

LETTER

TMC MANIFESTO

It is well known that the Trinamool Congress (TMC) has come so close to the corridors of power in West Bengal today, mainly because of the valiant resistance of the people of Singur and Nandigram against land acquisition and special economic zones (SEZs). Naturally, the people have an expectation that the Trinamool Congress would take a strong and pro-people position on SEZs and stop SEZs in West Bengal if it comes to power. In the recently released Bangla edition of the election manifesto of the Trinamool Congress, it is clearly stated under the "establishment of land-bank" section in p 16 that "SEZs would not be allowed in West Bengal". But not a single word has been written about SEZs in the English version of the election manifesto! A reading of the English version of the manifesto makes it abundantly clear that the English version has been addressed to the corporations and the chambers of commerce, whereas the Bangla version is full of pro-people promises. That is why the English version does not contain any statement about stopping SEZs. Possibly because this has come to public notice, the English version of the manifesto in the Trinamool Congress website has been renamed as "vision document", although the pdf file is still named as "manifesto_english".

The hypocrisy and double standards of the parties of the CPI(M)-led Left Front regarding SEZs is well known. Although these parties express their strong opposition to the SEZ policy at the national level, more than 50 SEZs are either running or are in various stages of the approval process in Left Front-ruled West Bengal. By-passing the first SEZ act in the country (West Bengal SEZ Act, 2003), two years before the SEZ Act was passed by the central government in 2005, the Left Front government has appeared as the path breaker in the issue of establishing SEZs in India. The barbaric attack by the Left Front government on the people of Nandigram in order to acquire land for the SEZ of the Salem group has exposed its pro-capital and anti-people position to everyone.

Ironically, the Trinamool Congress is following this same path of double standards. People demand that the Trinamool Congress adopt a clear stand on SEZs and maintain a consistent position in both the English and Bangla versions of its election manifesto.

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CORRECTION

This has reference to the article "The Binayak Judgement Deserves 'Suspended Public Approbation!'" (Frontier, April 3-9, 2011) On page 12 the sentence "But ignoring the objection on the any explanation....", appearing in paragraph above the sub-section II ("ON ACQUITAL"), is to be read as, "But ignoring the objection of the prosecution without any explanation....", the underlined (prosecution without) being the missing parts in the existing sentence. Error is regretted —Fr