

PEOPLE'S MARCH

Voice of the Indian Revolution



FOR SALE JOURNALISM

- I OFFERED TO PAY FOR POSITIVE COVERAGE
Rajender Singh Hooda
UP, Bareilly
- A TV channel wanted Rs 2.5 lakh to cover a Rahul Gandhi visit
Sandeep Dixit
Congress MP, East Delhi
- I WAS TOLD TO PAY UP LIKE OTHERS HAD
Lalji Tandon
BJP MP, Lucknow
- Take an ad if you want to get the news, we were told
Sudhakar Reddy
UP candidate, Kalyandurga
- EVERY PAPER IN MY SEAT WAS ON SALE
Yog Adityanath
BJP MP, Gorakhpur
- NO ONE COVERS MY PARTY (BSP), SO WE PAY
Abhilesh Das
BSP candidate, Lucknow
- I paid Rs 50,000 for three featured articles
Kodanda Rama Rao
Lok Sabha Party candidate, Warangal

**CONDEMNATIONS
GALORE WORLDWIDE
AGAINST THE INDIAN STATE'S
WAR ON PEOPLE
IN THE NAME OF
OPERATION GREEN HUNT**

**We should practice
GUERRILLA JOURNALISM
SAINATH**

FERMIAMO IL GENOCIDIO!



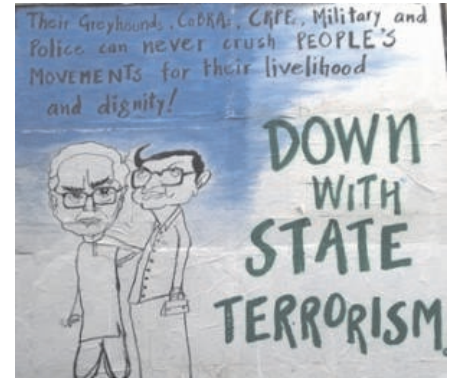
WWW.SOLIDARIETAPROLETARIA.ORG WWW.CARC.IT

PUDR Statement	3
Voices against war	4
Salwa Judum the Privatization of State Violence	8
The International Campaign Against War on the People	10
Statement from the Philippines	11



We have 2 GDPs – Gross Domestic Product on the right and *Gross Domestic Product* on the left.

Statement from Turkey	12
Amnesty International Statement	13
ILPS-Canada Statement	14
Bayan/ILPS Press Release	16
How the State is Waging War	17
In Chhattisgarh, jail	18



Chhattisgarh police abduct	19
Seema Is a Human Right Worker	21
The tribal 'Ruchikas' of Dantewada	22
Compulsory voting, Chhattisgarh style	23
Peoples Tribunal Verdict	24
Telangana Continues to Burn	25
Response by Azad, Spokesperson	27
'Democracy' at its worst	40

People's March Articles may be reprinted and translated in various Indian & Foreign Languages without Permission, Provided the source (<http://peoplesmarch.googlepages.com>) is credited

EDITOR: P. Govindan Kutty
Mobile No. : 99472 76692

E-mail : peoplesmarch@gmail.com
peoples.march@yahoo.in

Owned, Edited, Printed & Published by P. Govindan Kutty, Peroor house, Tripunithura, N.F. Ernakulam, Kerala - 682 301,

Printed at Anugraha Printers, Perumbavoor for Cherry Printers, Mannoor, Keezhillam - 683 541

Death of jawans in Chhattisgarh - PUDR Statement; A Response by Sumanta Banerjee

6 April 2010

Peoples Union for Democratic Rights believes that the death of 70 jawans in Dantewada on early hours of April 6th, 2010, is an unfortunate fallout of the government's willful policy of pursuing 'Operation Green Hunt'. We consider the war against the so called "Left Wing Extremists", as a wrong policy at a time when the country has been reeling under unprecedented drought, crop failure and price rise. We have been urging the Indian government that war at home against our own people, under any pretext, should be ruled out as an option, for once and for all, and the issues arising out of tribal people's opposition to MoU's signed by the state governments with mining and other industrial conglomerates and the consequent land grab, forest displacement, river water privatization needs to be resolved peacefully rather than imposed on the people against their will. On either side of the divide it is our own people who fall victim to the bullets.

Since war remains the preferred option of the Indian government they have no one else but themselves to blame if and when combatants die. We wish to remind them that security forces were returning from three day long operations when the ambush took place. As civil rights organization we neither condemn the killing of security force combatants nor that of the Maoists combatants, or for that matter any other combatants, when it occurs. We can only lament the folly of the Indian government which lacks the courage and imagination to pursue a non militaristic approach which is pushing us towards a bloody and dirty war.

Moushumi Basu and Asish Gupta

(Secretaries PUDR)

The other side of transactions in a violent system: the Maoist way of suppressing the para-military forces

Sumanta Banerjee

It is understandable that human rights/civil liberties organizations should come out with statements deploring the killing of security forces (e.g. PUDR press statement on the wiping out of 75-odd CRPF personnel in Chhattisgarh on April 6) on the purely humanitarian ground that any loss of life is deplorable. But civil society groups or individuals who view the issue from a larger perspective need to take a more rigorous and clear-cut stand. If they agree that the fundamental issues raised by the Maoists are right, even if they do not accept their tactics (in other words, if they are well-disposed towards the basic Maoist critique of the present exploitative system and sympathize with their efforts to build up alternative structures of egalitarian governance in their areas of control, without supporting their tactics of indiscriminate killings of innocent civilians), they have to recognize the stark reality.

The stark reality is that the confrontation between the recalcitrant Indian state (which is adopting an oppressive neo-liberal model of development) and its opponents (the rural poor and tribal villagers who are facing displacement by that model) is fast acquiring the dimensions of a civil war. In such a war situation, the liberal-bourgeois pacifists can condemn both the disputing parties, and wash their hands off, shouting: "plague on both houses." But can we afford to withdraw and refuse to take sides in this war?

If we are opposing the Indian state's neo-liberal model of development and its oppressive policies to impose it on our people by displacing them from their homes, we should define our position with regard to the various popular protest movements that are breaking out in different forms – ranging from Gandhian non-violent types like the Narmada Bachao Movement or the anti-steel plant agitation in Kalinganagar on the one hand, to armed resistance by forest-dwellers and tribal people organized under Maoist leadership on the other. The mainstream media propaganda builds up a peculiar dichotomy between these two types of movements – describing the former as part of 'democratic' protest, and denouncing the latter as 'terrorism' – as if the Maoist movement is not democratic. It is as if protests and agitations can be termed democratic only if they are non-violent. But what if thousands of people in a particular area, comprising the majority of the population, decide to opt for armed resistance, after their non-violent forms of protest are violently suppressed by the state? This is what is happening in Chhattisgarh. The reasons why the tribal people in Dandakaranya have taken up arms have been well-documented – not only by human rights activists, but also by no less an important body than the

Contd..... on Page 7

Voices against war

Stop War Against the People

What the State Wants to Destroy is the Alternate Development Model An Appeal to Thinkers, Intellectuals, Artistes, and Writers

Dear Friends,

The Indian state has amassed troops in central India on an unprecedented scale, to swoop down on the people. It is the latest of the wars launched by it against the people living in this country. The government says that it has to move against these areas as Maoists hold sway over it and it is not under the control of central or state authority.

In fact the natives of these jungles have been living there for thousands of years and have protected these forests as they ensure life to them and are their only source of livelihood for survival. These tribals are the most poor and wretched in our land. Popularly called adivasis, they are the oldest inhabitants of our country, still living in an ancient age. For thousands of years they have lived an archaic life. In all these years, no one has been able to subjugate them. The British Empire tried to do this in 1910 but their marauding armies were repulsed and forced to beat a retreat. The resistance of the tribal people against the British forces was led by the great warrior Gundadhur. This is popularly known as the Bhoomkal Baghawat. Earlier, they had fought the British under the leadership of Birsa Munda in the famous Munda Rebellion in the nineteenth century.

Since then, no regime has dared to attack and attempt to subjugate them, whether they were the British or the post-British rulers sitting at Delhi. They have remained a free people all along, with their own culture, customs and a unique way of life. The central and state governments have been

exploiting their forests and mineral and metal resources at an unbridled pace but have never done anything to provide them with basic requirements like drinking water, education, medical facilities etc. The loot of their resources has been enormous, to the tune of billions of rupees every year, with all the money going to the industrialists, bureaucrats, politicians, contractors and the police. All this was going on smoothly, till the tribals awakened to their rampant exploitation and inhuman oppression and took to the path of resistance. This resistance has been characteristic of their traditions and in accordance with their nature as an independent people. Their struggle is to put an end to this onslaught which has made their life, hell like. That is why they identified with the ideology of revolutionary Marxism which promises a world free of loot, exploitation and oppression. That is why they found common cause with the revolutionary Maoist rebels, who want to put a stop to every kind of exploitation and tyranny and build an egalitarian, humane society, free of any kind of discrimination.

Of course, as is well known by now, they are living on lands which are blessed with the richest minerals, metals and other natural resources like

Iron, Coal, Bauxite, Manganese, Corundum, Gold, Diamonds, Uranium etc. The Indian state has never considered that tribals have a right to their land and jungles, and have constantly tried to usurp them in various ways. The State wants to further intensify this exploitation now,

and has invited the foreign imperialist companies and Indian big industrial houses and their collaborations, to set up new projects on these lands. The Indian government has signed Memorandums of Understanding to the tune of lakhs of crores of rupees with the foreign and Indian industrial houses for this purpose. The contents of these MoU's are secret and confidential and people have no access to them! The current offensive of the Indian state is to wrest back these areas from the control of these people and hand it over to these Companies. All this is being done in the name of development. But this development in fact is in no way the development of the material conditions of the life of the tribals and the people living around these areas. This is amply demonstrated in the earlier projects like Bailladilla, Balco, Bokaro, Bhilai, Jaduguda and numerous others.

Quite recently we have seen the people of Nandigram, Singur, Kashipur, Kalinga Nagar, Lalgarth, Pollavaram, Tehri and Narmada Project areas resisting the setting up of car factories, dams, huge mining pit centers, SEZ's and other projects which have nothing to do with the development and well-being of the masses of ordinary toiling and poor in these areas or in the country elsewhere. It is meant to enrich the handful of already rich, who lives a parasitic life, or to fill the coffers of foreign imperialist capitalists whose only religion is to loot, plunder and exploit. The people here have struggled and fought against the state for their rights over their lands and against the

capitalist sharks on whose bidding the government acts.

The government has deployed lakhs of armed forces to destroy the resistance of the people, especially at places where it is strong and formidable and hampers the capitalists from acquiring resource rich lands. When government says it wants to take back the areas controlled by Maoists, in fact, it wants to smash the resistance of the people and snatch their lands to offer these to the mining giants, industrialists and super rich businessmen. Maoism is nothing but the rebellion of the people against injustice, notwithstanding whether the government calls them terrorists or whatever. Millions of people in these regions identify themselves with the cause of the Maoists and when millions become a movement for a just cause, they can't be called terrorists.

The state admits that there are 223 districts out of a total of 600 where Maoists are active. This means that there are 223 districts where the people espouse this ideology and want an end to exploitation. That lakhs support this resistance or are up in arms. That it has become a people's movement. And what of the people in the remaining districts? Are they not workers, peasants, students, employees, petty shopkeepers and toiling masses who have no stake in this system, want a change for the better, and have the same dreams? If the 223 are up against injustice and the rest have the same aspirations then the state loses the right to use the invective of terrorism.

What the Indian state wants to destroy is not just the Maoists, but the aspirations of millions upon millions in this country, the dreams of every oppressed Indian.

It is using the media and all the propaganda machinery available, to denigrate and destroy this. To destroy the resistance of the down-trodden, their movement for change, which is

the only thing that can bring them real happiness, in this wretched land of ours called Hindustan. This land, of the hungry. Of the exploited. Of the peasant who commits suicide. Of the youth facing a bleak future. Of the worker who is being laid off and kicked out of the factories. Of the employees of the organized sector who are losing all the rights gained over the years when their jobs are being contractualised. Of the government employees who have been booted out with a few crumbs in the name of VRS or Golden Handshake. Of the petty shop keepers and traders, whose enterprises are being gobbled up by the malls and the SEZs. This is the land crying for justice.

If Maoists are branded by the Prime Minister as the biggest internal threat to the country, then the rulers must think about what they have given to the people in the last 62 years of independence. Why have things come to such a pass? They have been ruling and organizing society and have utterly failed in the six long decades that they have been at the helm. The present state of affairs is their doing. Not that of the Maoists. Their development strategies have backfired and that can't be blamed on the resisting people and the Maoists. The Maoists have come into the picture only recently, but what has the state been doing about the promises it made to the people at the time of independence? Where has the promise of a Tryst with Destiny vanished? The promise sworn by Jawaharlal Nehru from the ramparts of Lal Qila on the midnight of 14-15 August 1947? People are not to be blamed for that promise not being kept, nor are the Maoists.

So now, Operation Green Hunt is not being executed just because the government wants to wipe out the Maoists in an all out war, in the name of fighting terrorism. It is their attempt to annihilate the yearning of the people, their struggles, their resistance, their resolve for a better life, whether they

are led by the Maoists or not. And when the tribal heartland refuses to cow down before such an attack, it deserves admiration. The state intends to bring in the might of the Air Force against its own people. This is the result of the 60 years of misrule and the anti-people policies, they have been imposing. The people have never given them a mandate to carry out these policies. Over these years they have only opposed these policies through petitions, protests, strikes, sit-ins, struggles, resistance and also through hunger strikes and work to rule agitations. And god knows how many times the so-called people's democratic state has fired on the protesters. How many times they have killed people. How many millions they have cane-charged and how many millions they have put into jails, not to speak of the thousands of custodial deaths and mass scale encounter killings. They never stopped the repression. All these decades, rather than listen to the grievances of the people, this state, which swears by the non-violence of MK Gandhi, has been resorting to never-ending violence. Like a mafia. Yet, the resistance continued and revolts grew.

And now it has created the borders within, against its own countrymen.

The current attack on the poor in central India is nothing but an enhanced and more deadly version of the same state violence that has continued since 1947. It is meant to break the fight back of the people there, the fight of the poorest of the poor, of the tribal peasants, and workers working in the mines. It is meant to tell others everywhere in the country, not to stand up for their rights, not to oppose the policies of the state though they go against the interests of the people and the country.

The centre of resistance is being encircled not just to break it, but also to destroy the new things which the

people have created during the course of their struggles and which they have toiled hard to build. The government has started a vilification campaign against those who refuse to budge, who refuse to kowtow and who refuse to be further misled by the never ending empty promises of development and progress. They know that this development is not for them. For a government which has discarded the ideal of a welfare state can't genuinely embark on a thing which it has abandoned at the behest of imperialist capital, the World Bank and the WTO.

The people under attack have built their own local government, the Jantana Sarkar, at various levels, taking their future into their own hands, for a real tryst with destiny.

Let us have a look in brief, at what the people have built through their Development Committees in the villages in Dandakarnya, and what the State wants to destroy. It will give us a glimpse of what the Maoists hold as a vision for the progress and development of our country – development which is indigenously and self reliantly built, one which is people oriented and is constructed in the course of the people's democratic participation, and one which cares for this land and its resources. Such development which will free us from the stranglehold of imperialist capital and its dictates. A course of action which can only be executed by the truly patriotic.

* The biggest reform undertaken is that of land. They have distributed lakhs of acres of land among every peasant household. And no one is allowed to keep more land than one can till. Thus doing away with unnecessary hiring of labour in agriculture. Even the Patels who used to oppress people and fleece them through unpaid labour have been allowed to retain land they can manage with their family's labour. No non-tribals are allowed to own land there.

* Women are also given property rights over land.

* They have developed agriculture from the primitive form of shifting every one or two years, to systematic settled farming. They were taught to sow, weed and harvest the crops. They cultivate both their own private lands as well as co-operative fields for community use. The development of agriculture is being done without using chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

* They have introduced a wide range of vegetables like carrot, radish, brinjal, bitter gourd, okra, tomato etc., which the tribals of remote areas had never seen or tasted.

* They have planted orchards of bananas, citrus fruits, mangoes, guavas etc.

* They have built dams, ponds, and water channels for breeding fish and for the purpose of irrigation. All this has been done through collective labour and the produce is distributed free to every household.

* They have dug wells for safe drinking water.

The industrial projects have destroyed underground water sources, and streams have been polluted to such an extent, that the fish and water life have died as also the vegetation around it. Many fruit trees have stopped flowering around these water resources.

* They have set up rice mills in a number of villages. These mills have freed women from the daily pounding of paddy for extracting grain. Many of these mills have been destroyed by Salwa Judum which was launched by the government, which talks so much about development in these areas.

* They have built a health care system which reaches every tribal peasant in every village. Each

village has a Medicine Unit which has been trained to identify diseases and distribute medicines to the villagers. The health of the tribals rates only second in priority to the fight against exploitation and oppression.

* The women participate equally in these developmental activities. Special attention is paid to the issue of patriarchy and that is why they come forward equally to defend their rights and lands.

* They run schools.

The schools built by the government are completely non-functional and are usually used by the police and paramilitary forces when they raid villages. That is one reason the people pull down these pucca structures which have become symbols of repression.

* They have published books and magazines in the Gondi language. As a result, it is for the first time that this language has found a place in the written world. Songs, articles and anecdotes written by the Gond people are published in the magazines brought out by the movement. These are the initial steps to develop this ancient language which has been neglected, just as the people have been. Though there is no existing script in Gondi, they use Devnagri script.

* The remunerative prices for Tendu leaf collection and wages for the cutting of bamboo and timber is fixed by the Maoist movement taking into consideration the interests of the tribals.

* Trade in the movement area goes on without hindrance. The traders are not allowed to cheat the tribals in haat bazaars. The movement announces remunerative prices for the jungle produce and paddy which the traders agree to. The presence of guerrillas ensures fair trade practices. On the other hand,

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>the traders feel happy that there is no danger of theft or robberies in the movement controlled areas and they can move about there, freely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * They have their own justice system. People's Courts are held to settle various disputes among the people, as well as with the oppressors. * Theft, robbery, cheatings, murders for property and personal gains have vanished. * Sexual harassment and rape by the forest department, the contractors and the police has become a thing of the past. Now the women walk | <p>freely in the jungle whether it is day or night.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Democratic functioning has been introduced at the village level onwards. The Gram Rajya Committees (now called Revolutionary Peoples Committees) function at the head of various committees like Development Committees which look after agriculture, fish farming, education, village development, Medicine Units etc. * The women and children have their own organizations in almost every village. The tribal peasants have their separate organization, with | <p>units in every village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Almost every village has units of People's Militia which take up the responsibility of defense of the village. * Cultural organizations thrive in these jungles as the tribals have great affinity for cultural activities. These organizations propagate through songs, dances, plays and other art forms, on all the issues whether local, national or international. * The movement has been able to prevent starvation deaths in its areas. |
|--|--|--|

PM

Contd..... from Page 3

Planning Commission Experts Group in its report on extremist-affected areas a few years ago. For years together, their basic needs had not only been ignored by the state, but whenever they tried to assert their economic demands through peaceful democratic avenues – like demonstrations asking for higher prices for tendu leave collection, or access to forest produce – they were ruthlessly suppressed by the police.

What needs to be asserted – and which is deliberately suppressed by the mainstream media – is that even the non-violent protest movements (accepted as ‘democratic’ by the bourgeois-liberals) are violently opposed by the state through the use of military force (witness the experience of the Narmada Bachao movement, or of the Gandhian Himangshu whose ashram in Chhattisgarh was destroyed by the police). If the followers of these non-violent movements, after their disillusionment with the ‘peaceful’ means of constitutional protest, take up arms tomorrow to protect their homes and occupations, should we denounce them as ‘terrorists’?

