be a red flag of which the length shall be one-and-a-half times its width. At the centre of the flag there shall be a crossed hammer and sickle in white.

MEMBERSHIP

1. Any Indian citizen, eighteen years of age or above who accepts the Programme and Constitution of the Party, agrees to work in one of the Party organisations, to pay regularly the Party membership dues and to carry out decisions of the Party shall be eligible for Party membership.

2. New members are admitted to the Party on individual application and through a Party Branch on the recommendation of two Party members. Party committees at local, town, taluk, district, state and central levels also have the power to admit new members to the Party. Party members who recommend an applicant must furnish the Party Branch or the Party Committee concerned, truthful information about the applicant, from personal knowledge and with due sense of responsibility. All applications for Party membership must be placed before the appropriate committees within a month of their presentation and recommendation.

3. The General Body meeting of the Party Branch shall decide on the question of admission and, if the applicant is admitted to the Party, he or she shall be regarded as a Candidate member for a period of six months commencing from the date of such admission.

4. If a leading member from another political party of local, district or state level comes over to the Party, in addition to the sanction of the Local Party Committee or District or State Committee, it is necessary to have the sanction of the next higher committee of the Party before he or she is admitted to membership of the Party.

5. Members once expelled from the Party can be readmitted only by the decision of the Party Committee which confirmed their expulsion or by a higher committee.

6. Candidate members have the same duties and rights as full members except that they have no right to elect or be elected or to vote on any motion.

7. The Party Branch or the Party Committee admitting Candidate members shall arrange for their elementary education on the Programme, Constitution and the current policies of the Party and observe their development, through providing for their functioning as members of a Party Branch or unit.

8. By the end of the period of candidature, the Party Branch or Party Committee concerned shall discuss whether the Candidate member is qualified to be admitted to full membership. The Party Branch or the Committee concerned may admit Candidates to full membership or prolong the period of candidature for another term not exceeding six months. If a Candidate member is found unfit, the Party Branch or Committee may cancel his or her Candidate membership. A report of recruitment of Candidates and of recommendations for admission to full membership shall be regularly forwarded by the Branch or the Party Committee concerned to the next higher Party Committee.

9. The higher committee may, on scrutiny of the report, alter or modify any such decision after consultation with the Branch or the Party Committee which has submitted the report. The District and State Committee will exercise supervisory powers over the recruitment of Candidates and over admissions to full membership and have the right to modify or reject the decision of the lower committees in this respect.

10. A Party member may transfer his or her membership from one unit to another with the approval of the unit from which transfer is sought and by presenting a letter of introduction from the same to the new unit he or she wishes to join. In case of transfer outside the district or State, approval by the District or the State Committee concerned shall be necessary.

Article V

PARTY PLEDGE

All Candidates as well as full Party members shall sign the Party Pledge. This Pledge shall be :

“I accept the aims and objectives of the Party and agree to abide by its Constitution and loyally to carry out decisions of the Party.

“I shall strive to live up to the ideals of Communism and shall selflessly serve the working class and the toiling masses and the country, always placing the interests of the Party and the people above personal interests.”

Article VI

PARTY MEMBERSHIP CARDS

1. On admission to membership, every Party member shall be issued a Party Membership Card.

2. Party Cards shall be uniform throughout the country and shall be issued by the State Committees. Their form and contents shall be decided upon by the Central Committee.

Article VII

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP CARD

1. There shall be an annual renewal of Party Membership Cards. Renewal shall be made on the basis of a check-up by the Party organisation to which the Party member belongs. No Party Card shall be renewed in the case of any Party member who, for a continuous period of more than six months and without proper reason, has failed to take part in Party life and activity or to pay Party membership dues.

2. A report on such renewal of Party Cards by a Branch or a Party Committee concerned shall be sent to the next higher committee for confirmation and registration.

Article VIII

RESIGNATION FROM PARTY MEMBERSHIP

1. A Party member wishing to resign from the Party shall submit his or her resignation to the Party Branch concerned, which by a decision of its General Body meeting may accept the same and decide to strike his or her name off the rolls and report the matter to the next higher committee.

