

## **23. After Bengal BJP's special focus on Kerala**

**By Gopal Krishna Agarwal,**

Thiruvananthapuram : It's official now. BJP is going to shift its focus heavily on Kerala. The party leadership is just waiting for the election in West Bengal to be over. To achieve the political target, the party would draw new strategies to confront the CPM head on.

The efforts would be to hold the CPM responsible for the economic crisis and development stagnation the state encounters, said Gopal Krishna Agarwal, BJP national spokesperson in charge of Kerala and a chartered accountant by profession.

"We have stopped the practice of contesting elections for the sake of it in Kerala. After West Bengal, BJP's political focus is largely on Kerala. It's only bound to increase in the future," said Agarwal who is in the state in connection with the assembly election.

The party, he said, is confident of winning the hearts of Kerala voters and form the government in a matter of a few years.

"This is not a pipe dream. We just need to explain our development agenda to the people and convince them. If a state like UP can achieve tremendous strides in terms of economic development in a span of a few years, Kerala with its intellectual capital, spices, and tourism potential, can do wonders," Agarwal said, adding that governments that always fight with the Centre won't be able to make major developmental strides.

Agarwal, who had earlier been attached to the West Bengal election, said it was the prominent presence of Marxists that scares investors away from Kerala.

"The basic concept and attitude of Marxists towards wealth creation is flawed. They talk about distribution of wealth. For that the basic requisite is creation of wealth. But unfortunately, Marxists won't address the aspect of wealth creation. Private capital is still an anathema for them. They can't perform the role of a facilitator," he said.

Good economics is good politics he said and claimed that the economic policies of the BJP government under the leadership of Narendra Modi are focused on long-term development and growth. The new amendments brought in by the Centre on agriculture laws, he claimed, would benefit lakhs of farmers while they would go against the interest of a few others.

"Our reform initiatives focus on long-term agenda. It is this point we want to reiterate in Kerala. Once in power, BJP would show the dogged and proven commitment towards the infrastructure and industrial development of Kerala. Establishment of waterways, food processing units, value addition of spices, rubber and agriculture produce would be our focus. Once an investment-friendly ecosystem is established, economic growth and employment opportunities would follow. These are not claims. We have practised and proven it in the states we are in power," Agarwal said.

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