The Home Minister, P. Chidambaram says that the Naxalites have forced a war on the Indian state and its people. It's the other way round. The Indian state has forced a war on the Indian poor by imposing on them a corporate sector-induced model of development – threatening wide sections of rural people ranging from the villages of Orissa, Jharkhand in the east to Rajasthan and Haryana in the north, who are being ousted from their lands. They are breaking out in protest demonstrations. The state responds by resorting to violence to suppress them. It has built up a well-structured a military network consisting of a variety of forces going under the names of CRPF, CISF, Special Operation Group, Eastern Frontier Rifles, etc. in various states. Exposures by independent reporters (in magazines like TEHELKA) have revealed how the senior officials and their juniors in these para-military forces have been consistently killing innocent people in false encounters, raping women, burning villages, not only in Maoist-dominated villages of Chhattisgarh, but also in Manipur and other parts of the north-east. The CRPF in particular has earned a notoriety for atrocities in areas wherever they had been deployed. The national media may shed tears for the death of the 75-odd CRPF soldiers in Chhattisgarh. But then, these soldiers, by being cannon-fodders of the Indian state, however tragic it might be, suffered the fate that – I'm sorry to say – they deserved. Should the bourgeois-liberals and human rights activists shed tears for the young dedicated Nazi soldiers (who massacred the Jews), and were killed in reprisal by the Soviet Red Army? Surely, there should be a limit to the tolerance that bourgeois-liberalism allows!

To come back to the latest incident of the Maoist attack on the CRPF camp in Chhattisgarh.... if we accept it as a part of a civil war, such killings are inevitable (just as the CRPF killings of Maoists) in a violent system that has been institutionalized by the Indian state. The difference between the CRPF violence (involving ‘false encounters’, raping of tribal women, burning their homes, etc.) on the one hand, and the Maoist violence on the other (which means attacks on oppressive landlords and the police and para-military forces like the CRPF which come to the aid of the landlords) - has to be distinguished by civil society groups.

PM

Salwa Judum

the Privatization of State Violence

Salwa Judum was a terror campaign launched by the government, where the police recruited tribal youth at Rs.1500 per month as Special Police Officers (SPOs). The SPOs were given arms and let loose on the villagers in the movement areas. They burned, killed, raped and forced people to flee their homes, with the help of paramilitary forces and specially trained Naga Battalions standing guard.

Salwa Judum restricted and destroyed trade in these areas by closing down the haat bazaars and trying to demolish their economy to force the tribals into submission. From 2005-07, this went on for two years. They destroyed standing and harvested crops, burned or poisoned the grain and other jungle produce kept by the tribals for exchange in the haat bazaars to procure other essentials of life. Even all this could not force the tribals to submit. Rather than surrender, they lived on bamboo seeds.

The bloody campaign of Salwa Judum killed hundreds of tribals, burned hundreds of villages, raped hundreds of women, forcing about 50,000 tribals to live in enclosures called relief camps, set up by the police, which the tribals ultimately fled. This campaign forced about 30,000 people to flee their villages for other provinces. Lakhs of people were forced to leave their homes and to roam in the interiors of the jungles. In fact the government tried to destroy their whole economy and sources of livelihood even threatening to poison open water sources in the forests.

But the resistance continued. It could not be broken. **And Now**

Bitter with its failure to make the people yield to them, the government has now embarked upon Operation

Green Hunt, a military campaign with nearly one lakh personnel. Under various pretexts, the Indian Air Force is weighing its wings to swoop down on the forests, in spite of promises to the contrary by the Prime Minister.

We have been told that Maoists are the biggest internal threat to the country. Who are these Maoists? They are just the people themselves who have taken to the path of resistance, to struggle against the various Indian governments, who one after the other, do not allow them a life of dignity or one of peace. The state is attacking its own people threatening to wipe them out, if they don't vacate the lands they have lived on for centuries. And we know about the term collateral damage – the killing of the civilian population in a war. Salwa Judum killed the people without a declared war, now they intend to kill on a much huger scale. They want to break the back of resistance by killing people. They want to hand over the resource rich lands of the tribals to the greedy foreign capitalist lords. They want to destroy the alternate development what the people have created with their enormous toil and persistent struggles.

Let us think. Let us awake. Let us spread the word. Let us awaken the people everywhere else. Let us raise our voice against injustice. Let us tell the government that it must stop this war against its own people and instead listen to them, respect their aspirations and attend to their demands.

This is an unjust war which the government has declared on its own people.

It must stop.

Here are the names who have so far consented to the paper and signed

The list continues:

Supporters:

1. Gursharan Singh, Dramatist-Activist, Punjab
2. Prof. Bawa Singh, Guru Sar Sudhar College, Sudhar, Ludhiana
3. Jaswant Kailvi, Ghazalga, Writer, Ferozepur
4. Baru Satwarg, Novelist-Activist, Rampuraphul, Bathinda
5. Dr. Baldev Singh, Deptt. of Economics, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Khalsa College, Delhi
6. Jaspal Singh Sidhu, Veteran Journalist (Presently Media Consultant with Punjabi University, Patiala)
7. Samuel John, Director Peoples' Theatre, Lehra Gaga, Sangrur
8. Jatinder Mauhar, Film Director, Mohali
9. Megh Raj Mitter (Shiromani Lekhak), Barnala, Punjab
10. Dr. Mohan Tyagi, Poet, B.N. Khalsa Senior Sec. School, Patiala
11. Master Des Raj Chili, Look Kale Munch Chili, Lehrer Gaga, Sangria
12. Jadish Para, Writer, Lehrer Gaga, Sangria
13. Narinder Nath Sharma, Advocate, Patiala
14. Dr. Tejwant Mann, Literary Critic, Sangrur
15. Prof. Harbhajan Singh, Writer, USA
16. Yadwinder Kurfew, TV Journalist, Delhi
17. Harbans Heon, Writer, Banga, Nawanshahr
18. Ajmer Sidhu, Writer, Nawanshahr
19. Gurmit Juj, Poet, Singer, Krantikari Sabhayachar Kendar, Punjab
20. Balbir Chohla, Activist-Journalist, Taran Taran
21. Prof. Bhupinder Singh (retd), Sociology, Punjabi University, Patiala
22. Satnam, Writer-Freelance Journalist, Patiala
23. Buta Singh, Publisher, Baba Bujha Singh Prakashan, Banga, Nawanshahr
24. Jasdeep, Software Engineer, Delhi
25. Harpreet Rathore, TV Journalist, Delhi
26. Veer Singh, Research Scholar, JNU
27. Narbhinder, Activist-Writer, Sirsa
28. Karam Barsat, Columnist, Sangrur
29. Sukirat, Journalist-Writer, Jalandhar
30. Makhan Singh Namol, Advocate, Sangrur
31. Davinderpal, TV

Journalist, Delhi 32. Partap Virk, TV Journalist, Delhi 33. Dr. Bhim Inder Singh, Lecturer, Punjabi University, Patiala 34. Jasvir Deep, Journalist and Social Activist, Nawanshahr 35. Paramjit Dehal, Poet & Literary Activist, Nawanshehar 36. Prof. Jagmohan Singh, Democratic Rights Activist, Ludhiana 37. Dr. Gurjant Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala. 38. Iqbal Kaur Udaasi, Progressive Singer-Activist, Barnala 39. Balvir Parwana, Editor Sunday Magazine, Nawa Zamana, Jalandhar 40. Jugraj Dhaura, Poet-Singer, Barnala 41. Dr. Ajit Pal, Writer-Activist, Bathinda 42. Rajinder Rahi, Writer, Barnala 43. Bhupinder Waraich, State President, Democratic Teachers' Front, Punjab 44. Didar Shetra, Poet, Nawanshahr 45. Baldev Balli, Poet, Nawanshahr 46. Jagsir Jeeda, Lyricist-Singer, Giderbaha, Bathinda 47. Hakem Singh Noor, Poet-

Activist, Barnala 48. Charanjeet Singh Teja, Freelance Journalist, Amritsar 49. Attarjit, Short Story Writer, Bathinda 50. Rajeev Lohatbaddi, Advocate, Patiala 51. Harvinder Deewana, Chetna Kala Kender, Barnala 52. Balwinder Kotbhara, Writer-Journalist, Bathinda 53. B.R.P. Bhaskar, Journalist, Thiruvananthapuram 54. S.S. Azaad, Writer, Mansa 55. Sadhu Binning, Writer, Vancouver, BC, Canada 56. Hiren Gandhi, Ahmedabad 57. Vijay Bombeli, Feature writer, Hoshiarpur 58. Paramjeet Singh Khatra, Advocate, Nawan Shehar 59. Daljeet Singh, Advocate, Nawan Shehar 60. Baldev Singh, Advocate, District Courts Patiala 61. Paramjit Kahma, Doaba Sahit Ate Sabhiachar Sabha, Jejon (Hoshiarpur) 62. Dr. Ramesh Bali, Nawanshehar, Activist 63. Puneet Sehgal, programme executive, DoorDarshan, Jalandhar 64. Harkesh Chaudhry & Other Artists, Lok

Kala Manch, Mandi MulanPur, (Ldh) 65. Prof. Ajmer Singh Aulakh. Dramatist, Mansa 66. Dr. Maninder Kang, Writer, Jalandhar 67. Charanjit Bhullar, Journalist, Bathinda 68. Dr. Anand Teltumbde, Human Rights Activist and writer, Mumbai 69. Dr. Puneet, Patiala 70. Taskeen, Critic, Kapurthala 71. Chanda Asani, social researcher and activist, Mumbai 72. Sanjay Joshi, convener, THE GROUP, film group of Jan Sanskriti Manch 73. Alok Kaushik, Photographer, Delhi 74. Nisha Biswas, Kolkata 75. Ravinder Goel, Associate Professor, Delhi University 76. Saroop Dhruv, Poet, Ahmedabad 77. Shamsul Islam & Neelima Sharma (Nishant Natya Manch), Delhi 78. Manu Kant, Journalist, Online Media, Chandigarh 79. Dr. Pyare Mohan Sharma, Retd. Professor, Medical College, Patiala 80. N K Jeet, Advocate, Bathinda **PM**

Contd..... from Page 17

people fired at each person. One of the women screamed and looked away. She was hit brutally by the Judum for looking away.

They left the bodies in the field and took the women away with them. After a long time, when we could no longer hear the Judum, we walked back to our village. I was shocked at what I saw in the village. An old woman who couldn't see properly had been hacked to death inside her house. Her head had been split open. Her stomach had been cut open and her intestines scattered. There was so much blood everywhere. Two other men were also killed just outside their houses — their arms had been chopped off and they had been shot. We heard later that the five women who were taken from our village were made to walk 10 kilometres. They were raped and beaten by the Judum before being allowed to go.

VANJAM BUDRAI, Resident of Gattapadu village, gave her eye-witness account:

They picked up three of them - Chodi Masa, Padam Deva and 15-year-old Dudhi Poja - and brought them back to the village. The Judum then forced the three men to round up all the goats and chicken they could find in the village and then dragged all of them out of the village. The men were forced to cook a meal and then watch as the Judum men feasted. Once lunch was done, they marched the three men out of the village. From our hiding spot, we could see everything that was happening in the village. The minute the Judum left the village, 10-12 people from the village followed them. We were worried about the three men they had taken away with them.

The Judum took them to the nearest police station, nearly 8 hours away. Once we reached the police station we realized that the Judum had taken three men from Palachalam as well - we met the women from Palachalam outside the station. At the station, when we

asked the police for details about why the men had been taken away, the police told us that they had been detained by the Judum and that the police had nothing to do with this. How can the police wash their hands off the issue when our men were taken to the police station?

After several hours, we stepped out to get something to eat. When we returned, the people from Palachalam told us that all the six men had been slipped out of the station to an undisclosed location. Much later, we heard that the Judum had shot the men. Two days later, we heard that the police had announced that the three men captured from our village were Naxals. And that they had shot them dead in a shoot-out.

Even if the police and the Judum argue that Masa and Deva were adults and could have been Naxal sympathizers, how can they label Poja, a 15-year-old boy grazing his cattle, a naxal? I doubt Poja had ever seen a gun before he was arrested and shot dead. **PM**

The International Campaign Against War on the People of India

Dear friends,

The International Campaign Against War on the People of India (ICAWPI) is now ready to be launched to work as a coordinating centre seeking international support for the resistance of the people of India against the all out military offensive of the Indian state against its own citizens.

ICAWPI is an international extension of widespread opposition and initiatives against this genocidal war to forcefully crush the heroic resistance of the tribal peoples in the heartlands of India and hand over these lands rich in minerals and raw materials to international corporations such as Vedanta.

This overt war serving to facilitate the looting of the land by Indian and international corporations for fabulous profits and the destruction of the livelihood of the countless numbers of the poorest of the poor in India is branded "Operation Green Hunt". While in different regions of the country the same operation may be named differently, the Indian state shamelessly tries to hide this banditry against the people of India and utterly open servitude to the imperialism as "war against the Naxalites"—imposing a severe reign of terror and repression on progressive and democratic forces and individuals everywhere across the country.

Countless intellectuals, authors, film makers, academics, and other professionals such as lawyers and doctors who abhor the Indian state's total lies and open disregard for civil and human rights have joined mass gatherings and rallies and various forums in India in order to raise their own voices and join forces to oppose the State and to defend the just cause of the oppressed tribal people in India.

In the course of this gathering movement countless people have been arrested and imprisoned. Untold suffering and restrictions have been imposed on the people.

Yet, international public opinion is kept grossly in the dark about these issues while the mainstream media continue to follow and repeat the Indian State's claims that "India is the largest democracy in the world" and that the Maoists, as the biggest security threat to this "democracy" must be wiped out at all costs. Thus they justify their silence and bless the Indian State in perpetrating these crimes in the name of a "war on terror".

The ICAWPI aims to reach out to all democratic and freedom loving people across the world concerned about the plight of the people in India to unite and take initiative to break this silence internationally and to rally much needed support and solidarity to the just struggles of the people of India.

Further information on Operation Green Hunt and the struggles of the people are available through www.icawpi.org - a website designed to carry material related to this issue and the campaign.

We request all democratic and progressive formations to take initiative and coordinate their efforts with ICAWPI. All reports of actions, meetings and letters of solidarity and concern will be published at this site. In order to launch this campaign and

rally the support and solidarity of the progressive forces abroad, ICAWPI calls on everyone to join demonstrations and protest actions in front of Indian embassies and consulates on February 5, 2010 where ever possible. A list of organized events will be published on the website as they become available. Further actions, events and meetings are being planned and will be announced soon after.

The website will also publish a list of clubs, associations and meeting places in Europe and elsewhere, for contact and discussion about the issue and to find ways of raising local awareness and take common joint action.

Please contact the ICAWPI through info@icawpi.org to inform us of your proposals to bring the campaign to your area.

ICAWPI

Feb 03, 2010

** In order to receive regular updates on developments and campaign news, please join the public mailing list of the campaign by sending a blank email to info-request@lists.icawpi.org with a subject line: subscribe or simply contact info@icawpi.org

PM

Form IV (See Rule 8)

Statement about ownership and other particulars about Newspaper er People's March

1. Place of Publication : Peroor House, Tripunithura NF, Ernakulam, Kerala
2. Periodicity : Bi-Monthly
3. Printer's name : P.Govindan kutty
(Whether citizen of India) : Indian
4. Publisher's name : P.Govindan kutty
5. Editor's name : P.Govindan kutty
6. Name and address of individuals who own the newspaper and partners : P.Govindan kutty Peroor House, of share holders holding more than one Tripunithura NF, Ernakulam, Kerala percent of the total capital

I, P.Govindan kutty, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

31-03-2010

S/d
Publisher

Statement on India's Operation Green Hunt from the Philippines

We, in the various youth and student groups in the Philippines express our condemnation at the intensifying attacks of the Indian government, starting from the Central government down to the state governments in pursuing the so-called Operation Green Hunt, its counter-insurgency operations purportedly directed primarily against the Communist Party of India (Maoist).

From the start of the Operation it has become clear that the real targets are not the Maoists alone but the resistance of the people of India against the wanton and profit-driven operations of big multinational companies backed by government and its military and police.

It has been reported that intensified militarization in the regions of Orissa, Jharkand, Andra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and in the heroic Lalgarh had further resulted to wider human rights

violations. Illegal and unjust arrests, forceful evacuation, torture, rape, and extra-judicial killings are being committed by military, police and paramilitary without hesitation, in full public view and with so much impunity.

The Operation Green Hunt is against the adivasis, farmers, and ordinary people especially in the remotest and poorest villages of India. The only crime they have committed is to stand and prevent the profit-driven mining and corporations in its operations which will destroy their livelihood and plunder the environ and India's natural resources.

We condemn the use of the Operation to flush out the adivasis and farmers from their land and government's building of concentration camps of the displaced in order to pursue its Memorandum of Agreements

(MOA) with various mining corporations. We demand that these camps be immediately closed. We demand that the Indian government withdraw heightened military deployment in the countryside and halt its Operation Green Hunt, and balked at pursuing anti-people projects which will only trample upon the basic rights of Indian people.

We support the Indian youth and people in their legitimate resistance against the systematic loot of India's resources which deprive its own people their life and livelihood, and their future.

ANAKBAYAN
(Sons and Daughters of the People)
Student Christian Movement
of the Philippines
League of Filipino Students (LFS)

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT TO THE INDIAN PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE AND AGAINST OPERATION GREEN HUNT OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

We, peasants from the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP, Peasant Movement of the Philippines) strongly support the Indian people's struggle against the Operation Green Hunt being implemented by the Indian government.

We strongly condemn the inhuman abuses of Indian military backed by US imperialism, the killings of Indian people, particularly peasants, the torture and rape, dislocation of 20 million peasants and hamletting and other forms of human rights violations. We hold the Indian government and US military and government for the violence imposed upon the Indian people.

We support and uphold the Indian people's struggle for genuine land

reform, primarily advanced by the Naxalites and Indian peasants who serve as main protectors of their native lands against foreign land grabbing, mining and industrial exploitation and environmental destruction. We recognize the Indian peasants' sovereign right to land and abhor the imperialist hunger of the United States and other capitalist countries for profit, as well as the Indian government.

We can relate to the suffering of the Indian peasants as we, Filipino farmers are also victims of the Arroyo government's counter-insurgency program Oplan Bantay Laya (Oplan Guard Freedom), that is composed mainly of extra-judicial killings (EJK), enforced disappearances and accusations of fabricated charges.

Arroyo's Oplan Bantay Laya resulted 561 peasant victims of extra-judicial killings, where 119 were KMP leaders, 129 peasant victims of enforced disappearances and scores are being held for crimes they did not commit.

We from the Filipino peasant movement pledge to carry out all we can to expose the brutality of the Indian government. We will hold protest actions at the Indian embassy anytime possible and convey our message of dissent to the measures of their government. We will include in our fundamental calls the immediate end to Operation Green Hunt, massive militarization and human rights abuses on Indian peasants and people.

PM

**END OPERATION GREEN HUNT IN INDIA!
JUSTICE TO VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN INDIA!
STRUGGLE FOR GENUINE LAND REFORM IN INDIA!
DOWN WITH U.S. IMPERIALISM AND PUPPETRY OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT!**

Norma G. Biñas
Email: norbin2008@gmail.com

February 5th, 2010

Protest action in front of the Indian Embassy in Frankfurt

Today with the initiative of ATIK (Confederation of Workers from Turkey in various cities in Europe Den Haag, London, Vienna, Bern and Frankfurt protest actions in front of the India Embassy' were held. The protest's were against the "Operation Green Hunt" which was first initiated in November 2009 by the Indian state, especially in very poor areas. Until now, there are reports in the international media reporting about the violation of the most fundamental human rights. In the statement it says:

"With the military operation "Green Hunt", the Indian government has lunched a broad repressive and brutal "annihilation offensive" against the people. In the poorest regions in India, with the military operation "Green Hunt", the Indian government has launched a broad repressive and brutal "annihilation offensive" against the people. In the poorest regions in India the legitimate people upraising with the support of the ethnic minorities against

this adversity, gains more and more sympathy worldwide In those areas in where the peoples' movement is the strongest, valuable resources were found, resources that the Indian government wants to sell to the multinational cooperations- and even if only partly- has sold some of it, between the closure of the contracts and the big money are the poor, isolated tribes and revolutionaries "Naxalites", who wage an organized, successful uprising against this situation. Or as the Indian progressive writer Arundhati Roy says "the government doesn't give the people anything else then violence and disrespect. And now they want to take away from them the last thing that they have, their land".