2. The Party Branch or the Party Committee concerned may, if it thinks necessary, try to persuade such a Party member to revoke his or her wish to resign.

3. In the case where a Party member wishing to resign from the Party is liable to be charged with serious violation of Party discipline which may warrant his or her suspension or expulsion and where such a charge is substantial, the resignation may be given effect to as expulsion from the Party.

4. All such cases of resignations given effect to as expulsion shall be immediately reported to the next higher Party Committee and be subject to the latter's confirmation.

Article IX

MEMBERSHIP DUES

All Party members, full as well as Candidates, shall pay a Party Membership Due of one rupee per year. This annual Party Due shall be paid at the time of admission into the Party or at the time of the renewal of the Party Card. (The Party member's dues may, if the State Committee concerned so decides, be realised in quarterly or half-yearly instalments).

Article X

DISTRIBUTION OF PARTY DUES

Party Dues collected from Party members by Party Branches or Units shall be distributed as follows :

- 10 per cent for the Central Committee ;
- 40 per cent for the State Committee ; and

The remaining 50 per cent shall be divided among the District committee, the Party Branch and the Local Committee where it exists, in such proportions as decided by the State Committee concerned.

Article XI

PARTY LEVY

The Central Committee and the State Committees in accordance with the guiding rules approved by the Central Committee, may fix levies on the Party members.

Article XII

DUTIES OF PARTY MEMBERS

1. The duties of the Party members are as follows :
 - (a) To regularly participate in the activity of the Party organisation to which they belong and to faithfully carry out the policy, decisions and the directives of the Party ;
 - (b) To study Marxism-Leninism and endeavour to raise their level of understanding ;
 - (c) To read, support and popularise the Party journal and Party publications ;

- (d) To observe the Party Constitution and Party discipline and behave in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and in accordance with the noble ideals of Communism ;
- (e) To place the interests of the people and the Party above personal interests ;
- (f) To devotedly serve the masses and consistently strengthen their bonds with them, to learn from the masses and report their opinions and demands to the Party, to work in a mass organisation, unless exempted, under the guidance of the Party ;
- (g) To cultivate comradely relations towards one another and constantly develop a fraternal spirit within the Party ;
- (h) To practise criticism and self-criticism with a view to helping each other and improving individual and collective work ;
- (i) To be frank, honest and truthful to the Party and not to betray the confidence of the Party ;
- (j) To safeguard the unity and solidarity of the Party and to be vigilant against the enemies of the working class and the country ;
- (k) To defend the Party and uphold its cause against the onslaught of the enemies of the Party, the working class and the country ;
- (l) To deepen their understanding of the noble traditions of the Indian people and their rich cultural heritage.

2. It shall be the task of the Party organisations to ensure the fulfilment of the above duties by the Party members and help them in every possible way in the discharge of these duties.

RIGHTS OF PARTY MEMBERS

1. Rights of the Party members are as follows :
 - (a) To elect Party organs and Party Committees and be elected to them ;
 - (b) To participate freely in discussions in order to contribute to the formulation of the Party policy and of the decisions of the Party ;
 - (c) To make proposals regarding one's own work in the Party, to get work assigned to themselves in accordance with their ability and situation in life ;
 - (d) To make criticisms about Party Committees and Party functionaries at Party meetings ;
 - (e) To demand to be heard in person when a Party Committee or any Party organisation discusses disciplinary action against any Party member or evaluates their personal character or work in connection with serious mistakes which he or she is alleged to have committed ;
 - (f) When any Party member disagrees with any decision of a Party Committee or organisation, he or she has a right to submit his or her opinion to the higher committee, including and up to the Central Committee and the Party Congress. In all such cases the Party member shall, of course, carry out the Party decisions and the differences shall be sought to be resolved through the test of practice and through comradely discussions ;
 - (g) To address any statement, appeal or complaint to any higher Party organisation up to and including the Central Committee and the Party Congress.
2. It shall be the duty of Party organisations and Party functionaries to see that these rights are respected.

PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

1. The structure of the Party is based on, and its internal life is guided by the principles of democratic centralism. Democratic centralism means central leadership based on full inner-Party democracy and inner-Party democracy under the guidance of the centralised leadership.

In the sphere of the Party structure, the guiding principles of democratic centralism are :

- (a) All Party organs from top to bottom shall be elected ;
- (b) The minority shall carry out the decisions of the majority ; the lower Party organisations shall carry out the decisions and directives of the higher Party organs, the individual shall subordinate himself to the will of the collective. All Party organisations shall carry out the decisions and directives of the Party Congress and of the Central Committee ;
- (c) All Party Committees shall periodically report on their work to the Party organisation immediately below, and all lower Committees shall likewise report to their immediate higher committees ;
- (d) All Party Committees, particularly the leading Party Committees shall pay constant heed to the opinions and criticisms of the lower Party organisations and the rank-and-file Party members ;
- (e) All Party Committees shall function strictly on the principles of collective decisions and check-up combined with individual responsibility ;
- (f) All questions of international affairs, questions of all-India character, or questions concerning more than one state or questions requiring uniform decisions for the whole country, shall be decided upon by the all-India Party organisations. All questions of a state or district character shall be ordinarily decided upon by the corresponding Party organisations. But in no

case shall such decisions run counter to the decisions of a higher Party organisation. When the Central Party leadership has to take a decision on any issue of major state importance, it shall do so after consultation with the State Party organisation concerned. The State organisation shall do likewise in relation to districts ;

- (g) On issues which affect the policy of the Party on an all-India scale, but on which the Party's standpoint is to be expressed for the first time, only the Central leadership of the Party is entitled to make a policy statement. The lower committees can and should send their opinions and suggestions in time for consideration by the Central leadership.

2. Basing itself upon the experience of the entire Party membership and of the popular movement, in the sphere of the internal life of the Party, the following guiding principles of democratic centralism are applied :

- (a) Free and frank discussion within the Party Unit on all questions affecting the Party, its policy and work ;
- (b) Sustained efforts to activate the Party members in popularising and implementing the Party policies, to raise their ideological-political level and improve their general education so that they can effectively participate in the life and work of the Party ;
- (c) When serious differences arise in a Party Committee, every effort should be made to arrive at an agreement. Failing this, the decision should be postponed with a view to resolving differences through further discussions, unless an immediate decision is called for by the needs of the Party and the mass movement ;
- (d) Encouragement of criticism and self-criticism at all levels, from top to bottom, especially criticism from below ;
- (e) Consistent struggle against bureaucratic tendencies at all levels ;

- (f) Impermissibility of factionalism and factional groupings inside the Party in any form ;
- (g) Strengthening of the Party spirit by developing fraternal relations and mutual help, correcting mistakes by treating comrades sympathetically, judging them and their work not on the basis of isolated mistakes or incidents, but by taking into account their whole record of service to the Party.

Article XV

ALL-INDIA PARTY CONGRESS

1. The supreme organ of the Party for the whole country shall be the All-India Party Congress.
 - (a) The regular Party Congress shall be convened by the Central Committee ordinarily once every two years ;
 - (b) An Extraordinary Party Congress shall be called by the Central Committee at its own discretion, or when it is demanded by the State Party organisations representing not less than one-third of the total Party membership.
 - (c) The date and venue of the Party Congress or of the Extraordinary Party Congress shall be decided by the Central Committee at a meeting especially called for the purpose.
 - (d) Regular Party Congress shall be composed of delegates elected by the State Conferences as well as by Conferences of Party Units directly under the all-India Party Centre.
 - (e) The basis of representation at a Party Congress shall be decided by the Central Committee.
 - (f) The basis of representation and the method of election of delegates to the Extraordinary Party Congress shall be decided by the Central Committee.
 - (g) The members of the Central Committee and of the

Central Control Commission shall have the right to participate as all delegates in the Party Congress, whether regular or extraordinary.

- (h) The number of membership from any state for which the membership dues quota to the Central Committee has been fully paid shall be taken as the basis for calculating the number of delegates from that state at the Party Congress.

