

## 100 Years of Communist Party of India (CPI)

*Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | History*

### Why in News?

The Communist Party of India (CPI) has completed its 100 years, and considers December 26, 1925, as its foundation date.

- **Origins of the CPI** - It was founded in **1925 in Kanpur**, inspired by Marxist ideas and the Russian Revolution.
- Initially operated underground due to colonial repression, focusing on workers' rights and anti-imperialist struggles.
- **Inspired global events** - The French Revolution, Industrial Revolution, Karl Marx's theories, and the Russian Revolution led by Lenin.
- **Origin - Tashkent vs Kanpur**
  - **1920, Tashkent** - M.N. Roy, Abani Mukherji, and Evelyn Roy issued a manifesto under Comintern influence calling for a communist party in India.
  - **1925, Kanpur** - Indian communists from Lahore, Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras convened in Kanpur, resolving to form the Communist Party of India.
  - **Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case (1923)** - Leaders S.V. Ghate, S.A. Dange, and Muzaffar Ahmad were jailed.
- **The 1964 Split** - Triggered by the Sino-Soviet ideological rift and India-China border clashes (1962).
- **2 factions** - CPI(M) views Tashkent 1920 as the true foundation, whereas CPI views Kanpur 1925 as the real foundation.
- **3 political strands in India** - Diasporic Revolutionaries & M.N. Roy, Indigenous Left Groups in India, Workers' & Peasants' Organisations.

Strand	Leaders	Base	Contributions
<b>Diasporic (MN Roy)</b>	M.N. Roy, Virendranath Chattopadhyay, Raja Mahendra Pratap	Abroad (US, Berlin, Kabul, USSR)	Global links, Comintern approval
<b>Indigenous Left Groups</b>	Dange, Muzaffar Ahmad, Ghulam Hussain, Singaravelu Chettiar	Indian cities	Local coordination, rooted activism
<b>Workers/ &amp; Peasants</b>	Lala Lajpat Rai (AITUC)	Trade unions, peasants	Mass-based, organised labour

- **Key leaders included** - M.N. Roy, Abani Mukherji, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Abdul Rab, S.A. Dange, Muzaffar Ahmad, S.V. Ghate, and Singaravelu M. Chettiar, etc.

- **Communists' role in the freedom struggle -**

- In 1925-28, the Communists were active in the formation of workers and peasant parties (WPPs).
  - In 1929, the Communist leaders were accused of organising a railway strike and charged under the **Meerut Conspiracy Case**.
  - In the 1930s, collaborated with the Congress Socialist Party (CSP, founded 1934) and other anti-imperialist forces.
  - After 1945, the Communists led crucial peasant struggles, such as the Tebhaga movement in Bengal, the Telangana struggle, etc.
- **Electoral Role -** In the 1950s, CPI became the principal opposition party in Lok Sabha elections (1951, 1957, 1962), briefly governed Kerala, and later ruled states through Left Front coalitions, but saw a sharp national decline after 2009.
  - After independence (1947), CPI demanded adult suffrage, women's equality, land redistribution, and workers' rights.

## References

1. [Indian Express | 100 years of CPI](#)
2. [Britannica | CPI](#)