For this reason we oppose the operation "Green Hunt" and the repression policies of the India government. We demand an immediate end of the operations, banishing, torture and release of all political prisoners in India. We are in solidarity with the just rebellion of the Indian people for social liberation and self determination of the indigenous people like the Adivasis."

These protests and solidarity actions were supported by different democratic migrant organizations and political

parties. The primal supporters of this call are:

Platform Of Democratic Mass Organizations-Europe (DEKÖP-A), ATIK (Confederation of Workers from Turkey in Europe), info@atik-online.net

ADHK (Confederation For Democratic Rights in Europe), info@adhk.de

Magazine YASANACAK DÜNYA, yasanacakdunya@yahoo.com

AvEG-Kon (Confederation Of The Oppressed Migrants In Europe), aveg-kon@hotmail.com

YEK-KOM (Föderation der kurdischen Vereine in Deutschland) yekkom@gmx.de

And MLPD Rhein-Main region (rhs@mlpd.de), BIR-KAR Frankfurt (birkar@msn.com)

These organizations declare their unlimited solidarity with the Naxalite Liberation Movement and the Adivasi people and that the protests will continue until this repression in India will finally come to an end.

Long Live International Solidarity!

PM

Contd..... from Page 42

they were trying to snatch their weapons at the roof.

A very pertinent question was asked to us by a few tribal youths at a meeting in a village of Kumbhari Panchayat. They told us that the Government wants tribals to keep peace and help the Government and use democratic means to state their complaints. But the CMAS members asked us, "Why should we help

Government when it has not even given us our basic survival needs like PDS, NREGS, schools and health? Government forced us to fight for our survival but killed us because we went to ask them a question? Is that so undemocratic? And what the police did to us is that what you call democracy?"

The fact finding team also observed that the local media persons have not been reporting the truth behind several facts of the firing incident and

are tracking movement of other reporters and fact finding teams visiting the area. They are conveying this information to the local police. The team felt very strongly that local media persons were doing this with malafide intentions.

Fact Finding Team Members

- 1.K SudhakarPatnaik-Senior Journalist
- 2.Manoranjan Routray - Journalist
- 3.Sharanya - HumAnE, Koraput

PM

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement 2 December 2009

India: Probe killing of two adivasi leaders and release detained activist in Orissa

Authorities in the eastern Indian state of Orissa must ensure independent, credible and impartial investigation into the killings of two adivasi (indigenous community) leaders by police and paramilitary personnel in Narayanpatna on 20 November 2009, Amnesty International said today.

The deceased – Singanna and Andrew Nachika – were peacefully protesting outside the Narayanpatna police station in Koraput district along with 80-100 other members of an indigenous people's movement – Chasi Mulia Adivasi Sangh (CMAS). The protestors demanded that the police stop harassing the adivasi communities who have been campaigning for an end to illegal mining in the area. Eyewitnesses have informed Amnesty International that the police firing began when one of the leaders, Singanna, entered the police station premises to talk with officials. Another leader, Andrew Nachika, was also shot dead and at least eight other protestors sustained bullet injuries as police and paramilitary forces continued their unprovoked firing at the unarmed and fleeing protestors.

The unnecessary use of force on adivasi protestors resulted in at least two deaths. The State authorities are obligated, under international treaties to which India is party, to respect and protect the right to life at all times. In an attempt to trace the wounded protestors, police raided a number of villages and arrested at least 50 other adivasi CMAS supporters. Amnesty International understands that those arrested are accused of several offences including those under Section 121 (waging war against the State) and Section 124A (sedition) as the police

have claimed that the CMAS has links with the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist).

A seven-member fact-finding team of social and political activists subsequently visited Narayanpatna to inquire into the killings and related arrests. Their report released at a press conference in Orissa's capital Bhubaneswar on 27 November rejects the police claim of a CMAS-Maoist link and accuses the police officials of unnecessary use of force and arbitrary arrests. On 29 November, the police arrested one of the members of the fact-finding team, Tapan Mishra claiming that he provided arms training to the banned Maoists.

Tapan Mishra is a known activist of the Communist Party of India (Maoist-Leninist) (Kanu Sanyal group) – a recognized political party. Amnesty International understands that Tapan Mishra has no links with any armed groups and that his arrest may be politically motivated. Following this arrest, other members of the fact-finding team have expressed fears of traveling to Narayanpatna. Amnesty International is concerned that the arrest of Tapan Mishra appears to be an attempt by the State authorities to intimidate and harass those inquiring into the lethal use of force by the police at Narayanpatna.

Amnesty International urges the Government of Orissa to:

- * immediately order an independent, impartial and thorough investigation into the use of force by the police and ensure that any officer suspected of using force unnecessarily or excessively, including those who ordered the shooting or were otherwise resp-

onsible, is prosecuted in proceedings which meet international standards of fairness;

- * provide reparations to the families of those killed, and to those who suffered injuries or other harm as a result of unnecessary use of force by police;
- * ensure that police officials as far as possible apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force and firearms which should be used only if other means remain ineffective, and then only to the minimum extent required, and that firearms may be used only in self-defence or the defence of others against the imminent threat of death or serious injury, and only when less extreme means are insufficient;
- * ensure that the right to peaceful assembly is respected and protected and that police, when fulfilling their public order duties, respect human rights as provided in international treaties to which India is a state party, and
- * Stop harassing, intimidating and bringing politically motivated charges against protestors and those engaged in defending human rights in Orissa.

Background

The CMAS is a social movement of Adivasi communities in south-western Orissa which has been campaigning, over the last year, against illegal mining in their lands and habitats by non-Adivasis and production and consumption of illegal liquor in the region. Since May last, the CMAS has intensified its campaign, leading to some non-Adivasi families fleeing their villages and attacks against CMAS supporters.

PM

ILPS-Canada demands an end to Operation Green Hunt and the massive displacement of people in India

Indian government threatens to eradicate popular resistance by March 2010

In late 2009 the Indian government unleashed massive war against its own people under the code name “Operation Green Hunt” involving the deployment of 70,000 military and paramilitary troops in the so-called “Red Corridor” that runs through parts of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal states.

It’s the latest in a series of efforts by the Indian government, labeled the “biggest democracy in the world” by Canada and other western powers, to impose “military solutions” on deep-seated social, political and economic problems, and to clear the way for local and trans-national corporations to plunder this region’s resources. Most of the riches sit on or under land occupied by the poorest populations in India, including the adivasis — the indigenous or tribal peoples.

Hundreds of agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) that allow free plunder of people’s resources have already been concluded by mining and other corporations with the central and state government and Special Economic Zones for multinational corporations have been established. The only barrier that now stands between the local and trans-national corporations and their prize is people’s resistance, both unarmed and in some instances, armed.

During this military-economic offensive, Indian government is actively ignoring its own Constitution and laws such as PESA and the Forest Rights Act and targeting anyone who dares to speak out against this state

repression as a “potential terrorist”.

However, from Nandigram to Niyamgiri, Lalgarh to Dandakaranya, Koraput to Kalinganagar, Dadri to Narayanpatna, people have refused to be mere victims of state-sponsored politics of liberalism, privatization and imperialist globalization (LPG) in the name of “development”.

As a result of Operation Green Hunt and renewed aggressions in Lalgarh, hundreds of thousands have been displaced, and the number of burnt villages, persons displaced, injured, arrested or “disappeared” has skyrocketed. Many have been placed in so-called “security camps” similar to the practice in Sri-Lanka, where the government in Colombo, with the backing of Washington and other western powers, bloodily attacked the Tamil population in early 2009.

In a letter to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, dated October 12, 2009, Indian and foreign intellectuals, including Booker Prize-winning author Arundhati Roy and American political activist Noam Chomsky, charged that the government’s offensive was “an attempt to crush democratic and popular resistance against dispossession and impoverishment” and a move that seemed to be geared towards facilitating the entry and operation of “large corporations and paving the way for unbridled exploitation of the natural resources and people in the affected regions”.

Arundhati Roy said, “This is a war waged by the army and paramilitary forces for the super rich corporations against the super poor of India, who have been driven to rebel and resist by years of injustice and

mistreatment.” Roy continued: “The Government doesn’t give the people anything else than violence and disrespect. And now they want to take away from them the last thing they have, their land”.

The purported aim of the Indian government is to clear this heavily forested area of resistance forces, including Maoists and other Naxalite organizations. Maoists — also known as Naxalites after Naxalbari district in West Bengal state where they first led a peasant uprising against landlords in 1967 — have a strong presence in this region. The members of the Communist Party of India (CPI - Maoist) the political wing of the Maoists, are now estimated by mainstream Indian media to be 20,000 strong. The focus of Operation Green Hunt is the Maoist or “Red Corridor” which stretches from West Bengal in India’s northeast through the states of Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra in the west. It includes many forest areas including the Dandakaranya forest. Its millions of adivasis were pushed into forest regions by waves of invaders and generally excluded from mainstream Hindu society. They have a long history of rebellion and militant uprisings against British colonial rule starting in the 19th Century and have been a major base for communist organizing.

The forests where the adivasis are concentrated have abundant mineral wealth (iron, coal, bauxite, manganese, corundum, gold, diamonds and uranium). Over the last years foreign and Indian corporations, with the protection of the Indian state

apparatus, have been exploiting these resources and violently suppressing the local people in the process.

The Communist Party of India (Maoist) has been active in this area since the 1970s, following the Naxalbari rebellion. The Maoists have helped lead the tribals in their struggles for just demands for land and opposition to police and military repression. The Maoists have support among the Muslim population and the Dalits (often referred to as “untouchables”). They have helped organize the people to improve subsistence agricultural methods, build wells and schools and struggle against backward feudal practices.

For years the Indian elite left this area in dire poverty and profited from the cheap labour which migrated all over India searching for work. Now, realizing the vast riches that lay in and beneath the vast forests of this region, the Indian ruling elite, with backing from the U.S. and other forces, is trying to clear the way for a new wave of foreign investment to plunder the regions’ resources.

The Indian government claims that by March 2010 they hope to have eradicated the Maoists and anyone who dares to support them and resists the government’s armed presence. According to the Indian state, tens of thousands of government “security personnel” will combat “against 6,000-7,000 armed Maoist cadres”. The military offensive has been accompanied by illegal arrests and detainment of progressive leaders in the area, such as Raja Sarkhel and Prasun Chatterjee, by the reactionary forces, under the CPI (Marxist), an organization apparently Communist in name only, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Activists have been heavily tortured to try to force them to give false testimonies against fellow activists.

Progressive Indian political leader Kobad Ghandy was also abducted, illegally detained and tortured for three days and nights while deprived of medicine and medical treatment for life-threatening health problems. The Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners (CRPP) has been actively campaigning for the immediate release of Ghandy and an immediate end to all illegal arrests and detentions and human rights abuses.

Operation Green Hunt follows on the heels of the vast offensive against the people of Lalgarh-Jangalmahal in West Bengal starting June 2009. An All-India Fact Finding Team which was organized by progressive forces to look into the atrocities being committed by the West Bengal government was prevented from reaching Lalgarh. The members of the fact-finding team were arrested, maltreated and detained. An international team of Amnesty International was also prevented from entering Lalgarh.

The International League of Peoples Struggle Canada chapter (ILPS-Canada), and its member organizations and allies, support the call of the Indian people to demand that their government immediately and unconditionally withdraw its armed forces engaged in the military-paramilitary offensive against the oppressed adivasi people of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Maharashtra, Bengal, Karnataka and other regions.

Furthermore, we support the Indian people who are demanding that their government take concrete measures to stop the plunder of the people’s land, forests, hills and rivers by Indian and multinational corporations. This requires the scrapping of hundreds of MoUs signed by the central and state governments with various corporations who plan exploit natural resources at the expense of the poor and

marginalized citizens of India.

We also extend our solidarity and support to the struggle of the tribal people in Lalgarh-Jangalmahal.

We join the people of India in demanding:

- **an immediate end to Operation Green Hunt and the withdrawal of all military and paramilitary forces;**
- **an immediate end to the “Lalgarh Operation” against the tribal people of Lalgarh-Jangal mahal and the withdrawal of all military and police-paramilitary forces from Lalgarh and nearby areas;**
- **the closing of all “internment” camps;**
- **the immediate release of all political prisoners;**
- **the Indian government provide due compensation to the people displaced and impacted by Operation Green Hunt and Operation Lalgarh, and punish those military, para-military and police officials responsible for violence, rape, loot and other crimes;**
- **the repeal of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), 2008**
- **free access to affected areas for fact-finding and solidarity teams and journalists;**
- **that the Central and State governments in India should initiate a dialogue with the people’s movements and accept their just demands.**

Resist imperialist globalization and plunder!

Long live the courageous resistance of the people of India!

ILPS-Canada

February 1, 2010

PM

Press Release

Bayan/ILPS Phil. Chapter Urge Indian Govt to Stop its Operation Green Hunt

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the ILPS Phil. Chapter today, Feb. 05, 2010, picketed near the Indian Embassy in Makati City to demand that “the Indian government immediately and unconditionally withdraw its armed forces engaged in the military-paramilitary offensive called Operation Green Hunt, against the adivasi (indigenous) people of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Maharashtra, Bengal, Karnataka and other regions of this populous country.”

Alarmed by the growing resistance movement of the adivasi in many parts of India, the government has unleashed Operation Green Hunt that has seen the burning of houses of adivasi, the targetting and killings of unarmed civilians, the torture-detention-killings of mass leaders of progressive organizations. Last year, Bayan and the ILPS Phil. Chapter, picketed near the Indian Embassy to protest the militarization and violations of human rights of the adivasi in Orissa where a large tract of land would be cleared for a sprawling factory for the cheap locally-made Indian car called Tata.

“Bayan and the ILPS Phil. Chapter demand that the Indian government immediately stop the plunder of vast tracts of land and forested areas for large scale mining and industrial projects in special economic zones. Vast areas within India, both rich agricultural fields and areas rich with minerals like Jharkand, Orissa, Andra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and West Bengal, are being exploited by the MNCs in collaboration with India’s top industrialists” Rita Baua, Intl Solidarity Officer of Bayan and Vice-Chairperson of the ILPS Phil. Chapter, said.

“Bayan and the ILPS Phil. Chapter likewise condemn the impunity of the Indian government towards the adivasi who are resisting their plunderous activities. Already, 3 million of the adivasi have been displaced by Operation Green Hunt. The adivasi people are the rightful owners of the land and the fruits of their hardship, not the Indian government which is pro-foreign investors,” Baua said. Bayan and the ILPS Phil. Chapter also called on the Indian government for the immediate surfacing of two progressive and militant leaders, namely, Mr. Ravi Sharma and Ms. Anuradha, who were forcibly taken from their workplace and home, respectively. “We fear that both leaders might have suffered tremendously from torture and intimidation. We hope they have not yet been killed considering that Mr. Sharma was arrested last October 10, 2009,” Baua noted. “Bayan and the ILPS Phil. Chapter likewise condemn the Obama Govt for providing not only logistical support such as munitions and other war materiel, latest military technology, but also US\$18 billion; providing military advise on mapping the deployment of revolutionary forces on the ground, and holding of joint US-India-Israel military exercises. Obama who got a Nobel Peace Prize for Peace is a contradiction in terms as far as the genuine peace in India is concerned” Baua said.

“We therefore demand that the Obama government stop its war of terror against the adivasi and the people of India. The latter will not be cowed by your weapons and political/military tactics meant to suppress them,” Baua concluded.

PM

Grey Hounds gang-rape adivasi women in Vishakhapatnam

The notorious anti-Naxal Grey Hounds force of Andhra Pradesh, lauded by the central government and several counter-insurgency experts as a model to be emulated by other states in tackling the Maoists, has once again come into limelight with their gang-rape of four adivasi women on January 22. These lawless goons hired by the state with the aim of creating terror among those supporting the revolutionary movement, have become a grave menace to society at large. There is no end to their atrocities on the innocent, unarmed people in the form of encounter murders, abductions, rapes and torture of adivasis and other oppressed sections.

The Balliguda atrocity in Vishakhapatnam district brings into one’s mind memories of the Vakapalli atrocity in 2007 when 11 adivasi women were raped by these uniformed goondas. Vakapalli incident had then raised a furore in the entire state. The Balliguda incident brought forth protests by various organizations and individuals. Three of the victims were taken to KG Hospital on January 29 for medical examination. The tests could not be undertaken on the previous day on account of the threats and intimidation by the terrorist police force. The victims agreed to undergo tests only after some human rights organizations extended support to them.

PM

How the State is Waging War

The following heart-rending stories of state-sponsored terror by Congress-BJP's vigilante Salwa Judum gangs in the villages of Dantewada provide a glimpse of the brutal war waged by the Indian state under the direct supervision of the Union Home Minister P Chidambaram. These excerpts are taken from the *Tehelka magazine* dated February 06, 2010 filed by SANJANA who had traveled in the remote region for over a week.

According to the writer, she along with TEHELKA photographer, tracked Adivasis whose lives were destroyed by the Salwa Judum in the past four months. This period coincides with the start of Operation Green Hunt, an operation that the Central Government calls a 'media creation'.

In village after village, Adivasis recount tales of the Judum attacking anyone they could find — "if they found a woman, they raped her. If it was a man, he was killed." None of the witnesses were willing to walk to the police station to file complaints. In their eyes, the Judum and the police are complicit. Seeking justice from one against the other would be futile.

Kunja Iрмаi, a resident of Palod village said:

"We are battling drought on one hand and sickness on the other. The nearest hospital is 30 kilometres away and the only way to get there is on foot. On top of all this, we've to face the Judum. The Judum don't kill Naxalites but only poor people like us. Couldn't the government think of any other way to announce its presence in our village? Our only source of drinking water — three bore-wells — stopped working two years ago. All we get from the government is people who will kill us, without telling us why," stated

by headman of Dogpadu village, Kalumu Bheema, who witnessed the cold-blooded murder of Vando Mangdu and Madkam Budra by Salwa Judum goondas in his village.

We went to the Kishtaram police station the next day with people from Dogpadu and Tetmadagu. The Judum had killed 6 people in these two neighbouring villages as well. We asked for the bodies of the people they killed. We were told that a helicopter took the bodies to Dantewada to conduct the post mortem. Who knows what happened to the bodies?

Everyday I think of the curses that the Judum heaped on us when they entered our village. They are angry that we refuse to join the Judum. If this is the way they behave with us, why would we even think of joining them? They killed Joga because they found him by the pond. They raped Irre because they found her grazing cattle in the forest. If they had found anyone else, they would have killed and raped them, too.

16-year-old Tunki Venkatesh of Palachelima village whose brother and brother-in-law were murdered by Salwa Judum, recounted:

The Judum made the three men walk for 10 hours to the nearest police station. My sister gathered 15 other women from the village and followed them back to the station. They saw the Judum take the three men into the station. For hours, they maintained a vigil outside. At some point in the night, the Judum slipped the men out of the station and took them to a clearing near the village bus stand. They were forced to strip and change into Naxal uniforms. The Judum tied them up to different trees and shot them dead. Enough villagers were around to see them conduct this exercise.

Later, the Judum loaded the bodies on a truck and buried them in a mass grave at a town 70 km away. Schoolchildren watched the Judum dig the grave and throw the bodies in. Why couldn't the Judum at least give our dead a decent burial? Why wouldn't they give us back the bodies? I had hoped to finish school and go to college in Dantewada. I wanted to work in an office. My brother and I would sit and talk for hours about this. I had to drop out of school after the killings to take care of the family. What choice do I have?

MADIVI MOYEE, Resident of Gachampadu village said:

In the morning, someone from a nearby village came and asked us to run for our lives. The Judum was headed our way, he said, and that they had killed a lot of people in the nearby villages. We left everything we had, picked up our children — my baby was four months old — and ran to the forests. We could see the village from where we were hiding. A lot of people — it was impossible to count how many — all armed with guns and sickles entered the village.