2. Functions and powers of the regular Party Congress are as follows :

- (a) To discuss and act on the political and organisational report of the Central Committee ;
- (b) To revise and change the Party Programme and the Party Constitution ;
- (c) To determine the tactical line and the policy of the Party on the current situation ;
- (d) To elect the Central Committee by secret ballot ;
- (e) To hear and decide on the report of the Central Control Commission as well as on appeals ;
- (f) To hear and decide on the audit report submitted by the Control Commission ;
- (g) To elect the Central Control Commission.

3. The Congress shall elect a Presidium for the conduct of its business.

Article XVI

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

- 1. (a) The Central Committee shall be elected at the Party Congress, the number of members being decided by the Party Congress.
- (b) The outgoing Central Committee shall propose to the Congress a panel of candidates.
- (c) The panel of candidates shall be prepared with a view to creating a broad-based, capable leadership,

closely linked with the masses, firm in the revolutionary outlook of the working class and educated in Marxism-Leninism. The panel shall bring together the best talent, experience from the states, from mass fronts and other fields of Party activity.

- (d) Any delegate can raise objection with regard to any name in the panel proposed as well as propose any new name or names.
- (e) Anyone whose name has been proposed shall have the right to withdraw.
- (f) The panel finally proposed, together with the additional nominations by the delegates shall be voted upon by secret ballot, and by the method of single distributive vote.

2. The Central Committee shall be the highest authority of the Party between two all-India Party Congresses.

3. It is responsible for enforcing the Party Constitution and for carrying out the political line and decisions adopted by the Party Congress.

4. The Central Committee shall represent the Party as a whole and be responsible for directing the entire work of the Party. The Central Committee shall have the right to take decisions with full authority on any question facing the Party.

5. The Central Committee shall elect from among its members a Polit Bureau including the General Secretary. The number of members in the Polit Bureau shall be decided by the Central Committee. The Polit Bureau carries on the work of the Central Committee between its two sessions and has the right to take political decisions in between two meetings of the Central Committee.

- 6. (a) The Central Committee shall remove any member from itself for gross breach of discipline, misconduct or for anti-Party activity by two-thirds of the members present and voting and in any case by more than half the total strength of Central Committee voting for such removal.

STATE, DISTRICT PARTY ORGANS,
PRIMARY UNIT

1. The highest organ in the state or district shall be the State or District Conference which elects a State or District Committee.
2. (a) The organisational structure, the rights and functions of the State or District Party organs are similar to those enumerated in the articles concerning the Party structure and functions at the all-India level, their functions being confined to the state or district issues and their decisions being within the limit of the decisions taken by the next higher Party organ ;
(b) The State or District Committee shall elect a Secretariat including the Secretary.
3. The State Committee shall decide on the various Party organs to be set up between the primary unit (the Branch) and the District and shall make necessary provisions relating to their composition and functioning.
 1. (a) The primary unit of the Party is the Party Branch organised on the basis of profession or territory ;
(b) Party members are to be organised on the basis of their occupation or vocation, when they are working in a factory or an institute or any industry. When such Branches are organised the members of such Branches shall be associate members of the Party Branches in place of their residence or organised as auxiliary Branches there. The work to be allotted in their place of residence shall not be detrimental to the work allotted to them by their basic units in the factory or institute or occupation ;
(c) The number of members in a Branch, the structure and functions and other matters relating to a Branch will be determined by the State Committee.

- (b) It can fill up any vacancy occurring in its composition by simple majority of its total members.
- (c) In case a member or members of the Central Committee are arrested the remaining members of the committee by a two-thirds majority can coopt substitute members and they shall have full right as the original members but should vacate their places as the arrested members get released and assume their duties.

7. The Central Committee shall fill up any vacancy that may occur in the Control Commission by two-thirds of the members present and voting and in any case by more than half the total strength of the Central Committee voting for the candidate.

8. The time between two meetings of the Central Committee shall not exceed three months and it shall meet whenever one-third of its total members make a requisition.

9. The Central Committee shall discuss and decide political and organisational issues and problems of mass movement and guide the State Committees and All-India Party fractions in mass organisations.

