

India: ICFI supporters hold May Day meeting in Bangalore

By our correspondents
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On May 1, Indian supporters of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) held a May Day public meeting on “World War and the Centenary of Russian Revolution” in Bangalore, the Karnataka state capital. It was the second public event in India organised by ICFI supporters focusing on the October 1917 Revolution and its contemporary significance, following a public meeting in Chennai, Tamil Nadu on March 5.

As part of their campaign to build the Bangalore meeting, ICFI supporters spoke with garment workers in Peediya and students and IT employees in different parts of the city, including Shivaji Nagar, Marathali and Electronic City. Several hundred English-, Tamil- and Kannada-language leaflets were distributed.

Campaigners discussed with workers and students the danger of another world war and the necessity for an international anti-war movement based on the working class and a socialist perspective, and promoted the *World Socialist Web Site*’s online lecture series on the Russian Revolution.

The Bangalore meeting was chaired by Sathish Simon and addressed by Arun Kumar from the ICFI supporters group and Socialist Equality Party (SEP) (Sri Lanka) assistant national secretary Deepal Jayasekara, who travelled from Colombo to speak at the event.

Kumar referred to the Trump administration’s cruise-missile attack in Syria, the Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB) bombing in Afghanistan and Washington’s escalating military bullying of North Korea. He warned that these actions posed the danger of a new world war involving nuclear weapons. The speaker noted that over the past quarter century the US had conducted an unending series of imperialist wars under the pretext of a “war on terrorism.”

“The attack on Syria, Afghanistan and bullying of the small state of North Korea are only manifestations of dangerously sharpening geo-political conflicts between US and China, US and Russia and also US and Europe,” he said.

Kumar reviewed how the South Asian region increasingly had been drawn into growing global geo-political tensions and, in particular, the US war preparations against China, which had escalated under the Trump administration.

“The Modi government has transformed India into a frontline state in the US war drive against China and is strengthening military-strategic ties with the US,” the speaker said. “As a sign of the rapid integration of India into the US’s anti-China ‘Pivot to Asia’ campaign launched by former President Obama, New Delhi signed an agreement last year providing the US military’s access to Indian bases. India has now become a major service and repair hub for the US Seventh Fleet, which is central to US war preparations against China.”

Kumar noted that the US military courting of India had further emboldened the Modi government to take an increasingly jingoistic stance against Pakistan. These developments, he said, posed “deadly consequences for the working class and oppressed masses in the region and internationally.” The speaker explained why it was necessary for the Indian working class to join with their class brothers and sisters in the region and throughout the world and fight for the anti-war, socialist movement that the ICFI was constructing.

Deepal Jayasekara spoke at length about the historic significance of the 1917 Russian Revolution. He explained that the crisis of capitalist system that led to World War I and later World War II, had developed to

a higher and more profound level. “All the unresolved contradictions of the past century are reemerging with explosive force to the surface of world politics,” he said. “Under these conditions and on the centenary of Russian Revolution, the events of 1917 acquire a new and intense contemporary relevance.”

The Bolshevik Party’s struggle to lead the working class to power in the October Revolution was based on an international perspective, he said and added: “Above all Lenin and Trotsky recognised that the objective basis for the socialist revolution in Russia was rooted, in the final analysis, in the international contradictions of the world imperialist system—i.e., between the outdated national-state system and the highly integrated world economy. The fate of the Russian Revolution therefore depended on the extension of workers’ power beyond the borders of Soviet Russia.”

The speaker reviewed Lenin’s fight against the opportunists in the Second International, who had lined up with their imperialist ruling classes to support WWI, and explained Lenin’s struggle in April 1917 to reorient the Bolshevik Party and turn it to preparing the working class to overthrow the Provisional Government, take power and establish the first workers’ state in October.

“Today, under conditions of the worst global economic crisis since the 1930s, deepening austerity and the imperialist drive toward a new world war, millions of workers internationally are being driven into a renewed upsurge of class struggles,” Jayasekara said. “The most advanced elements among them will inevitably turn toward the experiences of the Russian Revolution.”

The speaker exposed the efforts of India’s main Stalinist parliamentary party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPM, which attempted to claim the legacy of the October Revolution while falsifying the basic theoretical issues underlining Russian Revolution.

A recent booklet published by the CPM on the centenary, Jayasekara said, presented the October Revolution as a national event and not as the opening shot of a world socialist revolution.

In opposition to Trotsky’s Theory of Permanent Revolution, which was vindicated by the Russian Revolution, the CPM repeated the anti-Marxist Stalinist

“two-stage” theory. This nationalist perspective insisted that the bourgeois-democratic revolution was the “first stage,” with the working class politically subordinated to the national bourgeoisie, and the “second stage”—the socialist revolution—postponed forever.

Jayasekera concluded his address by calling on everyone at the meeting to join with the ICFI and the SEP to build a section of the ICFI in India, as the revolutionary party of Indian working class.

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