Within minutes of their arrival, we saw smoke. Our houses were being burnt. Then, screams rent the air. I realised then that there were some people who had been left behind in the village. After a long time, I saw the Judum bring out two men and five women from our village into the field behind the village. The men's hands were tied behind their backs and I could see blood on one of their faces. The Judum lined up the men and women in two rows facing each other - the Judum men were behind the women. They shot the men down even as the women looked on. At least two

Contd..... on Page 9

In Chhattisgarh, jail is the cost of filing a public interest litigation plea

Aman Sethi

***Police detain three witnesses to killings in Gompad village, ban journalists from site
Police decline comment on veracity of claims made in petition filed
by Sodi Sambho and others***

There is concern that the facts surrounding the Gompad killings might never be known

Konta: The mystery surrounding the killing of nine Adivasis in Gompad village in Dantewada district in October last year is deepening, with the Chhattisgarh police detaining three more witnesses to the incident and restricting all access to the area on the pretext of Operation Green Hunt. Operation Green Hunt is a catch-all phrase, used by the police and media alike, for all major anti-naxal offensives since July 2009.

Total control

As previously reported by *The Hindu*, the Chhattisgarh police have assumed total control over the movements of Sodi Sambho – one of several witnesses in a Supreme Court petition that alleges that the 9 civilians were killed by the security forces.

On Friday, armed policemen and Special Police Officers (SPO) lined the length of the highway from Dantewada town to Konta, the block headquarters closest to Gompad, stopping vehicles and questioning commuters. Traveling with local journalists Anil Mishra of *Nayi Duniya* and Yashwant Yadav of *Navbharat*, this correspondent was repeatedly detained along the route and told that Gompad village was out of bounds as a major anti-naxal operation was underway. Non-journalists were, however, let through.

Concerned that we might enter the village from Andhra Pradesh, we were detained by SPOs for about 45 minutes on the Chhattisgarh-A.P. border and allowed to proceed only after the intervention of Deputy Inspector-General, Dantewada, S.R.P. Kalluri.

At present, the police have refused to comment on the veracity of the claims made in the Supreme Court petition filed by Sodi and others. “The Superintendent of Police of Dantewada has been told to initiate an enquiry into the Gompad incident,” said T.J. Longkumer, Inspector-General Police, Bastar.

However, witnesses to the killings insisted in interviews to *The Hindu* that the police were involved in the early morning ‘sanitization operation’ and killed nine villagers (seven from Gompad and two from nearby villages),

including three women and a 12-year-old girl. “The police also cut off the fingers of a two-year-old infant,” said one witness speaking on condition of anonymity fearing police retribution. “The police stabbed Madavi Venka [a victim] and then shot him fatally,” said another witness, “All those killed were innocent villagers with no involvement with the naxals.”

The witnesses were interviewed, via a translator, at a weekly bazaar at Adralpalli on the Andhra Pradesh side of the border between the two States. Due to the police cordon around Gompad village, witness reports could not be verified independently.

The villagers also claimed that the police have detained Soyam Rama, Soyam Dulla and Kattam Dulla, three witnesses whose testimonies could prove crucial when the case comes up for hearing in the Supreme Court. “All three men have been held at the police station at Konta for the last one week,” said a Gompad villager. The Adivasis were picked up by the police in the first week of January when they came to Dantewada town for a public airing of grievances, the villagers said, an assertion DIG Kalluri contests. “We have never detained these three men,” he said. “They have never been taken into police custody.”

However, police sources speaking to *The Hindu* on background confirmed that the three men were indeed held “for questioning” at the Konta police station till January 14 but could not confirm their current location. At present, their whereabouts are unknown.

Yet to be addressed

Police control over witnesses and restrictions on the movement of the press have raised concerns that the facts surrounding the Gompad killings might never be known. In another PIL petition pending before the Supreme Court for the past three years, allegations of large-scale killing of Adivasis and arson by the Salwa Judum and security forces have yet to be addressed.

PM

Chhattisgarh police abduct eye-witnesses to Gompad massacre carried out by CRPF-CoBRA forces

The sordid cynical drama that is being enacted right in front of the eyes of a hundred crore people for over four months since the Gompad massacre shows the fake nature of our democracy and the immense power wielded by the murderers and criminals in police uniform. On October 1, the CRPF and CoBRA forces sent to Chhattisgarh by Chidambaram with the pretext of “recapturing” territory from the control of the Maoists, carried out a brutal massacre in Gompad village in Dantewada district killing 9 unarmed innocent adivasis. Then they attacked three more villages and murdered another three taking the toll on a single day to 12. Several people were eye-witnesses to these gory murders by Chidambaram’s men. The story of Sodi Sambho is now quite well known. She received treatment in AIIMS, Delhi after the Court intervened and asked the Chhattisgarh government not to obstruct her. However, she was abducted from the hospital by getting her discharged before anyone could go to meet her.

After several petitions by human rights activists in the SC that the eye-witnesses to the Gompad massacre were in illegal police custody, the court at last intervened and issued an order on February 8 to the state government to produce the 12 missing witnesses in the court by February 15. The 12 witnesses including Sodi Sambho were abducted by Chidambaram-Raman Singh’s khaki goons soon after they deposed before the Supreme Court on February 5. They were illegally detained even earlier for almost 45 days in total.

In this context, the Supreme Court’s remarks on the missing witnesses are worth citing. Justice Sudarshan Reddy told the government counsel: “*What is*

going on in this country? If citizens can’t come to this court where will they go? There are no two classes of citizens. You cannot say those who do not subscribe to your philosophy have no right to live in this country. Don’t try to overreach this court. If necessary, we will monitor this case.” On February 15, six of the 12 missing adivasis were produced before the Court while the other six still remain untraced. The reason why the other six were not produced was because the police thought they might utter the truth in the Court in spite of the intimidation and threats by the police. The six who were produced were tutored by the police to say that they saw the killings in their village of Gompad but are unable to identify who the murderers were. Actually the police tutored the witnesses to say that they saw the Maoists carrying out the Gompad massacre. This is what the Goebels of Chhattisgarh, Vishwa Ranjan, has been lying in public without any sense of shame whatsoever. This master liar squarely places blame on the Maoists for the massacre of adivasis committed by the police and SPOs!

It is also amusing to see how the sinister drama is being played by officials at the highest level. To impress upon the court how difficult it is to produce the witnesses the Attorney General Vahanvati openly lied to the Supreme Court that when a police party accompanied by around 300 SPOs went to the villages to fetch the witnesses they were ambushed by the Maoists at Gorkha village in Dantewada district injuring two SPOs. He even showed a fax message he had received from the state’s DGP, Vishwa Ranjan, on February 9 informing of the serious situation after the land-mine

blast. Whatever be the truth behind the land-mine blast, the indisputable fact is that the witnesses were actually under confinement in the office of Dantewada SP.

Like several such mass murders that have become a common feature in the police state under saffron terrorist Raman Singh, the Gompad massacre too would have gone unnoticed by the corporate media had it not been pursued consistently by some democratic and civil rights organizations and individuals despite their being branded as Maoist sympathisers.

Union Home Minister Chidambaram thinks people are fools to believe his words when he asserts that he can do nothing at all when human right violations take place in states since law & order is a state subject and that the Centre cannot intervene. But this master liar rushes up to Raipur and Kolkata to organize meetings of the chief ministers of the Maoist-dominant states to conduct joint operations. This fascist even compliments Raman Singh for the significant progress he achieved in the fight against the Maoists with the help of the central forces. He promises all assistance to the saffron terrorist in carrying out more blood-baths as in Gompad. For all his talk of the rule of law, this hypocrite does not even raise the “human rights violations” in Chhattisgarh. Evading responsibility for the murders of innocent adivasis by simply yelling that law & order is a state subject, Chidambaram provides complete legitimacy and immunity to the state governments for their lawless and unconstitutional acts, and gives them a blank cheque by assuring them that he would not interfere no matter what they do. Actually, it is not only

the police forces of the states but also the central para-military forces that have been carrying out the worst possible crimes against the adivasis. In fact, almost all the recent atrocities carried out in Dantewada and Bijapur districts of Chhattisgarh after the commencement of Operation Green Hunt, have been the handiwork of the CRPF and CoBRAs sent by Chidambaram himself. And it is with the help of these forces that the state's police and the Salwa Judum goons too are able to carry out their murderous campaign and inhuman atrocities against the adivasis. Hence there is not an iota of truth in what Chidambaram has been trying to say in public—that he cannot do anything regarding human right violations in states since law & order is a state subject.

Moreover, this hypocrite has gone on record for praising the saffron terrorist regime in Chhattisgarh for implementing the Centre's plan against the Maoists very well i.e Chidambaram has extended his all-out support to Raman Singh in carrying out the murder of almost one hundred unarmed innocent adivasis including women and children, raping adivasi women and chopping off the fingers of a two-year-old child. He is also exerting pressure on other state governments like Jharkhand and Bihar to follow Raman Singh's example and create a reign of terror.

So in the kidnapping of the 12 eye-witnesses of Gompad massacre Chidambaram is as much involved as Raman Singh for both the state and central forces had jointly perpetrated the massacre. Both the state and the Centre are in dire need to protect their mercenary forces at this critical juncture in their war against the Maoists. It is only massive outbursts of people's protests as in Kashmir that a trigger-happy policeman would be punished.

Even after the Supreme Court order

only six were produced before the court on February 15. And the solicitor-general Gopal Subramanyam, who is paid by the state to defend its lawless policemen, had tried to hush up the criminal acts of the police and divert the issue of the missing witnesses by narrating how dangerous and risky were the lives of policemen working in Maoist areas. Appearing in the supreme court on February 15, Subramanyam told the court that police officers leave for duty everyday in Naxal-affected areas with a "death band" around their heads. To prove his point he produced tapes with intercepts of conversations between Maoists about their hit list of police officers.

Chidambaram pretends that nothing has happened even as his central forces accompany and extend total unconditional support to these Salwa Judum goons and play their own share in the murders and rapes of adivasis of this region. This trusted manager for imperialist capital in India and a loyal agent of the comprador capital lauds the significant achievements by his uniformed thugs in Chhattisgarh and the private vigilante gangs. This khadi terrorist and saffron terrorist Raman Singh hug and pat each other for their success in destroying the adivasi villages and evacuating the adivasis to pave the way for the take-over of the mineral-rich belt by their corporate masters. These thugs relentlessly squeal like chatter-boxes that Naxalites should abjure violence while they themselves carry out cold-blooded murder of poor unarmed innocent adivasis. And these hypocrites and liars par excellence abduct eye witnesses like Sodi Sambho right under public glare and get away with the crime. The judiciary assists these thugs and murderers to carry out blood-bath and get away unscathed. Anyone, even if it be a Gandhian, who sees the mayhem, arson and terror created by the gangs sent by Chidambaram and

Raman Singh, would advise the Maoists to equip themselves with better arms, train up more fighters and hit back the armies of aggression and inhuman marauders.

What is needed now is more organized, more effective and more wide-spread revolutionary counter violence of the masses in defence of their land, forest, dignity and lives. And this revolutionary counter-violence should hit Chidambaram, Raman Singh and their band of rapacious inhuman exploiters and oppressors where it hurts them most. Led by the Maoist revolutionaries, the oppressed people, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the Indian population, will surely teach these neo-Nazi gangsters a fitting lesson. **PM**

Contd..... from Page 22

to shift the case from Konta to the Dantewada Sessions Court on March 9 as the magistrate lived in Konta in the very neighbourhood of the accused.

Harassment began soon after. SPOs crossed the state border and searched for Madvi's house on April 10, 2009. And on December 2, Madvi's father and a boy who shared her husband's name were apprehended and taken to Chintur Police Station in Andhra Pradesh. There the father was threatened and the boy was beaten. They were told to bring Madvi to Konta police station. At this point, she had gone into hiding, knowing that her next appearance at court was to be held on December 10, when she had to depose. The deposition didn't take place. On the day of the hearing there was a rally against the Vanvasi Chetna Ashram, who used to support her emotionally and financially. As of January 6 the Vanvasi Chetna Ashram has ceased to exist, its workers arrested, its employees threatened. No one can predict how Madvi's story will end, but the omens are not encouraging. **PM**

Seema Azad, editor of the left-wing journal DASTAK published from Allahabad, was taken into custody by the police Saturday, 6th February, soon after she alighted from the train on her return from the Book Fair at Delhi. She, along with her husband and left-wing activist Vishwa Vijaya Azad, has been detained at the Khuldabad Police Station. Seema Azad just published a collection of articles criticizing the Indian government for its “Operation Green Hunt” — the ongoing massive military attack by the government against the tribal inhabitants of central India. The booklet contains articles by noted authors and media-persons such as Arundhati Roy, Himanshu Kumar, Anil Chamaria, Punya Prasoon Vajpeyi, Sunita Narayan, and others. Although they were produced before a court in Allahabad, the details of the charges leveled against Seema Azad and Vishva Vijaya were not specified. Seema is the state secretary of the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) for Uttar Pradesh. The PUCL has released the following letter addressed to the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission in New Delhi.

Seema Is a Human Right Worker, Not a ‘Naxali’

Letter to the National Human Right Commission, New Delhi

by People’s Union for Civil Liberties

To,
The Chairperson,
National Human Right Commission
New Delhi,
sir,

We want to acknowledge you that Seema Azad, journalist, human right worker and executive member of Peoples Union for civil liberties (PUCL), and her husband former student leader Vishwavijay and friend Asha, were detained by the police on Allahabad Railway Junction without any proper reason on Saturday (6th Feb 2010). Both of them were returning from World Book Fair, New Delhi by the Reewanchal Express. According to police they all are Naxalites.

Sir, the organization wants to highlight the background of detention. PUCL has continuously raised the voice against the atrocity done by the police-Bahubalies nexus in Kachhari region of Allahabad and Kausambi district on the sand mining labours. Due to the pressure of politician and Bahubalies, DIG of Allahabad has framed many fraud cases against the labour movement leader. DIG had banned the ‘Lal Salam’ cited it as against the nationality. PUCL had condemned the ban saying that it was natural address of Communist party. According to PUCL ‘Lal Salam’ is a common address of labourer across the world. Raising the cause of fighting labour against the illegal collection and illegal mining of sand in Nanda ka Pura village of Kausambi, the Minister Seema Azad and

advocate K. K. Roy of PUCL has issued a report on human right violation. In past one month the police and PAC jawans has unleashed the Lathicharge couple of times in Nanda ka Pura village. Police had torched the local office of CPI (ML) New Democracy in Nanda village. And their leaders were detained in the jail for several days in fraud cases. The voice against them, doesn’t suit the mood of DIG of Allahabad and police. Police doesn’t want that the voice should be raised by any organization against their working style. The arrest of Seema Azad, her husband Vishwavijay and friend Asha is done by the police in the revenge. Seema Azad has no any connection with the Naxalite and she is working in the field of human right for past several years. She is also editor of a monthly magazine ‘Dastak’. She has made report on serious issues like human right situation in eastern Uttar Pradesh, labour movement, SEZ, situation of Mushar cast and Encephalitis disease. Vishwavijay, husband of Seema Azad, and his friend Asha were active student leader of Central university of Allahabad for a long time. They have strongly raised the concerned problem of students under the banner of ‘INQUALABI CHHATRA MORCHA’. The persons which are naxalite, according to the police, are working in between students and labour for a long time.

Sir, in past also UP Police has threatened the leader of PUCL working for the human right concern. PUCL has

raised the questions against the encounter of Kamlesh Chaudhoury in Chandauly dated 9th November. After that, in a press conference dated 11th November 2009, DGP Brijlal has articulated that “the action would be taken against the PUCL leader” (see Dainik Hindustan of November 12, 2009). The Allahabad arrest of Seema Azad is a chain of the same retaliation.

Hence, we appeal for the prompt action in the matter and also we appeal that police atrocity and human right violation should be stopped. We also demand that Seema Azad and her friend should be released as soon as possible.

- Sincerely

Vandana Mishra, General Secretary,
PUCL, U.P.

Chitranjan Singh, National
Secretary, PUCL

K.K. Roy, Advocate, state executive
member, PUCL

Ravikiran Jain, state executive
member, PUCL

Satendra Singh, Convener, People’s
Union for Human Rights (PUHR)

Sandeep Pandey, winner of
Magsaysay award and state
executive member, PUCL

S. R. Darapuri, former police
director, state executive
member, PUCL

Anshu Malviya, Shehri Garib
Sangharsh Morcha

Shahnawaz Alam, Organization
Secretary, PUCL

Rajeev Yadav, Organization
Secretary, PUCL

Vijay Pratap, Freelance journalist
and human right worker

PM

The tribal 'Ruchikas' of Dantewada

Javed Iqbal, 08 Jan 2010

Operation Green Hunt to flush out the Maoist rebels from central India may have begun only last November, but the hapless tribals of Chhattisgarh's Bastar region have been at the receiving end of official hostility for years before that. It is not clear why they should attract official ire, but they do. The state machinery, of course, denies any such sentiment.

Take the case of four Muria tribal women from the village of Samsetti. The Muria say they don't know anything about rape; their word for it is closer to *balatkaar* than anything else. On July 6, 2006, according to witnesses, government-appointed special police officers and Salwa Judum members gang-raped three young women, 19, 22 and 23, during a raid on Samsetti, which is in Dantewada district. Another girl was allegedly raped in January of that year. But the state wanted to know nothing about it.

When they went to file a complaint at the police station, the girls say they were threatened and chased away. It was discovered later that there were allegedly 24 cases of rape in the entire Konta block, but only six women would speak up. Four were from Samsetti, one from Arlampalli and another from Bandarpadar. The complaints, however, were not recorded.

Finally, on March 27, 2009, the women first wrote straight to the superintendent of police and the district collector. Nothing happened. Then a complaint case was jointly filed with the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Konta, on April 29.

Interestingly, while statements were being recorded at the court on June 16, the accused were said to be loitering around the corridors. On the

next court date, July 17, when the testimonies of the victims were meant to be heard, the magistrate was absent, allegedly 'called away to headquarters'. The magistrate also magically disappeared on the next court date, August 12.

The magistrate, Amrit Karkate nervously rides his bicycle to court every day from his house in Konta – the bastion of the accused. A warrant for the 30 accused was finally issued in October to the police stations of Dornapal, Konta and Bhejji. Yet no arrests were made. The accused are said to be missing yet one of them is even giving speeches. The SPOs are on duty but for some reason they're missing, too.

What about the victims? Recently, these women were said to have been beaten by the same accused and forced to give their thumbprints on blank papers. They were detained for five days in Dornapal police station, where some of the accused too are stationed. Once the girls they released refused to talk to anyone. Samsetti villagers too apparently told the victims to forget about it. Throughout September last year, the sarpanch of Samsetti kept asking villagers to withdraw the cases and put their thumbprints on blank papers, otherwise the police and the SPOs would come to the village again. They did not heed the threats.

Harassment of the victims apparently continued as the women fled their village for the Gandhian NGO Vanvasi Chetna Ashram run by Himanshu Kumar. The ashram approached district collector Reena Babasaheb Kangale on August 11 to ensure the safety of the women. No assurance was forthcoming. They returned to their village. They'd be

beaten.

They'd be dragged to jail, irrespective of the fact that once a warrant is issued, the accused cannot withdraw the case unless the accused are brought to court and the matter can proceed. What's the point of beating them now? Take the case of Madkam Madvi (name changed) of Bandarpadar, Konta block, who was allegedly gang-raped by SPOs at Konta police station in April 2008. According to her testimony, she was taken to the police station by the Salwa Judum, robbed of some Rs 25,000, then kept alone in a room. She was first raped by an SPO in an isolated room in the police station, then blindfolded and gang-raped over two days at the station by three more unidentified persons. Eventually, she was set free and after further harassment escaped to Andhra Pradesh. She had hoped to start over and had even married.

At this point, members of the Salwa Judum tracked her down in Andhra Pradesh and the harassment resumed. According to her husband, they had threatened him saying, 'We were going to sell this girl and earn some money but now that you married her, we have suffered a loss that you shall now have to pay back.' He said they stole Rs 3,500, one cow, three goats and two chickens to 'make up for their loss'. After further threats, they went back to Chhattisgarh, ensuring that Madvi would sleep in a different room in a different village every night.