10. The Central Committee shall submit its political and organisational report before the Party Congress, whenever it is convened.

11. The Central Committee shall convene an extended session of the Central Committee (or Plenum), at least once in a year and place before it a review of the work of the Party during the year for its approval. The Central Committee may convene this extended meeting whenever it feels that an issue or issues have arisen on which a decision from a wider body is necessary. The number of representatives to be called to this extended session and the number from each state or from mass fractions shall be decided by the Central Committee, and the various State and Fraction Committees shall elect them.

CENTRAL AND STATE CONTROL COMMISSIONS

1. There shall be a Central Control Commission of three members elected by the Party Congress.

2. The Central Committee shall propose a panel of names for the Central Control Commission to the Party Congress. In proposing the names for nomination, the Party standing of the candidate, which shall not be less than ten years, and his experience in Party organisation and personal integrity shall be taken into account.

3. The procedure of election shall be the same as in the case of the Central Committee.

4. The members of the Central Control Commission shall participate in the meetings of the Central Committee with right to vote.

5. The Central Control Commission shall take up :

- (a) Cases referred to it by the Central Committee or the Polit Bureau ;
- (b) Cases where disciplinary action has been taken by the State Committees ;
- (c) Cases involving expulsion from the Party decided upon by any Party Unit against which an appeal has been made by the comrade concerned ;
- (d) Cases against which an appeal has been made to the State Control Commission and rejected.

6. The Central Control Commission shall report its decision to the Central Committee. These decisions shall be ordinarily final and be implemented by the Central Committee unless they are set aside by two-thirds majority of the members present and voting and in any case by more than half of the total strength of the Central Committee.

7. In all cases there shall, however, be the right to appeal to the Party Congress.

8. The same rules apply to the composition and functioning of the State Control Commission, but there will

be no appeal to the State Conference as the member or Committee concerned can go in appeal to the Central Control Commission.

Article XIX

PARTY DISCIPLINE

1. Discipline is indispensable for preserving and strengthening the unity of the Party, for enhancing its strength, its fighting ability and its prestige, and for enforcing the principles of democratic centralism. Without strict adherence to Party discipline, the Party cannot lead the masses in struggle and actions, nor discharge its responsibility towards them.

2. Discipline is based on conscious acceptance of the aims, the Programme and the policies of the Party. All members of the Party are equally bound by Party discipline irrespective of their status in the Party organisation or in public life.

3. Violation of Party Constitution and decisions of the Party as well as any other action and behaviour unworthy of a member of the Communist Party shall constitute a breach of Party discipline and are liable to disciplinary actions.

4. The disciplinary actions are :

- (a) Warning ;
- (b) Censure ;
- (c) Public censure ;
- (d) Removal from the post held in the Party ;
- (e) Suspension from full Party membership for any period but not exceeding one year ;
- (f) Removal from the Party rolls ;
- (g) Expulsion.

5. Disciplinary action shall normally be taken where other methods, including methods of persuasion, have failed to correct the comrade concerned. But even where disciplinary measures have been taken, the efforts to help the comrade to correct

himself shall continue. In cases where the breach of discipline is such that it warrants an immediate disciplinary measure to protect the interests of the Party or its prestige, the disciplinary action shall be taken promptly.

6. Expulsion from the Party is the severest of all disciplinary measures and this shall be applied with utmost caution, deliberation and judgement.

7. No disciplinary measure involving expulsion or suspension of a Party member shall come into effect without confirmation by the next higher committee. In case of suspension or expulsion, the penalised Party member shall, however, be removed from the responsible post that he or she may hold pending confirmation.

8. The comrade against whom a disciplinary measure is proposed shall be fully informed of the allegations, charges and other relevant facts against him or her. He or she shall have the right to be heard in person by the Party Unit in which his or her case is discussed.

9. Party members found to be strike-breakers, habitual drunkards, moral degenerates, betrayers of Party confidence, guilty of financial irregularities, or members whose actions are detrimental to the Party and the working class, shall be dealt with by the Party Units to which they belong and be liable to disciplinary action.