Finally, through the Vanvasi Chetna Ashram, a complaint was written to the superintendent of police, Dantewada. There was no reply for months. The matter was taken to the court as a private complaint. There was a request

Contd..... on Page 20

Compulsory voting, Chhattisgarh style

Aman Sethi
The Hindu 14 Feb

BIJAPUR: In Lingagiri, it didn't take long to tally the results of the recently concluded panchayat elections. On January 31 this year, a sum total of four people voted in this remote village in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district. The polling booth opened on time, the polling officers were present, and then the force arrived.

Pujari Rajamma, 35, was combing her hair in her courtyard. "I was getting ready to walk down to the polling office, when the uniformed men stormed in," she said, "they checked my fingers for the voting mark." When they didn't find it, they beat her with sticks. The bruises are still visible on Rajamma's back; she can barely move her swollen left arm.

Pujari Chandeyya, 40, was sharpening a chisel, his brother, Pujari Lakshmaiah was lying in bed with a fever, when the force found them and assaulted them. "They wanted to see the vote mark." He said, "I hadn't voted yet." Gulla Ganesh, 25, was waiting for his friends by a tamarind tree; Soyam Ramulu was stringing a rope when the force attacked them. In all, five villagers were assaulted by men in combat fatigues for not voting in the elections.

"The villagers have registered a complaint," said assistant sub-inspector Madan Patel. "As per their description, the CRPF or the CoBRA force could be responsible. An investigation is under way." Patel, who was present in the booth, said that the four votes were "probably" cast by those manning the booth.

Abandoned in 2006

The attack occurred at about 10.30 a.m. after which the villagers decided to boycott the election. Had they voted, their votes would have made little difference to the outcome. The winning candidate was a foregone conclusion. Tokal Ramaiah stood unopposed for the post of sarpanch. He filed his papers in Avapalli (about two hours away by road) and has not visited the village for the last four years. The villagers found out he was contesting only after the results of the election were declared.

Lingagiri and neighbouring Basagud were abandoned in 2006 when the state-sponsored Salwa Judum programme was in full sway. As the conflict between

state forces, aided by the Salwa Judum, and the naxals intensified, villagers across Chhattisgarh fled to the relative safety of Andhra Pradesh or to camps set up by the government.

Lingagiri itself emptied out in 2006 after four villagers were killed and two raped, allegedly by the security forces and special police officers, according to testimony gathered by the National Human Rights Commission.

During hearings on an ongoing PIL, the Supreme Court in 2008 ordered the State government to rehabilitate villages destroyed in the Salwa Judum campaign. The government did nothing to implement this order but in March 2009, Lingagiri was resettled by villagers and the Van Chetna Ashram, an NGO. To date, about 2000 of Lingagiri's estimated 500 residents have returned the rest are scattered across Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. A successful election would have provided much needed legitimacy to state institutions in an area where naxals still exercise considerable control.

Tokal Ramaiah, who will take the oath of office on February 15, is one of those who are yet to return to Lingagiri. "He hasn't set foot in the village since 2006," said a villager speaking on condition of anonymity. In Basaguda too, Bendke Kamala, another émigré sarpanch, won unopposed, both, Tokal and Bendke currently reside in Bijapur – and administrative outpost about five hours by road from the villages they represent. **PM**

When the IG jumped the Gun

The Indian Express, February 2, 2010

Last week, Inspector General of Police in charge of anti-Maoist operations, Sanjiv Manik landed in soup when he called up journalists to announce that the abducted CPM leader in Sundargarh district has been killed by the Maoists. Anandmasi Horo, CPM leader, and two others were abducted by the Maoists during the two-day bandh on January 25 and 26. While the two others were released, Horo did not return home prompting the IG to predict that he has been killed by the rebels. The IG based his prediction on the 'breaking news' of some TV channels which proclaimed that Horo might have been killed. No sooner did the CPM politburo condemn the 'killing, Horo was released by the rebels. His family and party immediately slammed the IG for his 'announcement'.

PM

From The Developmental Terrorism of the Indian State

A document prepared by Sanhati Collective

In almost all cases the affected people try to ventilate their grievances using peaceful means of protest; they take our processions, they sit on demonstrations, they submit petitions. The response of the State is remarkably consistent in all these cases: it cracks down on the peaceful protestors, sends in armed goons to attack the people, slaps false charges against the leaders and arrests them and often also resorts to police firing and violence to terrorize the people. We only need to remember Singur, Nandigram, Kalinganagar and countless other instances where peaceful and democratic forms of protest were crushed by the state with ruthless force. It is, thus, the action of the State that blocks off all forms of democratic protest and forces the poor and dispossessed to take up arms to defend their rights, as has been pointed out by social activists like Arundhati Roy. The Indian government's proposed military offensive will repeat that story all over again. Instead of addressing the source of the conflict, instead of addressing the genuine grievances of

the marginalized people along the three dimensions that we have pointed to, the Indian state seems to have decided to opt for the extremely myopic option of launching a military offensive.

While the poor have seen their incomes and purchasing power tumble down precipitously in real terms, the rich have, by all accounts, prospered beyond their wildest dreams since the onset of the liberalization of the Indian economy. There is widespread evidence from recent research that the levels of income and wealth inequality in India have increased steadily and drastically since the mid 1980s. A rough overview of this growing inequality is found by juxtaposing two well known facts: (a) in 2004-05, 77 percent of the population spent less than Rs. 20 a day on consumption expenditure; and (b) according to the annual World Wealth Report released by Merrill Lynch and Capgemini in 2008, the millionaire population in India grew in 2007 by 22.6 per cent from the previous year, which is higher than in any other country in the world.

It is also worth remembering that the geographical terrain, where the government's military offensive is planned, is very well-endowed with natural resources like minerals, forest wealth, biodiversity and water resources, and has of late been the target of systematic usurpation by several large, both Indian and foreign, corporations. So far, the resistance of the local indigenous people against their displacement and dispossession has prevented the government-backed corporates from exploiting the natural resources for their own profits and without regard to ecological and social concerns. We fear that the government's offensive is also an attempt to crush such democratic and popular resistance against dispossession and impoverishment; the whole move seems to be geared towards facilitating the entry and operation of these large corporations and paving the way for unbridled exploitation of the natural resources and people of these regions.

PM

“Stop Operation Green Hunt”

Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Operation Green Hunt was in the dock at a people's tribunal in the capital over the weekend and the verdict of the jury was loud and clear: Guilty.

Organised by civil society groups, the “Independent People's Tribunal on Land Acquisition, Resource Grab and Operation Green Hunt” heard the testimonies of tribal people, activists, academics and experts from Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. The final recommendations of the jury advised the government to “Stop Operation Green Hunt and start a dialogue with the local people.”

Among the jury members were Justice P.B. Sawant, Justice H. Suresh, Yash Pal, V. Mohini Giri, P.M. Bhargava, and K.S. Subramanian. In their observations, they noted that “state violence has been accentuated by Operation Green Hunt in which a huge number of paramilitary forces are being used mostly on the tribals. The militarization of the state has reached

a level where schools are occupied by security forces.”

They also warned that if peaceful resistance was violently crushed, the government “could very well be sowing the seeds of a violent revolution demanding justice and rule of law that would engulf the entire country.”

The jury recommended that all compulsory acquisition of agricultural or forest land be stopped. The forced displacement of tribal people needs to end, and rehabilitation started immediately. It called on the government to declare the details of all MoUs and industrial and infrastructural projects proposed in these areas and stop all environmentally destructive industries.

The paramilitary and police forces need to be withdrawn, and dissenters must not be victimized, said the jury.

PM

Telangana Continues to Burn as Neros Sonia, Manmohan and Chidambaram fiddle

The attitude displayed by Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram gang towards the people of Telangana show for the umpteenth time how people's democratic aspirations have never been a matter of concern for the reactionary rulers of our country. The ordinary Indian citizen, in the eyes of these plunderers, is worth no more than a vote and assumes importance only once in five years. They show to the world the poor emaciated Indian voter, deprived and alienated from all the so-called development that Manmohan & Co boast of, as a testimony for a "vibrant" democracy. The voter is promised a paradise on earth by the parliamentary leaches if they are elected to power. But the moment an election comes to an end, the voter is treated as dust and all the promises are consigned to the dust-bin.

Separate Telangana too is one such empty promise dished out by these traitors going by the name of mainstream democratic parties. Telangana issue had served as a vote-catcher for all the parliamentary parties which had included it in their election manifestos. But once the election season is over, these opportunistic, hypocritical, shameless, self-seeking, corrupt, power-hungry, anti-people parties have ditched the voters and have not hesitated a bit in resorting to the use of lathis and bullets to crush a just, legitimate, democratic mass agitation.

Chidambaram, the worst liar to have occupied the post of Home Minister till date, was not just indulging in flip-flop, as the media had put it mildly, but had taken his art of lying to a new record. He promised to the people of Telangana on December 9, 2010 that the political process for the formation of a separate state would commence soon. Within a fortnight, cringing before the money-power of the Andhra-Rayalaseema capitalists, he backtracked on the issue

by stating that wide-ranging consultations are required and a consensus was necessary for resolving the issue. On February 1, he declared that a committee would be formed to look into the issue. Within a few days a committee headed by former Justice Sri Krishna was constituted with four other members; terms of reference were fixed and time was given until the end of 2010 for submission of report by the committee. It is significant to note that the people of Telangana have been opposing the setting up of any more committees and demanding that the government immediately declare a dead-line for the formation of a separate state. What has further infuriated the people of Telangana is the absence of the term Telangana in the terms of reference. Thus while Telangana is burning, the Neros in Delhi had only added fuel to the fire by callously skipping any reference to the issue of formation of Telangana. These hypocrites and opportunists of the highest order wanted to hunt with the hound and run with the hare by trying to balance mid-way between those who demanded Telangana and those who bitterly opposed the demand. In reality, they had kow-towed before the money power of the capitalist class hailing from the Andhra-Rayalaseema region.

It is also significant to note that the Prime Minister as well as the extra-constitutional power and the defacto head of state, Sonia Gandhi, had not opened their lips ever since the issue began to snowball into a major conflagration. Of course, the imperialist stooge Manmohan Singh did warn of the dangers of regionalism on the occasion of the Republic Day thereby hinting clearly that he was opposed to the democratic aspirations of the people of Telangana. It is clear that the comprador-feudal Congress party that has been serving the imperialists and

the comprador-feudal classes of our country ever since its formation in 1885 can never dream of fulfilling the aspirations of Telangana people. Until and unless, of course, it is driven to the wall by a wave of mass resistance movement.

The great betrayal by the state and central governments has angered the people of the region as never before. The spineless, opportunist leaders of the state Congress party had tried to justify the constitution of the bogus committee interpreting it as an affirmation of the commitment of the Congress to the formation of Telangana state. But the very fact that the leaders of various parties of Andhra-Rayalaseema region had hailed the setting up of the Sri Krishna committee and had appealed to all parties in the Telangana region to abide by the recommendations of the committee showed beyond a shadow of doubt that the setting up of the committee is a conspiracy by the Centre in collusion with the feudal-capitalist comprador forces of Andhra-Rayalaseema region. It is clear that the committee would spare no effort to sabotage the demand for separate Telangana. At best, it might come up with a solution that is acceptable to the Andhra-Rayalaseema bourgeoisie and land mafia by excluding the city of Hyderabad from the new state of Telangana.

The tactic of the reactionary Congress leaders and the ever-lying Home Minister Chidambaram is to procrastinate on the issue with the fond hope that "emotions" of the people would die down in course of time. Thereby their dirty plan of continuing the plunder of Telangana in a united state of Andhra Pradesh could proceed unchecked. Most of the Congress legislators of Telangana region who had been yelling that they would submit their resignations if the political process

for the formation of Telangana state is not initiated immediately went back on their promise without a sense of shame. They had even justified the setting up of the Sri Krishna committee by Chidambaram and began to fool the people once again by saying they would wait for six months and then resign from their posts if nothing comes out by that time. The TDP MLAs from Telangana submitted their resignation letters to the Joint Action Committee to outwit their Congress counterparts.

The social fascist CPI(M) showed its worst authoritarian and anti-people stance by bitterly opposing the demand for separate Telangana. Its greatest fear is that once Telangana demand is accepted it may have to give in to the legitimate demand for a separate Gorkhaland in the "Left Front" ruled state of West Bengal. It would not hesitate to unleash the most brutal blood-bath in Gorkhaland to retain it as the colony of the Bengali bourgeoisie and to loot the revenues of the region. Every Bengali-chauvinist party and leader is opposed to the democratic demand of the Gorkhas for a separate Gorkhaland.

The political JAC was split vertically with the betrayal by the Congress legislators of Telangana region and the dilly-dallying by the Telangana legislators from TDP and other parties. The student JAC had intensified its agitation as an answer to the Centre's regressive move of setting up the committee. Every section of society from Telangana region came out in protest resorting to many novel forms of protest. A student rally called POLIKEKA was held in the city of Warangal on February 7 attended by several lakhs of students. The police, as usual, used their strong-arm tactics and tried to disrupt the student meeting by all means at their disposal. Anyone not possessing a student ID card was barred from entering the venue of the meeting. And thousands were stopped in spite of having ID cards. Despite these heinous attempts by the police the

student rally was a grand success like the *Vidyarthi Garjana* held in Osmania University campus in the month of January. Speaker after speaker lashed out at the Centre and the Congress party. There was unanimous demand from the students for the immediate resignation of the legislators from Telangana region of all parties.

The last fortnight witnessed peaceful as well as militant forms of struggle by the students, teachers and professors, lawyers, journalists, doctors, workers, and various sections of people. The police attacked the students in Osmania campus using lathis, teargas and rubber bullets injuring several students. The protests by students spread to other districts forcing the government to institute an enquiry into the incident. On February 19, students organized a *chalo assembly* rally to demonstrate before the Assembly which was to commence its budget session that day. The Roshaiah government mobilized over 25,000 policemen and blocked all roads leading to the Assembly. Section 144 was imposed throughout the city of Hyderabad and the entire traffic within a radius of 4km around the Assembly was brought to a halt by the overzealousness and paranoia of the police who became objects of ridicule by the common man. The OU campus resembled a battle-field with thousands of students trying to break the barricades and the police stopping them with lathis and teargas. A student committed suicide by immolating himself frustrated by the betrayals by the political parties by the cause of Telangana. This tragic incident infuriated the students and the situation turned more volatile. After the *chalo assembly* programme was disrupted by the police there were demonstrations throughout Telangana with demands for the resignation of the legislators going louder. Some legislators were gheraoed or attacked.

The government and the police tried to cook up an excuse for using brute

force against the students by saying that Maoists had entered the OU campus and the situation was going out of control. The Vice-Chancellor of the University denied that Maoists were in the hostels. The Andhra Pradesh High Court directed the government to withdraw the paramilitary forces from the Osmania campus. The Supreme Court stayed the High Court order but asked the state government to furnish proof of the entry of Maoists in the hostels. Now attempts are on by the notorious APSIB to plant Maoist literature and weapons in the rooms of some students to prove they belonged to banned CPI(Maoist). There is a deep conspiracy to suppress the student agitation in the name of a Maoist take-over. The students are prepared for any sacrifice and to forego an academic year to achieve their goal of a separate Telangana. The examinations have been already postponed six times this year. The stalemate continues with the state and central governments adamant in their stand of not conceding the demand for a separate Telangana on the one hand, and the students and other sections of people prepared to fight and die for their demand on the other. The reactionary rulers are amassing their special police forces and the central paramilitary forces to suppress the agitation in rivers of blood. The situation is indeed ripe for the growth of revolutionary forces and the emergence of a real alternative political force in the Telangana region. The intransigence of Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram gang at the Centre and the betrayal by the opportunist, hypocritical parties in the state on the other has created a situation for the growth of a massive militant anti-state movement. As it is, all the parliamentary parties have lost their relevance in Telangana. And these are certain to be swept away from the soil of Telangana as the mass movement transforms into a mighty tornado.

PM

Response by Azad, Spokesperson, Central Committee, CPI (Maoist)

In an exclusive interview to The Hindu, Azad, spokesperson of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), answers in writing questions on his party's attitude to dialogue with the Union Government. The following is the edited text of the full interview:

1. *In recent weeks one has seen statements by the Government of India and leaders of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) saying they are in favor of dialogue and talks but each side seems to lack seriousness. There has also been an element of drama or more precisely, theatre, with Kishenji and P. Chidambaram exchanging state-ments through the media. Our first question is whether Kishenji's statements can be treated as authoritative pronouncements of the CPI (Maoist) central leadership in pursuance of a national strategy? Or are these tactical announcements by him keeping only the specifics of the Bengal situation in mind.*

Azad: It is true our Party leadership has been issuing statements from time to time in response to the government's dubious offer of talks. But to generalize that there is lack of seriousness on both sides does not correspond to reality. To an observer, exchanging statements through the media does sound a bit theatrical. And it is precisely such theatrical and sensational things the media relishes while more serious things are swept aside. Now the stark fact is lack of seriousness has been the hallmark of the government, particularly of the Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram. It is Mr. Chidambaram who has been enacting a drama in the past four months, particularly ever since his amusing 72-hour-abjure-violence diktat to the CPI (Maoist) in the course of his interview with Tehelka

Magazine some time last November. As regards Kishenji's statements, they should be seen with a positive attitude, not with cynicism. Though our central committee has not discussed our specific strategy with regard to talks with the government at the current juncture, as a Polit Bureau member, comrade Kishenji had taken initiative and made a concrete proposal for a ceasefire. Whether comrade Kishenji's statements are the official pronouncements of our Central Committee is not the point of debate here. What is important is the attitude of the government to such an offer in the first place. Our central committee has no objection to his proposal for a ceasefire. But as far as the issue of talks is concerned, our Party will pursue the guidelines given by our Unity Congress-9th Congress held in early 2007.

2. *Both the Government and the Maoists are also laying down preconditions. Chidambaram says the Maoists should "abjure violence and say they are prepared for talks... I would like no ifs, no buts and no conditions". Now 'to abjure' can mean to renounce or forswear violence, or even to avoid violence, i.e. a ceasefire. What is your understanding of Mr. Chidambaram's formulation? What do you think is the implication of what he wants the Maoists to accept?*

Azad: It is a very pertinent question as no one knows exactly what Mr. Chidambaram wants to convey by his oft-repeated, yet incomprehensible, abjure-violence statement. Hence I can understand your confusion in interpreting Mr. Chidambaram's "abjure violence" statement. It is not just you alone but the entire media is left in a state of confusion. His own

Party leaders are a confused lot. Some interpret Mr. Chidambaram's statement to mean that Maoists should lay down arms. Some say it means unilateral renunciation of violence by Maoists. Yet others say what this could mean is a cessation of hostilities by both sides without any conditions attached.

It is indeed very difficult to understand what Mr. Chidambaram wants to convey. This seems to be a characteristic trait of Mr. Chidambaram whether it be his pronouncements on Telangana, which are mildly described by the media as "flip-flop" behaviour and interpreted by both pro and anti-Telanganites according to their own convenience; or on Operation Green Hunt which he describes as a "myth invented by the media" even as the entire political and police establishment, and the entire media, give out graphic descriptions of the huge mobilization of the security forces, and the successes achieved by Operation Green Hunt; or on MoUs signed by various MNCs and Indian Corporate houses with the governments of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal and others.

The Home Minister himself had displayed his split personality, not knowing what exactly he wants when he says Maoists should "abjure violence." To a layman what this proposal obviously implies is that the state too would automatically put a stop to its inhuman atrocities on the adivasis, Maoist revolutionaries and their sympathizers. But not so to our Home Minister!

When you ask us what our understanding of Mr. Chidambaram's formulation is, our answer is: we are very clear that the real intent behind his rhetoric is not a ceasefire between

the government and the Maoists, like that with the NSCN, but an absurd demand for a unilateral renunciation of violence by the Maoists. Anyone with a bit of common sense would understand the unreasonableness of the Home Minister's demand.

It is not that our so-called political analysts and others who appear on TV channels or write articles in the print media lack this common sense. It is their vested interests that come in the way of questioning the Home Minister in a straightforward manner. Can they not put a simple question why the government cannot stop its brutalities on the people, adhere strictly to the Indian Constitution by putting an end to the police culture of fake encounters, abductions, rapes, tortures, destruction of property, foisting of false cases and such indescribable atrocities on the people and the Maoists? Chidambaram is cosy in studios and press conferences before English-speaking TV anchors and correspondents but can never answer the questions put by illiterate adivasis. That is the secret behind his skipping the Jan Sunwaayi in Dantewada last December. For, drama and real life are entirely different.

The implication of what Mr. Chidambaram wants the Maoists to accept is crystal-clear. He wants the Maoists to surrender. Or else [the state's] para-military juggernaut would crush the people and the Maoists under its wheels. It is total surrender, pure and simple. While repeating that he never wanted the Maoists to lay down arms – as if he had generously given a big concession – he comes up with an even more atrocious proposal: Maoists should abjure violence while his lawless forces continue their rampage creating more Gachampallis, Gompads, Singanamadugus, Palachelimas, Dogpadus, Palods, Tetemadugus, Takilodus, Ongaras, and so on. Not a word does he utter even as

scores of inhuman atrocities by his forces are brought to light by magazines like Tehelka, Outlook, a host of websites, and, to an extent, some papers like yours. What is it if not sheer hypocrisy on the part of the Home Minister to ask Maoists to abjure violence while his paramilitary forces indulge in crimes every day, every hour, in gross violation of the very Constitution by which he swears?

3. The Maoists also have their preconditions for talks. In his recent interview to Jan Myrdal and Gautam Navlakha, Ganapathy made the following formulation on the issue of talks: "To put concisely the main demands that the party has placed in front of the government [of India] for any kind of talks are 1. All out war has to be withdrawn; 2. For any kind of democratic work, the ban on the Party and Mass Organizations have to be lifted; 3. Illegal detention and torture of comrades had to be stopped and they be immediately released. If these demands are met, then the same leaders who are released from jails would lead and represent the Party in the talks."

My question is whether these are realistic preconditions. For example, the "all out war" can be suspended first before it is "withdrawn," i.e. a ceasefire, so why insist on its withdrawal at the outset? Are you asking for a ceasefire or something more than that?

Secondly, you want the ban on the Party and its mass organizations lifted and prisoners released. Usually in negotiations of this kind around the world between governments and insurgent groups, the lifting of a ban is one of the objects of talks rather than a precondition and the release of political prisoners an intermediate step. Is the Maoist party not

putting the cart before the horse, making demands that the government may be unlikely to accept as a starting point, rather than positing the same as one of the end points of the proposed dialogue?

Azad: I concur with the logic of your arguments. It is logically a valid argument that such demands could be resolved in the course of actual talks and not as a precondition for talks. But you must also understand the spirit of what comrade Ganapathi has said in his interview given to Mr. Jan Myrdal and Gautam Navlakha. Some clarification is required here. I will try to clarify what comrade Ganapathi has said.

Firstly what he meant when he said the government should withdraw its all-out war is nothing but a suspension of its war, or in other words, mutual ceasefire. Let there be no confusion in this regard. What Chidambaram wants is unilateral ceasefire by Maoists while the state continues its brutal campaign of terror. On the contrary, what the CPI (Maoist) wants is a cessation of hostilities by both sides simultaneously. This is the meaning of the first point. A ceasefire by both sides cannot be called a precondition. It is but an expression of the willingness on the part of both sides engaged in war to create a conducive atmosphere for going to the next step of talks.

Secondly, if peaceful legal work has to be done by Maoists as desired by several organizations and members of civil society, then lifting of ban becomes a pre-requisite. Without lifting the ban on the party and mass organizations how can we organize legal struggles, meetings etc in our name? If we do so, will these not be dubbed as illegal as they are led by a banned Party? According to us, the ban itself is an authoritarian, undemocratic, and fascist act. Hence the demand for

the lifting of the ban is a legitimate demand, and, if fulfilled, will go a long way in promoting open democratic forms of struggles and creating a conducive atmosphere for a dialogue.

Thirdly, what comrade Ganapathi had asked for is that the government should adhere to the Indian Constitution and put an end to the illegal murders in the name of encounters, tortures and arrests. We must include the term 'murders' which is missing in the third point. There is nothing wrong or unreasonable in asking the government to stick to its own constitution. As regards the release of political prisoners this could be an intermediate step as far as the nature of the demand is concerned. However, to hold talks it is necessary for the government to release some leaders. Or else, there would be none to talk to since the entire Party is illegal. We cannot bring any of our leaders overground for the purpose of talks.

4. *Would the Maoists be prepared to establish their bona fides on the question of talks by announcing a unilateral ceasefire or, perhaps the non initiation of combat operations (NICO) after a particular date so as to facilitate the process of dialogue?*

Azad: It is quite strange to see intellectuals like you asking the Maoists to declare a unilateral ceasefire when the heavily armed Indian state is carrying out its brutal armed offensive and counter-revolutionary war. How would unilateral announcement of ceasefire or NICO after a particular date establish the bona-fides of our Party on the question of talks? What purpose would such an act serve? It is incomprehensible to me why we are asked to "display this generosity" towards an enemy who has the least concern for the welfare of the

people and derives vicarious pleasure in cold-blooded murders, rapes, abductions, tortures and every kind of atrocity one could ever imagine. And how would this "generous Gandhian act" on our part facilitate the process of dialogue with the megalomaniacs in the Home Ministry who do not spare even non-violent Gandhian social activists working in Dantewada and other places?

5. *What do the Maoists hope to achieve with talks? Are you only looking to buy time and regroup yourselves – which is what the government said the CPI (Maoist) did during the aborted dialogue in Andhra Pradesh? Or is it part of a more general re:evaluation of the political strategy of the party, one which may see it emerge as an overground political formation, engaged in open, legal activities and struggles, and perhaps even entering the electoral fray directly or indirectly at various levels in the kind of 'multiparty competition' that Prachanda says is necessary for the communist movement? When you say you want the government to lift its ban on the party, are you also undertaking not to indulge in methods of struggle (eg. armed struggle) which led to the imposition of the ban in the first place? There are other Maoist and revolutionary communist parties across India that is mobilizing workers and peasants through mass politics. They have not been banned. Why does the CPI (Maoist) not believe those are legitimate forms of struggle? In Kashmir, the Hurriyat conference stands for the self determination of J&K and seeks to mobilize people for this but the Indian state, which may use violence and repression and excessive force against people who peacefully protest, has not banned the Hurriyat. Does this not indicate that there is some space in the system for the Maoists to press*

their demands through peaceful political means?

Azad: Your question, or rather, a whole set of questions, requires a detailed answer. I am afraid it will take much space but I will try to be as brief as possible. Before I proceed, let me clarify at the very outset that the proposal of talks is neither a ploy to buy time or regroup ourselves, nor is it a part of the general re-evaluation of the political strategy of the party that could lead to its coming overground, entering the electoral fray, and multi-party competition as in Nepal. Our CC had already dealt in detail with the question of multi-party competition in our Open Letter to the UCPN (M) and various articles and interviews by our Party leaders. So I will not go into it again here.

Now let me take up each of the points that you had raised.

First, you asked me what we want to achieve with talks. My one sentence answer is: we want to achieve whatever is possible for the betterment of people's lives without compromising on our political programme of new democratic revolution and strategy of protracted people's war. People have a right to enjoy whatever is guaranteed under the Indian Constitution, however nominal and limited these provisions are. And the government is duty-bound to implement the provisions of the Constitution. We hope the talks would raise the overall consciousness of the oppressed people about their fundamental rights and rally them to fight for their rights. Talks will also expose government's hypocrisy, duplicity, and its authoritarian and extra-constitutional rule that violates whatever is guaranteed by the Constitution. So talks would help in exposing the government's callous attitude to the people and may help in bringing about reforms, however limited they may be.

Another important reason is: talks will give some respite to the people who are oppressed and suppressed under the fascist jack-boots of the Indian state and state-sponsored terrorist organizations like the Salwa Judum, Maa Danteswari Swabhiman Manch, Sendra, Nagarik Suraksha Samiti, Shanti Sena, Harmad Bahini, and so on. Those who sit in studios and insulated rooms, and make their expert analyses about how Maoists want to buy time or utilize the respite to regroup themselves, can never understand the ABC of revolution or the ground situation. This is actually not an argument at all. If the Maoists try to utilize the situation, so would the police and the government. Wouldn't they? They created an extensive network of police informers during the six-month period of ceasefire in Andhra Pradesh in 2004. The intelligence hawks attended every open meeting and activity of the Maoists, took videos of people, and could easily target them after the clamp-down. Maoists had definitely increased their recruitment but so did the enemy. It doesn't need much of a common sense to understand that both sides will utilize a situation of ceasefire to strengthen their respective sides. Then could this be called an argument at all? These cynics, or, I would rather call them, war-hungry hawks, itch for a brutal suppression of the Maoists and the people they directly lead, even if it means genocide. They do not care if in the process thousands of police and paramilitary personnel too perish for they are nothing but cannon-fodder in the eyes of these gentlemen.

So let me make it crystal-clear: the proposal of talks is meant neither to buy time nor to regroup ourselves but to give some respite for the people at large who are living under constant state terror and immense suffering. How many of our countrymen know that three lakh adivasis were driven away from their homes, that half the

adivasi population in our country is already living under conditions of chronic famine and even the rest of the population is now pushed into famine condition? And why? Because of the insatiable greed of the corporate sharks that is fuelling Chidambaram-Raman Singh's war in Chhattisgarh, Chidambaram-Naveen Patnaik's war in Orissa, Chidambaram-Buddhadeb's war in West Bengal,

Chidambaram-Shibu Soren's war in Jharkhand, and so on. Whoever has the minimum concern for the well-being of the masses, no matter what his/her ideology is, would naturally think of how to save them from being decimated. But those who have nothing but sheer contempt for the poor and helpless people and only think of how to maximize the profits of a tiny parasitic class, put forth weird and cynical arguments deliberately to confuse the people. They depict the Maoists as terrorists, create a fear psychosis in the middle and upper classes that the Maoists would soon come to your cities and disturb your supposedly secure lives; that they would seize power by the middle of this century, and what not. By such hysteria whipped up by the rulers through the various means at their disposal, they justify the brutal war on the people and make the massive displacement, mayhem, massacres, rapes and atrocities appear like collateral damage in the larger noble objective of achieving peace, progress and prosperity for all.

Question of re-evaluation of political strategy of CPI (Maoist), demand for lifting of ban, and the issue of legitimacy of open, legal forms of struggle

There are a lot of questions related to the above and I feel this needs some detailed explanation keeping in mind several misconceptions doing the rounds. Firstly you are wrong in assuming that it is the forms of struggle (armed struggle) pursued by the CPI (Maoist) that had

“led to the imposition of the ban in the first place.” On the contrary, it is the other way round. It is the imposition of the ban that had led the Party and mass organisations to take up arms in the first place.

People are easily misled to believe that it is the violence of the Maoists that had compelled the government to impose the ban. This is a classic example of how a white lie can be dressed up and presented as the truth by endless repetition. If you have even a cursory glance at the history of the revolutionary movement in our country you will find that the forms of struggle adopted by the Maoist revolutionaries from time to time basically corresponded to the forms of suppression pursued by the rulers.

A stark example of the transformation of a peaceful mass movement into a violent armed struggle is right in front of our eyes. Lalgah's peaceful mass movement with simple demands for an apology from the police officials and an end to brutal police repression had transformed into a revolutionary armed struggle due to the brutal suppression campaign unleashed by the state and state-sponsored terrorists like the Harmad Bahini. So was the case of the movement in Kashmir and various states of North East. Even in Naxalbari in 1967, the first shots were fired on unarmed women and children by the police. The people retaliated in their own manner and the party took birth and evolved a correct political line for the Indian revolution. In Srikakulam, Koranna, and Manganna were the first martyrs and these murders transformed the movement into an armed struggle. Even during the first great armed mass uprising of Telangana during the late 1940s, the spark was first lit when the cruel feudal lords murdered Doddi Komaraiah.

If you take the case of the transformation of the movement led

by the erstwhile CPI (ML)[PW] or MCCI or the present CPI (Maoist), you will find the same pattern. The revolutionaries go to the oppressed, make them conscious of their inherent strength and the reasons for their misery, make them aware of their fundamental rights, organize and unite them, mobilise them into peaceful forms of protest and struggle. Then the state enters with its baton in defence of the class of big landlords, contractors, industrialists, land mafia and other powerful forces that control the state and economy. Everywhere, the peaceful struggles are crushed brutally, entire areas are declared disturbed, fake encounters, abductions, disappearances, rapes, burning down villages, and untold atrocities become the order of the day.

The Indian Constitution is consigned to the dustbin by the rulers and is not even worth the paper it is written on. At that point of time any revolutionary party has to quickly switch to non-peaceful and armed forms of struggle if it is really serious about transforming the lives of the people and the oppressive conditions in the country. The alternative is to surrender the revolutionary aims, make adjustments with the system and sail with other parliamentary parties albeit with some revolutionary rhetoric for a while. This, however, will not work for long as people cannot distinguish between the bourgeois-feudal parties and the ML party that had turned into a new parliamentary party. When people are fighting a do-or-die battle you cannot turn your tail but will have to provide them with new appropriate forms of struggle and forms of organization. And this is what our Party had done right from the days of Jagtyal Jaitra Yatra.

What shook the rulers at that time and compelled them to declare Jagtyala and Sircilla tauks in

Karimnagar district of North Telangana as disturbed areas in 1978 was not the armed struggle of the Maoists (which had suffered a complete setback after the setback in Naxalbari, Srikakulam and elsewhere by 1972 itself) but the powerful anti-feudal militant mass struggle that upset the hitherto established feudal order in the countryside. And one of the main forms of struggle at that time was social boycott of the feudal lords and their henchmen, which witnessed the unity of over 95 per cent of the people in most villages. Social boycott had disturbed the peace and tranquility of the feudal barons who functioned like a state within a state. From then on, undeclared ban has been in vogue in parts of North Telangana until 1985 when it encompassed the entire state. CRPF was deployed for the first time to suppress the peaceful mass struggles that broke out against liquor. I remember how the mainstream media like the Indian Express published stories of policemen selling arrack at the police stations and forcing people to consume liquor in order to foil the anti-liquor agitation of the revolutionaries.

We find the same story in the urban areas too. The Singareni colliery workers organised themselves into a trade union called Singareni Workers' Federation (SIKASA) in 1981 but it was unofficially banned within three years. An undeclared ban was imposed on the students and youth organisations, women's organizations, workers' organizations, cultural organizations and every form of peaceful, democratic protest was brutally suppressed. One must see the development of armed struggle in the background of the strangulation of even the limited democratic space available in the present semi-colonial semi-feudal set up, and the brutal suppression of the movement by unleashing the lethal instruments of the state.

To cut a long story short, it is not the forms of struggle and forms of organization adopted by a party that had led to imposition of ban but the very ban (whether declared or undeclared) on every type of open, legal activity including peaceful public meetings that had compelled the revolutionaries to adopt non-peaceful and armed forms of struggle and under-ground forms of organization. Our Party appeals to all independent observers and unbiased media personnel to look at this phenomenon historically and analyse this with an open mind. You will realize that what I have said is hundred per cent correct. We are prepared to enter into a debate with anyone on the course of development of the revolutionary movement led by our Party in our country and how, why, and when, armed form of struggle had to be adopted by the party.

Revolutionaries never mince words. There is no need to. We believe that ultimately people have to take up armed struggle to seize power. But this does not mean we take up armed struggle at the cost of all other forms of struggle and thereby invite the state to unleash its brute force on the people. On the contrary, it is only when all other forms of struggle fail to achieve the objective, when these are crushed under the iron heels of the state that we resort to non-peaceful and armed forms of struggle. It is very important to understand this as it has become a common practice for some so-called political analysts and representatives of the ruling classes to charge the Maoists as responsible for all the violence since their very ideology talks of armed struggle. Hence, they conclude, there is no use of talks with the Maoists. These simpletons resort to the method of simple reductionism: Maoists believe in violence and armed struggle to overthrow the state; hence they indulge in endless

violence; there is no use of talking to people whose very ideology is rooted in violence; and hence there is no other way than to crush the Maoists with all the means at the disposal of the state. Such goes their argument. I will deal with this later on.

I didn't quite understand what you meant when you said referring to other open Maoist and revolutionary communist parties across India that are mobilizing workers and peasants through mass politics: "Why does the CPI (Maoist) not believe those are legitimate forms of struggle?", you ask. Who has said we do not believe these are legitimate forms of struggle? We consider all forms of struggle as legitimate, right from social boycott as we had practiced in Jagtiala, hunger-strikes as our comrades in various prisons are frequently taking up besides other places, and various militant demonstrations. Armed struggle is also a form of struggle and assumes importance depending on the tactical moves by the enemy. While all forms of struggle are legitimate in our eyes, some so-called revolutionaries, veterans of yesteryears, surprisingly exclude armed struggle from the forms of struggle and lay one-sided emphasis on peaceful forms of struggle. They can well join the Gandhian organisations and fight for some reforms instead of calling themselves as part of the ML stream or as Maoists aiming for the revolutionary transformation of society. For some of them, ML ideology or label is only a fashion. They do not wish to bring about the revolutionary transformation of the society and state but only a few cosmetic reforms.

The question of imposing or not imposing a ban on a certain party or organization depends on several factors. It would be too simplistic to conclude that just because a Party believes in armed struggle and indulges in acts of violence it is being

banned while those who pursue open, legal forms of struggle are allowed to function freely. During the Emergency, as we all know, both the revolutionary

Left as well as the reactionary Right parties were banned. Even at the height of sectarian violence indulged in by the Hindu fascist gangs, they are allowed a field day. They carry arms, display them openly, threaten the religious minorities with genocide, indulge in violence against the Muslims and Christians, and yet are deemed as legitimate organizations since they are part of the ruling classes and their integral culture of violence.

The acts of destruction in the violence that was organized in a planned manner [in Andhra Pradesh] by a faction of the Congress in one day far surpassed the so-called violent acts carried out by Maoists in an entire year! Yet our Union Home Ministry issues advertisements against Maoist violence while keeping mum about the mayhem and arson by his own Congress party hooligans. Thus the question of how you look at violence is coloured with a class bias. The violence by the ruling class parties is considered legitimate while those by the oppressed masses and their organizations are dangerous and a threat to the security of the rulers. This has been true right from the time of Charvakas.

6. If the government believes the Maoists "misused" the Andhra talks, your party believes the dialogue there was abused by the authorities to identify and then target your leaders. How, then, do you hope to deal with the risks of once again entering into a dialogue with the Indian state?

Azad: The talks we held with the Congress regime in AP provided us with important lessons. And these lessons would guide us in any future talks with the governments of the

exploiting classes. It would be too simplistic to conclude that the police could identify and target the leaders by utilizing the talks interregnum. They used it to some extent just as we used it to take our politics widely among the people in the State and outside. The setback we had suffered in most parts of AP is not a fall-out of talks but due to several inherent weaknesses of our Party in AP and our failure to adopt appropriate tactics to confront enemy's tactics. This is an entirely different subject and can be dealt at some other time.

What is of relevance here is that the talks in AP have given us a rich experience and important lessons. If at all a situation for talks arises once again—which we do not foresee in the near future given the inexorable compulsions on the government from the corporate sharks for total control of the mineral-rich region—we can instruct our leadership in various prisons to take the responsibility. Our General Secretary had explained this in the course of his interview with Mr. Jan Myrdal and Mr. Gautam Navlakha. The mistakes committed in AP during talks with the government will not be repeated.

7. There is a contradiction between the recent offer for talks made by Kishenji and the spate of violence and killing by the Maoists which has followed that. The Home Ministry has compiled a list of such incidents and circulated it to the media (see Annex). No doubt there has been no letup in the government offensive during this period and you could produce your own counter list but many of these attacks by the Maoists do not appear to be 'defensive' but 'offensive'. Can the offer of talks go hand in hand with the intensification of offensive Maoist military activities?

Azad: This is not as complicated as it is made out to be. The crux of the matter is: no ceasefire has been

declared either by the Maoists or by the government. The Maoists had made an offer of talks which was immediately dismissed by the government as a joke and spurned by Chidambaram himself who wants nothing short of total surrender, whatever be the language he uses. When the government is not serious about a ceasefire and dialogue, and is placing a condition that Maoists should abjure violence without spelling out whether it will reciprocate with a simultaneous declaration of ceasefire, then what is the use of grumbling about acts of violence by Maoists? The acts of violence by both sides will cease from the day a ceasefire is declared.