10. There shall be right of appeal in all cases of disciplinary action.

11. The State Committee has the right to dissolve or take disciplinary action against a lower committee in cases where a persistent defiance of Party decisions and policy, serious factionalism, or a breach of Party discipline is involved.

PARTY MEMBERS IN ELECTED PUBLIC BODIES

1. Party members elected to Parliament, State legislature or Administrative Council shall constitute themselves into a Party group and function under the appropriate Party Committee in strict conformity with the line of the Party, its policies and directives.

2. The Communist legislators shall unswervingly defend the interests of the people. Their work in the legislature shall reflect the mass movement and they shall uphold and popularise the policies of the Party.

The legislative work of the Communist legislators shall be closely combined with the activity of the Party outside and mass movements and it shall be the duty of all Communist legislators to help build the Party and mass organisations.

3. The Communist legislators shall maintain the closest possible contact with their electors and masses, keeping them fully informed of their legislative work and constantly seeking their suggestions and advice.

4. The Communist legislators shall maintain a high standard of personal integrity, lead an unostentatious life and display humility in all their dealings and contact with the people and place the Party above self.

5. Communist legislators shall pay regularly and without default a levy on their earnings fixed by the appropriate Party Committee. These Party levies shall be the first charge on their earnings.

6. Party members elected to corporations, municipalities, local bodies and gram-panchayats shall function under the appropriate Party Committee or Party Branch. They shall maintain close day-to-day contacts with their electors and the masses and defend their interests in such elected bodies. They shall make regular reports on their work to the electors and the people and seek their suggestions and advice. The

work in such local bodies shall be combined with intense mass activity outside.

7. All nominations of Party candidates for election to Parliament shall be subject to approval by the Central Committee.

Nominations of Party candidates to the State legislatures or the councils of centrally-administered areas shall be finalised and announced by the State Committee concerned.

Rules governing the nomination of Party candidates for corporation, municipalities, district boards, local boards and panchayats shall be drawn up by State Committees.

Article XXI

INNER-PARTY DISCUSSIONS

1. To unify the Party and for evolving its mass line inner-Party discussion shall be a regular feature of Party life. Such discussion shall be organised on an all-India scale or at different levels of the Party organisation depending on the nature of the issues.

2. Inner-Party discussion shall be organised :

- (a) On important questions of all-India or State importance where immediate decision is not necessary, by the Central or the State organ of the Party as the case may be, before the decision is taken ;
- (b) Where over an important question of Party policy, there is not sufficient firm majority inside the Central Committee or in the State Committee.
- (c) When an inner-Party discussion on an all-India scale is demanded by a number of State organisations representing one-third of the total Party membership or at the State level by District organisations representing the same proportion of the total membership of the State concerned.

3. Inner-Party discussion shall be conducted under the guidance of the Central or the State Committee which shall formulate the issues under discussion. The Party Committee which guides the discussion shall lay down the manner in which the discussion shall be conducted.

Article XXII

DISCUSSION PREPARATORY TO PARTY CONGRESSES AND CONFERENCES

1. Two months before the Party Congress, the Central Committee will release draft resolutions for discussion by all units of the Party. Amendments to the resolutions will be sent directly to the Central Committee to be assorted and placed before the Party Congress.

2. The meeting of the Central Committee which circulates documents for the Party Congress will take place after the State Conferences are over.

3. At each level, the Conference shall take place on the basis of reports and resolutions submitted by the respective Committees.

Article XXIII

PARTY MEMBERS WORKING IN MASS ORGANISATIONS

Party members working in mass organisations and their executives shall organise themselves into fractions or fraction committees and function under the guidance of the appropriate Party Committee. They must always strive to strengthen the unity, mass basis and fighting capacity of the mass organisations concerned.

Article XXIV

BYE-LAWS

The Central Committee may frame rules and bye-laws under the Party Constitution and in conformity with it. Rules and bye-laws under the Party Constitution and in conformity with it may also be framed by the State Committees subject to confirmation by the Central Committee.

Article XXV

AMENDMENT

The Party Constitution shall be amended only by the Party Congress. The notice of proposals for amending the Constitution shall be given two months before the said Party Congress.