Now I am not going into the innumerable atrocities by the police forces and the paramilitary gangs sent by [the state]. There has been a wide coverage in magazines like Tehelka, Outlook and our own Maoist Information Bulletins. The statements and fact-finding committee reports by various organizations and Gandhians like Himanshu Kumar clearly show how savage the state has become.

Equally atrocious is the list compiled by the Union Home Ministry regarding the violent acts by Maoists to justify its rejection of the Maoist offer. The annexure appended to your questionnaire speaks volumes about the duplicity and lies spread by the war-mongering hawks in the Home Ministry as part of their psy-war. This is meant to lend an element of legitimacy to their rejection of the ceasefire offer by Maoists and also to their war waged for nipping in the bud the alternative organs of people's power, the alternative development models, and for grabbing the resources in the mineral-rich region for the benefit of the class of tiny parasitic corporate elite they represent. I will not go into all the incidents listed therein.

The very first "heinous act of violence" cited by the Union Home Ministry in its annexure circulated to the media to manufacture consent for its dirty war, goes like this: "In West Bengal (February 22, 2010) –attack on a State Police-CRPF Joint patrol party in PS Lalgargh, district West Midnapore. In the ensuing gun battle Lalmoham Tudu, President of the Police-e-Sangharsh Birodhi Janaganer Committee (PSBJC) was killed."

The above incident was said to have taken place within three hours of the offer of a 72-day ceasefire made by comrade Kishenji. Chidambaram himself had gone on record repeating several times this fabricated "heinous act" in a desperate bid to justify his rejection of the Maoist offer. Earlier too, Chidambaram had deliberately hurled an accusation against the CPI (Maoist) of massacring villagers in Khagaria district.

Coming to the so-called attack by Maoists on the joint patrol party, it is a hundred per cent lie. There was no such attack at all. Ask anyone in Narcha village or Kanatapahari. Every villager, and not just the family members of Sri Tudu, will tell you how a hundred-odd CRPF men lay in waiting at his house on the night of 22nd, how they caught the three, and carried out the cold-blooded murder. That there had been no firing by the Maoists was corroborated even by the CRPF men guarding the camp.

Initially, the SP of Paschim Mednipur asserted that Mr. Tudu died when the CRPF men "bravely" retaliated an attack by the Maoist guerrillas on the fortress-like CRPF camp in Kantapahari. Later, realizing the hollowness of his own story and fearing that it would evaporate like dew drops with the first rays of the sun, they changed the version by [saying] that Tudu and other two were killed when a Maoist guerrilla squad attacked the CRPF's raiding party. This lie is being propagated

consciously, with a clearly worked out strategy of justifying the gruesome offensive by our own brand of George Bushes and Donald Rumsfelds.

Thelka Magazine, Star Ananda and other media sources have graphically exposed this lie.

As for your question regarding offensive and defensive actions, I wish to clarify to every well-meaning person who desires a reduction of violence on the part of the Maoists that there is nothing like defensive and offensive actions once the war has commenced. However, our revolutionary counter-violence is overall defensive in nature for a considerable period of time. This does not mean we will retaliate only when we are fired at and keep silent the rest of the time when the police, paramilitary and the vigilante gangs unleash terror and engage in all-round preparations for carrying out genocide. To make this clear, let us suppose the men sent by Chidambaram are combing an area. When we come to know of it, we will carry out an offensive, annihilate as many forces as possible in the given circumstances, and seize arms and ammunition. We will also take prisoners of war where that is possible. This will be part of our overall defensive strategy although it is a tactical counter-offensive.

In the war zone, if you do not take the initiative, the enemy will seize the initiative. Likewise, we may have to attack ordnance depots, trucks carrying explosives, guards at installations such as NMDC, RPF personnel, and even outposts and stations far beyond our areas to seize arms, as in Nayagarh, for instance. To fight a well-equipped superior enemy force that has no dearth of arms supplies and logistical support, what other option do we have but to equip ourselves with the arms seized from the enemy?

Some of these men are killed when they offer resistance. We feel sorry for

their lives but there is no other way. Chidambaram may yell that innocent CISF jawans were targeted even though they were in no way related to the state's offensive against Maoists. But that is how things would be in a war zone. The war would get dirtier and dirtier, engulf new areas and affect hitherto unaffected regions and sections of society. But this is precisely what [the ruling] coterie want. We will also destroy the informer network built by the enemy, his supplies, bunkers, communication network and infrastructure. We have to confiscate money from the banks and other sources for funding the revolution. There is no use of yelling about the indiscriminate destruction by Maoists. We have to paralyse the administration, immobilize the enemy troops, cut off his supplies and perhaps even target the policemen engaged in removing the dead bodies of the enemy. There was a hue and cry when our guerrillas placed mines under the dead bodies.

But why such a hue and cry? Where are the rules in this war? Who has defined the rules? If there were rules, then why are the peace-chanting pigeons in the Home Ministry completely silent about the beasts in police uniform who had chopped off the breasts of 70-year-old Dude Muye before killing her, murdered in cold blood over 120 adivasis since August 2009 in Dantewada, Bijapur, Kanker and Narayanpur, and yet roam freely and continue their atrocities without hindrance? Chidambaram, Pillai, Raman Singh and their like should first define the rules of engagement and then, and only then, they have a right to speak of violations of the rules. I am sure they would never dare to discipline their own forces while preaching meaningless sermons about Maoist "atrocities."

We appeal to all peace-loving, democratic-minded organizations and

individuals to ponder over this question, pressurize the government to adhere to the Geneva Convention, punish those who are creating Gompads, Gachampallis, Singanamadugus, Palachelimas, Tetemadugus, Takilodus, Dogpadus, Palods, and several other massacres. If it is to be a war, then let it be but the state should clearly state whether it would abide by its own Constitution and the International Conventions on the conduct of war.

8. The Maoists are engaging in armed struggle but have not hesitated in use violence against non combatants. The beheading of a policeman, Francis Induvar, while in Maoist captivity, shocked the country and was a blatant violation of civilized norms and of international humanitarian law, which the Maoists, like the Government, are obliged to adhere to. If civil society condemns the security forces for killing civilians in places like Gompad village in Chhattisgarh and elsewhere and demands that justice be done and the guilty punished, it has an equal right to condemn the Maoists whenever they commit such crimes. There have been some reports that the Maoist leadership has apologized for the killing of Induvar but what steps have you taken to punish those who were involved? What steps have you taken to ensure such crimes are not committed by your cadres? If your answer is that the state has also not punished those among its ranks who have committed crimes, are you then admitting that the political culture and moral universe the Maoists represent is the same as that of the state which you decry as illegitimate?

Azad: I had already covered part of your question in my answer to your earlier question. Our attempt will always be to target the enemy who

is engaged in war against us. Non-combatants are generally avoided. But what about the intelligence officials and police informers who collect information about the movements of Maoists and cause immense damage to the movement? It is true most of them do not carry arms openly or are unarmed. What to do with them? If we just leave them they would continue to cause damage to the Party and movement. If we punish them there is a furore from the media and civil society. Caught between the devil and the deep sea! Our general practice is to conduct a trial in a people's court wherever that is possible and proceed in accordance with the decision of the people. Where it is not possible to hold the people's court due to the intensity of repression we conduct investigation, take the opinion of the people and give appropriate punishment.

I agree there is no place for cruelty while giving out punishments. I had clarified this in one of my earlier interviews while referring to the case of Francis Induvar. But it is made into a big issue by the media when a thousand beheadings had taken place in the past five years by the police-paramilitary and Salwa Judum goons. You are saying the beheading of Francis Induvar was a blatant violation of civilized norms and of international humanitarian law which both sides in the war are obliged to adhere to. Do you really think the government is adhering to the law? And has the media ventured to ask Chidambaram why [the state] hasn't been following the international law or at least the Indian Constitution when dealing with the people in the war zone or citizens elsewhere? Just ten days ago, two of our Party leaders—comrades Shakhmuri Appa Rao and Kondal Reddy—were abducted from Chennai and Pune respectively by the APSIB and the Central Intelligence officials and were

murdered in cold blood. What cruel tortures these comrades were subjected to by the lawless goons of the Indian state no one will ever know. I can give a thousand such examples of killings of our comrades in cold blood while in police captivity in the past five years. Why is the media silent about these murders but becomes hysteric when one Police Inspector is beheaded? What is the civil society doing when such cold-blooded murders are taking place in police custody? Why single out a rare case of the beheading of one Induvar and play it up whenever you need an excuse to bash the Maoists?

When our comrades hear of these cold-blooded murders committed by the APSIB or other officials of the state, it is natural that their blood would boil and they will not bat an eye-lid to hack any of the perpetrators of these inhuman crimes, say a man from APSIB or Grey Hounds, to pieces if he fell into their hands. In the war zone, the passions run with such intensity which one cannot even imagine in other areas or under normal circumstances. Could someone who has seen women being raped and murdered, children and old men being murdered after hacking them to pieces in the killing fields of Dantewada and Bijapur, ever give a thought to your so-called non-existent (I say non-existent as none of the combatants know what these are nor would follow these conventions as the history of fake encounters by the Indian state shows) international laws when the perpetrator of such crimes happens to fall into their hands? The pent-up anger of the masses is so intense that even the Party general secretary will perhaps fail to control the fury of the adivasi masses when they lay their hands on their tormentors.

Maoists are not for crude and raw justice as some are trying to make it appear. Maoist guerrillas are not thugs and mercenaries like the men who carry out their brutal heinous acts in

the name of democracy and the “rule of law.” Maoists have great respect for human life. Democratic values and norms are an integral part of socialist and communist ideology. Yet at the same time we think it is necessary to destroy the few poisonous weeds to save the entire crop.

I once again request you and all others to think by imagining yourselves what would you have done when your mothers, sisters and daughters are raped in front of your eyes, your father, brother and sons are murdered after being hacked to pieces. And worst of all, when there is no guardian of the “rule of law” to receive your complaints and the complainant himself/herself is abducted. When we do not understand the feelings of the affected people, it is better to imagine ourselves in their place. This may help us in getting nearer to the truth.

9. The Supreme Court has asked the petitioners who filed a PIL against Salwa Judum atrocities to draw up a rehabilitation plan for those displaced by the violence perpetrated in Chhattisgarh by Salwa Judum, the regular security forces and the Maoists. Is the CPI (Maoist) prepared to give an undertaking that it will allow the rebuilding of schools and the establishment of basic government services (primary health care, anganwadi, PDS etc.) as part of a court backed plan for the welfare of the tribals affected by the conflict? Will you agree not to attack government employees and officials who enter to provide services to the tribal masses?

Azad: Asking us to give an undertaking that we will allow the rebuilding of schools and establishment of basic government services in the areas we control and that we will not attack government employees and officials is quite bizarre, to say the least. The welfare of the

masses is the first priority for the Maoist revolutionaries. You should request Mr. Chidambaram to allow you to visit the areas in Dandakaranya, Jharkhand, Orissa, or the villages of Jangalmahal by controlling his paramilitary forces, the SPOs, the Salwa Judum, Shanti Sena, Nagarik Suraksha Samiti and Harmad from obstructing you. Then you will see with your own eyes a hitherto hidden story of how the adivasis are prevented from pursuing their normal activity by the state and state-sponsored terrorists.

You will find how the forces had occupied school buildings for six months to a year, thereby preventing the children from pursuing their studies. You will find how the adivasis are prevented from buying their daily necessities from the weekly bazaars most of which were forcibly closed through threats and intimidation by the so-called security forces. Who is blocking the development of the adivasis, who is preventing them from carrying on their normal activity like cultivating the fields, tending the animals, collecting minor forest produce, picking tendu leaves, obtaining their daily necessities, and so on will become as clear as day-light once you visit these remote villages. Hence the government, its “security” forces, and vigilante gangs are hell-bent on preventing independent observers and fact-finding teams from visiting these areas.

It is worthwhile to keep in mind that it is not the lack of development that has become the problem in the rural areas, particularly adivasi-inhabited areas. On the contrary, it is its imperialist-dictated anti-people development model that is driving them to displacement and deprivation, death and destitution, and extreme desperation. There need be hardly any doubt that the poor adivasis have been a happier lot before the civilized [corporate] goons set their foot on

their soil. The development model pursued by [the rulers] displaced them and made them aliens in their own land.

The so-called development that you are referring to is the development that India had seen under the British colonialists. The talk of roads in remote areas is not for the benefit of the people, who are without food and drinking water, but only for the speedier movement of the raw materials from the hinterland to the cities, to help the mining sharks to transport the mineral wealth and forest produce. And, of course, for rushing in the state's troops to quell any militant people's struggle against the rapacious plunder by the tiny parasitic class of blood-sucking leaches. The entire world knows that a George Bush invaded Iraq for oil even as the media in the US barked about Saddam's non-existent Weapons of Mass Destruction. Entire India knows that [the rulers] and the vultures they represent are itching to lay their hands on the abundant reserves of iron ore, coal, tin, bauxite, dolomite, limestone and other minerals of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and other States where their Operation Green Hunt is launched.

Lastly, banding together Maoists with the state and vigilante gangs, and equating their revolutionary counter-violence in defence of the rights of the people with the counter-revolutionary violence of the state and vigilante gangs like the Salwa Judum, is a despicable trick played by the rulers and those so-called democratic forces to obfuscate the stark reality of the brutal violence of the state and state-sponsored terrorists. I can say with full confidence that there was no displacement, whatsoever, of innocent people due to the revolutionary counter-violence by the Maoists. It is only a handful of anti-people exploiters, tribal heads and landed gentry who had fled the villages in the course of the class struggle.

Many, however, had surrendered to the people, mended their behaviour, and continue to live in the villages like others. The Supreme Court should know that the displacement of the adivasis was done in accordance with a pre-mediated plan to evacuate the villages and settle them in Vietnam-type strategic hamlets. And this policy is being continued by the BJP government in Chhattisgarh with full assistance from the Congress-led government at the Centre. The Supreme Court, if at all it is serious about the displacement of the adivasis, should direct the central and State governments to immediately halt its brutal armed offensive on adivasi villages in the first place, which is resulting in the massive exodus of the people estimated at around three lakhs since the current brutal war began in the name of Operation Green Hunt.

10. Human rights groups have condemned the security forces and the Maoists for not respecting the sanctity of schools. If the security forces take them over and convert them into barracks, the Maoists have also been guilty of destroying school buildings and infrastructure. Even in the absence of a ceasefire or dialogue, don't you think both sides need to come to an understanding that schools and school children should not become targets of this war?

Azad: It has now become a fashionable thing for some human rights groups and the media personnel to play the role of referees in a sports event. By criticizing both sides equally they imagine they are being impartial or neutral in the war. If someone says that both Indians and the British were responsible for the violence in India during the two centuries of British rule would you accept it? Or that both Iraqis and the American occupiers are responsible for the violence in Iraq? Any freedom-loving person would unequivocally say

it was the British colonialists that caused the blood-shed in India and it is the American aggressors that are the cause for the unending violence in Iraq.

By criticizing both the so-called security forces and the Maoists for not respecting the sanctity of schools, these human rights groups imagine they are playing a neutral and impartial role. But they do not even see the cause and effect chain of events. They do not ask themselves the simple question: If the police and paramilitary do not occupy schools, then where is the need for the Maoists to destroy them? Do you know the fact that in many villages it was not the Maoist squads but the people themselves who had demolished school buildings since they did not wish to see the security forces create insecurity in their villages? How can you ask the Maoists and the people to assure you that they will respect the sanctity of schools occupied or likely to be occupied by their tormentors?

My request to media people like you is: please do not be misled by an act, by how it happened, but go deeper into why it happened. Only then you will reach the truth.

However, we also agree with your proposition that even in the absence of a ceasefire or dialogue, both sides should come to an understanding that schools and school children should not become targets of the war. We take this occasion to convey to the GOI that it should immediately withdraw all its forces from school buildings and stop recruiting school children as SPOs and as police informers. If they withdraw their forces and assure they would not reoccupy school buildings, then our Party will desist from targeting schools. And if the government stops recruitment of school children as SPOs and police informers, then the very basis for punishing these people disappears.

But the more important thing and the larger issue is: can schools function even if the buildings are intact when the parents of the school children are murdered, raped, abducted, tortured, and are forced to flee? What do you have to say of the children of the three-lakh people who had fled the villages due to Operation Green Hunt I and II? What use are the school buildings and the talk of sanctity of schools when the villages themselves are deserted? A more rational proposal would be to ensure that the inhabitants of the villages are resettled with the assurance that the police and paramilitary would not continue their atrocities and let them live in peace. This is the most important thing and should assume first and foremost priority in the war theatres all over India, particularly Dandakaranya.

11. *Is the Maoist party and leadership under pressure because of recent top level arrests like that of Kobad Ghandy? Is there also a wider crisis of leadership with fewer activists from the intelligentsia getting attracted to Maoists?*

Azad: I did not understand what pressure you are referring to. Is it the pressure for a ceasefire and talks? If so, then I would say you are completely off the mark. One cannot overcome pressure through such tactics. Actually the Party and leadership will grow rapidly in times of war. Several new leaders are emerging out of the struggle. War is giving birth to new generals and commanders, which we never anticipated in normal times. While it took several years to produce a leader of calibre in relatively peaceful times, it is taking a fraction of that time in the midst of the war situation.

Today we find even children acquiring high level of consciousness at an early age. War is transforming the world outlook of the illiterate people, their understanding about the

class nature of the state and its various wings, and how they have to get rid of the anti-people state and establish their own organs of power. People have begun to understand from their own lives what comrade Lenin had taught in his State and Revolution. This transformation has contributed to the development of leadership at all levels. At the central level, I agree there is some problem, though not very acute, after the losses in the past two years.

Overall, it is not true to say that there is a wider crisis of leadership due to drop in recruitment from the intelligentsia. You will be surprised to know that contrary to the assessment of various analysts and media personnel, the appeal of the Maoist movement has actually grown stronger in the intelligentsia. And it is precisely this fact which is rattling [the rulers] and [their] trumpeters in the media. The threats and attacks on intellectuals have been increasing in tenor and there are growing attempts at isolating the intellectuals who seem to sympathise with the Maoists. The more the growth in popularity of the Maoists and their politics, the more is the cacophony about the erosion of the mass base of Maoists, especially among the intellectuals.

You must also look at it from another angle, instead of concluding that [a] lack of intelligentsia has created a crisis of leadership. The mass base of the Maoists has actually grown stronger, notwithstanding the attempts of the rulers to destroy it by brute force. The more you try to crush it the more it bounces back. Our leadership is drawn basically from the oppressed class of adivasis, dalits, agricultural labourers and poor peasants. It is precisely because of this circumstance that our movement has become invincible. Intellectuals are a good asset for the party but it is the basic classes that are the life-blood of the Party. And we have plenty from these sections.

12. *In Ganapathi's interview to Jan Myrdal and Navlakha he said: "I reiterate that at present no one party or organization is capable enough to be a rallying center for all revolutionary, democratic, progressive and patriotic forces and people. Hence, at present juncture our Party can play a significant role in rallying all revolutionary, democratic, progressive and patriotic forces and people." This suggests you see the Maoists as one part of a wider force of progressive, patriotic people. Who else do you consider part of these forces? Which organizations or parties do you regard as progressive and patriotic part of these forces? Does this not include the CPI and CPI (M)? Why then have Maoists in Bengal been involved in assassinating cadres of other communist parties like CPI (M)?*

Azad: It is not only now, but all along we have been considering ourselves an indivisible part of the broader force of other revolutionary, democratic and patriotic sections of people. Firstly, we are one of the several revolutionary detachments in the international detachment of the world proletariat and we see ourselves as a part of the broad world-wide anti-imperialist front. Our mass organizations are a part of the International League of People's Struggles (ILPS) and are in the forefront of the struggle against American imperialism.

Within India, our party took birth in the midst of the revolutionary upsurge of the late 1960s, particularly with the glorious Naxalbari uprising, and hence we are an indivisible part of all that is revolutionary in the Indian political stream. We are also an heir to the great Telangana Armed Agrarian Uprising (1946-51), the Tebhaga uprising of 1946, and all the revolutionary struggles led by the Communist Party since its birth in 1921, notwithstanding the

betrayals by its central leadership at every critical turning point in the revolutionary political history of our country.

Second, and the one more pertinent to your query, is the fact that the Communist revolutionaries are politically (i.e., in terms of its programme), a part of the wider democratic stream of all anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces in the country. This is the essence of our programme of new democratic revolution (NDR), which seeks to unite all those opposed to imperialism, feudalism, comprador bureaucratic capitalism into one broad front to overthrow these enemies and establish a government comprised of the four-class alliance of the working class, peasantry, urban petty-bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie. Once you grasp this political basis of our NDR it will not be difficult to understand why we are trying to form numerous tactical united fronts as part of forming a strategic united front in various States and at the all-India level.

To identify the organizations or parties that can be called progressive (usage of the term 'democratic' would be more appropriate) and patriotic, one has to see not only whether they have any anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-state or anti-authoritarian aspect included in their political programmes, but also their actual practice. We consider most of the ML revolutionary forces as part of this front.

We consider national liberation organizations like the NSCN, ULFA, PLA of Manipur, and the JKLF in Kashmir as part of the wider democratic forces fighting the Indian state. We consider the various non-parliamentary trade union organizations, various progressive organizations belonging to the religious minorities which are persecuted by state-backed Hindu fascist organizations; various

organizations of dalits and other oppressed castes, adivasis and women; the non-parliamentary organizations that are fighting for demands like separate Telangana, Gorkhaland, Vidarbha, Bundelkhand and so on; the organizations that are waging struggles against SEZs, mining and other so-called development projects leading to massive displacement of people; organizations fighting against the Liberalisation-Privatisation-Globalisation (LPG) policies of the reactionary rulers; those which boldly confront the growing authoritarianism and unbridled state repression resulting in fake encounters, mass murders, and violation of all fundamental rights of the people; and so on, as part of this broad-based non-parliamentary democratic people's front.

There are also a large number of intellectuals and other democratic individuals who are concerned about the well-being of the people and the sovereignty of our country at large. We consider all these as genuine patriotic forces that are deeply concerned about the future of our country, about the well-being of the overwhelming majority of the Indian people rather than that of a tiny parasitical class that runs the country through the so-called mainstream parliamentary parties.

I am obviously leaving out the names of the organizations and individuals who, in our opinion could play a crucial role in the revolutionary transformation of our country into a self-reliant, genuinely democratic society. Today we are passing through a phase of Indian McCarthyism that brands every form of dissent and anyone who questions the authoritarianism of the Indian state as Maoist in order to legitimize its witch-hunting and brutal repression.

Today immense possibilities have unfolded for the rapid advance of

the revolutionary war in India and the task of the revolutionary Party lies in how effectively and ably it can utilize the present situation, rally all those who have become the victims of the anti-people, imperialist-dictated policies of the comprador-feudal forces ruling our country, and forge a broad-based united front of all these affected sections of our society and all revolutionary, democratic and patriotic forces in the country. This task should be achieved by defeating the brutal all-out countrywide coordinated war unleashed by the reactionary ruling classes of our country with the aid and assistance of the imperialists, particularly American imperialists.

If we fail in achieving broader unity of all these forces, the fall-out would be disastrous for the Indian people at large since the aim of this cruel armed onslaught is not only to suppress the Maoist movement, but also to suppress every form of democratic dissent and struggle of the people against the authoritarian, feudal and autocratic structure of the Indian state and socio-political system. As put forth by our General Secretary, comrade Ganapathi, in the same interview given recently: "This war is principally against Maoist movement but not limited to this movement and aimed enough against all revolutionary, democratic, progressive and patriotic movements and the movements of oppressed communities of our society including oppressed nationalities. At this juncture, all these forces have to think together how to face this mighty enemy and for this how to unite to go ahead." Now coming to your specific question regarding the CPI and CPI (M). Are they not a part of the wider democratic and patriotic forces? I would say YES and NO. As far as the rank and file cadre of these parties is concerned, there is still some amount of sincerity and zeal among a

section of them to work for the well-being of the people. But the leadership has completely capitulated to the exploiting ruling classes and pursues a reformist line that would only help sustain the status quo albeit with a few cosmetic changes. Here too, we have to differentiate the CPI from the CPI (M). We do not place both the CPI and the CPI (M) in the same category. The CPI leadership has been critical of the policies of the CPI (M), has consistently opposed counter-revolutionary vigilante gangs like Salwa Judum propped up by the State and central governments, and is opposing the Operation Green Hunt launched by the Centre. One can witness the reactionary anti-people nature of the policies of the CPI (M), especially in States where it is in power. Singur, Nandigram, Lalgah, and a host of other names have stripped the CPI (M) of its guise of anti-imperialism and anti-neoliberalism. The CPI (M) is not even a thoroughgoing democratic force, let alone being Communist. However, we are prepared to join forces with even these revisionists if they come forth into non-parliamentary struggles on the basic issues of the people, and to the extent they uphold democratic values.

It is wrong to say we are assassinating the cadres of the CPI (M). We are confronting the armed onslaught by the storm-troopers like the Harnad Bahini and other armed [men] maintained by their party leaders by putting up courageous resistance. The struggle against the CPI (M) is

part of the class struggle of the people against exploitation and oppression. We challenge them to an open debate on any issue. Despite their diplomatic and opportunistic stand that their fight with the Maoists is mainly political, they are in the forefront in the war waged by the Indian ruling classes against the Maoists. Unable to confront us ideologically and politically, their leaders and spokespersons have unleashed a vicious campaign of outright lies and slander against the Maoists.

We call upon the cadres of the CPI (M) and other so-called left parties to come forward to unite with other forces to fight against the disastrous policies of the central and State governments, to unite with others to oppose the brutal war waged by the reactionary rulers guided by the US imperialists against the Maoist movement and all forms of democratic dissent. We are prepared to unite with all sincere and genuine forces in these parties who take the side of the broad masses of people.

13. *Why has the CPI (Maoist) decided to reach out through the columns of The Hindu? To use a newspaper to clarify its views vis a vis the Government?*

Azad: Among the daily newspapers, The Hindu has a reputation for giving out serious news and less of sensational stuff that has become the genre of the media these days. Our party leadership has given interviews to this paper earlier too, such as my

interview on the developments in Nepal, which was covered in two parts. On a lighter vein, I think it will reach out to our direct Enemy No. 1 at the present juncture, Mr. Chidambaram, too.

I think the media can play a role in carrying the views of a banned party to the government and the people at large, particularly at a time when facts regarding our Party are distorted, misinterpreted, and obfuscated in a meticulously planned manner. And when there is no scope for a dialogue given the determination of the rulers to carry out their pre-programmed war offensive that was worked out a year ago, we think it appropriate to reach out to the people at large through the media too.

Finally, I thank The Hindu for the thought-provoking and incisive questions it has placed before our Party. We look forward to more of such interaction with the media in future. On behalf of our Central Committee and our entire Party, I welcome any questions related to our ideology, political programme, strategy, tactics, and practice. I hope through regular and active interaction between organizations like ours that are proscribed by the government and the media, an opportunity is provided to the people to arrive at a correct judgment and seek truth from facts. Or else, truth is certain to become a casualty in this world dominated by corporate sharks that control virtually every source of information that is fed to the people. **PM**

Read and Subscribe to PEOPLE'S MARCH (Bi-Monthly)

Single copy

India & South Asia	Rs 20/-
Rest of the 3rd World countris	\$ 2.00
Rest of the World	\$ 3.00

Annual Subscription reates (POSTAGE 30-)

India & South Asia	Rs 120/-
Rest of the 3rd World countris	\$ 24.00
Rest of the World	\$ 36.00

For Copies and Subscriptions, Contact

P. Govindan Kutty, Peroor House, North Fort, Tripunithura P.O. Box 56, Ernakulam District, Kerala - 682 301

(Money orders, cheques, bank drafts to be made in the name of P. Govindan Kutty. Foreign & Indian bulk subscribers can deposit payments in any ICICI Bank in my name in SB A/c No. 0549 0100 0174 and inform by E-mail or by post.)

‘Democracy’ at its worst!

(Fact Finding of Narayanpatna Firing on Chasi Mulia Adivasi Sangha, CMAS)

As this report gets written Singanna and Andru’s bodies are being cremated at Podapadar village amidst a throng of police platoons waiting to arrest any member of Chasi Mulia Adivasi Sangha (CMAS) who exposes herself or himself to the police. Already 20 have been arrested and there is evident fear of many more hundreds being detained or arrested. The total clamp down on participation of the media, activists, leaders and any sympathizer of CMAS is not only condemnable but totally unjustified. The district has been turned into a hunting ground of tribals and there is fear written all over the faces of tribals in this remote block of Koraput district. A small team of three members made a two-day visit to Narayanpatna to ascertain the situation and understand the truth behind the firing incident which killed two tribals.

Blocked roads, long walks up and down winding hill paths and petrified tribals afraid to open their mouths to any unknown persons were the memories etched in the team members’ minds. But what left the members shocked during their visit on 21st and 22nd November 2009 was that democracy had fallen to its worst during those three days after the firing and murder of two tribals.

There is much to be asked about the firing but the question foremost on our mind is – who ordered the firing? Did the police take the permission of a magistrate before setting off their guns? And why were tear gas and other non-fatal measures not used to disperse a crowd which police thought might create a law and order situation? The time gap between the protest gathering and the firing is just about 30 minutes? But police say they requested and warned and then opened fire? All these

things happened in 30 minutes? Sounds a little preposterous and forces one to wonder whether it was cold blooded murder or a freak incident or a well-planned strategic elimination of a leader who held sway over a large number of fearless and empowered tribal cadres of CMAS.

As the days pass rising police brutalities destroy brick by brick the euphoric notions of ‘democracy’ so carefully packaged and sold to people of India by a political class sold out to corporate greed. Every night and every dawn brings shivers to the tribals as they await an assault on their hamlet, whether on the hill top or on the plains or deep in the jungles, by the marauding security forces. No one knows from which end and at what time under cover of darkness these cobras and scorpions will attack their village, break open their doors, kick them out of their homes and beat the blues out of them. The CMAS has been persistently branded a frontal organization of the CPI (Maoist) despite their vehement rebuttal and lack of any evidence to show their Maoist connections.

Facts and observations stated in this report are based on information and statements collected during interviews with Narayanpatna residents who were witness to the firing, local media persons and villagers of Kumbhari and Narayanpatna Panchayats.

The Facts of 20th November 2009
About 200 CMAS members including 100 women came to Narayanpatna Police Station to protest against harassment of tribals in particular women during the previous days’ combing operations by security forces. They reached the police station

at around 2 pm and since the two gates of the police station were closed they called on the OIC to come out for a discussion. The police refused to let them in and began verbally abusing tribals who had assembled at the gate.

When the police did not respond to their repeated requests to let a team of tribals into the police station for discussion on their complaints with the OIC, CMAS leader Kumudini Behera and CMAS President Kendruka Singanna broke open the lock of the small side gate of the police compound with an axe. As the gate opened 5-6 main leaders of CMAS including Singanna and Kumudini went to meet OIC Gouranga Charan Sahu. During a heated exchange between the OIC and Singanna, the OIC began to shout that he was being attacked by CMAS leaders and he ordered the IRB guards on the roof of the police station to open fire on the crowd gathered outside. The police fired three shots in air and then began to indiscriminately fire at the crowd standing outside the police compound. The firing was done by the IRB as well as CRPF and Cobra at 2.45 pm. The firing continued for half an hour and 300 bullets were fired at people.

Hearing the sound of firing Singanna and others came out of the police station. Singanna was hit in the chest while he was walking out of the police compound. He received ten bullets in his chest and fell in front of the small police gate. Another CMAS member Andru Nachika of Bhaliaput village received bullet injuries and fell face down outside the police compound. Their bodies were left there by CMAS members who ran helter-skelter as the police began firing at them. Around 300 bullets were fired

at the people. In this firing, while two have died it is being estimated that around 60 more persons have been injured and some are in a serious condition.

Singanna is survived by his wife who is also pregnant, three sons and a daughter. Andru is survived by his wife who is also pregnant and two children.

The Reason for CMAS Protest

During a fact finding visit on 22nd November 2009, all CMAS members and villagers interviewed stated that they had gone to the Police Station to lodge their protest against police harassment of tribals and in particular women who were being harassed by the security forces.

One of the main reasons for CMAS members' protest was that they wanted an answer from the OIC regarding violation of an assurance made to the tribals earlier. The CMAS members stated that about two months back they had held a protest rally regarding harassment of tribals in the name of combing and deployment of security forces in their villages. Following the rally, the OIC had given a written assurance to CMAS leaders that forces would not enter their villages and harass the tribals. They would conduct combing operations without harassing the locals. But the CMAS members stated that the police had violated this assurance and hence they came to ask the police the reason for this gross violation which was a serious breach of trust.

Of particular importance is people's statement that the security forces categorically told them during combing operations on 18th and 19th November that they should leave their villages immediately or else they would have to face dire consequences. They even told them that the non-tribals whose lands CMAS had 'grabbed' (sic!) would come back soon to claim

their lands!

Combing operations and related harassment of 18th and 29th November was reported from Odiapentha, Dandabeda, Palaput, Dubaguda and Badhraguda villages.

Apart from warning them, they did not allow the women and men to continue their harvesting work. Some said that they even took away their harvested paddy and *mandia* crops. The tribals explained to us that this season is the most important time for them because they are engaged in harvesting, husking and storing of their food grains. Hence such combing operations and threats to people would destroy their harvesting operations and affect their food security.

When the tribals related this to their CMAS leaders, the latter decided to go to the police station to demand an explanation for this warning and also protest the harassment. The CMAS leaders sent cadres to different villages and assembled the members and took a decision to hold a peaceful march to the police station to make their protest and put their demands before police.

About 50 tribals whom we interviewed and most of who had attended the march to the police station, categorically stated that they did not carry any firearms and that they carried a few axes and thick bamboo sticks. None carried any bow and arrow because they explained to us that on previous occasions their bows and arrows had led the media to brand them as Maoists. So they said that they had consciously not carried any bows and arrows or local swords.

Situation of 22nd November 2009

As of today, it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of persons injured as CMAS members have returned to their villages and have not been able to meet or communicate

with each other about the actual injuries to their members. Medical aid to these persons is not available as the injured are afraid to come to Narayanpatna Primary Health Centre (PHC) for medical treatment for fear of being arrested. They are taking treatment from their traditional tribal healers (*disaris*). Doctors are also reluctant to go to the villages for treating any patients for fear of abuse by the police and security forces. Local Anganwadis and ASHA workers are unable to treat the injured as they do not have the necessary medicines, spirit and cotton to clean and dress the wounds.

Far flung villages and constant combing by the security forces is also making it difficult for the leaders to move to different villages to ascertain how many have been injured and what is their condition. Most leaders are in hiding as there is a reported shoot-at-sight order against them.

On 22nd November early morning there was a combing operation by security forces and seven persons were arrested from their homes between 5 to 6 am. Apart from this, forces forcefully broke into homes and searched for 'red flags' (whatever that might signify as evidence!?). They abused people, in particular the women, kicked and beat young boys with thick bamboo sticks who did not answer questions. They seized axes, sickles, knives, bows and arrows and bamboo sticks from every house they entered and told the tribals that these are 'dangerous weapons of murder' and that they would be arrested if they were found in their homes next time. The tribals asked us, "These are our agricultural implements and daily household needs so how can we not keep them at home? How will we get fuel wood, cut vegetables, harvest paddy and cut branches to feed our animals? Where should we hide them and why should we do that when we

never use these as weapons of murder as accused by the police?" We had no answers

Four CMAS members from Narayanpatna and three persons from Palaput, 1 km away from Narayanpatna. The details of persons arrested are:

1. Raju Huika
Narayanpatna Kandha Sahi
2. Dora Nachika
Narayanpatna Kandha Sahi
3. Masi Sirka
Narayanpatna Kandha Sahi
4. Ramesh Khosla
Narayanpatna Ghasi Sahi
5. Kumudini Dora
Palaput Tala Sahi
6. Debendra Behera
Palaput Tala Sahi
7. Satyanarayan Bangu
Palaput Tala Sahi (his commander was seized)

These seven persons have been taken into police custody on 22nd November and will have to be produced before Judicial Magistrate at Laxmipur within 24 hours. If this is not done then the police would be violating its own laws.

Apart from this, the fact finding team also met three persons who have received bullet injuries. A boy of 18 years received two bullet injuries in his leg and in the same village another person has a bullet injury wherein the bullet is still lodged in his hip. Yet another person of that village has a bullet wound which whisked past his left calf and has left a slit which needs immediate stitches. Another older man of another village has received a bullet injury in his left hand. This person was marketing dry fish near the police station when he was hit. He had no idea about the rally and the reasons

for it. He is also partially hearing impaired. Apart from this, the people the fact finding team spoke to said that about 60 others have also received bullet injuries and are hiding in the villages. None of these persons are able to get medical help.

As the fact finding team wanted to give some medicines to the injured patients and went into Narayanpatna town for purchasing these at around 3 pm on 22nd November they were stopped by DSP Jagannath Rao and Semiliguda IIC Sarat Sahu along with some armed constabulary. After initial questions on where the team had gone and why and checking of vehicle, they asked the team to leave the town immediately or else they would have to detain the members. This warning came despite knowing the fact that two of the fact finding members were journalists.

Impact of Firing on People

All people whom the fact finding team met in the last two days are under tremendous fear that the police would kill every tribal they set their sight on including all members of CMAS. There is fear in their eyes as they spoke to the fact finding team members. They asked, "What should we do when the police come to our village?" When they were told not to run upon seeing the forces, they asked, "If we do not run then how can we save ourselves? They will definitely kill us". The women stated that they heard forces warning them in low breath that if the CMAS male members did not hand themselves over to the police then they would rape the all the women to 'teach them a lesson'. One old woman asked us, "What wrong have we done? We only asked for lands to cultivate and live a life of dignity and freedom from hunger?"

People are afraid to move out of villages due to fear of arrest and are constantly discussing about what will happen to them after this. Every village we went to we found women and men assembled in their village meeting place discussing the impending dangers. They are afraid to stay in the jungles as the forces are patrolling the jungles as well. They say that if they stay in the jungles they will be hunted and killed and if they live in their villages then they will be hunted out into the jungles and then also killed. "So either ways we die", tell the women.

The leaders of CMAs have several questions : why did the police not use tear gars to disperse the tribals if they thought there was going to be a law and order situation ? Why were rubber bullets not used? The firing took place within half an hour of the protest rally so how did the police state that they gave the people adequate opportunities to break the rally and disperse?

The CMAS leaders also asked us, "when the police comes attacking us in our villages we do not retaliate and kill them? In fact we allow them to search us, our homes and even beat us up mercilessly? So why did police kill us when we came to their home to seek answers to simple questions?" They told us, "even if we had snatched the weapons we could not have fired because we do not know how to use them? So how did we become threats to the life of the OIC or the IRB guards standing on the rooftop?"

They asked us to reflect on why would they, the tribals, want to attack the police in their own compound? And why would 200 tribals come to the police station to loot arms when the OIC did not even have a gun on him when they confronted him? They explained to us that the IRB guards stationed on the roof, who fired at the crowd, were beyond the reach of tribals and hence it is impossible that

Contd..... on Page 12

As journalists, we should practice guerrilla journalism

Silence of the media on crucial social issues disturbing, says Sainath

The Hindu

‘Resolution of problems in the media requires serious public action.’

Kochi: Noted development journalist and Rural Affairs Editor of The Hindu, P. Sainath, on Saturday said that the areas of silence in the media are startling and interesting. “Interesting in a sad way,” he said.

Speaking on “Criticism of the media: the right of the people” at a seminar organized by T.K. Ramakrishnan Cultural Centre in connection with the release of ‘Vyajasammithiyude Nirmithi’ (The manufacture of consent), jointly written by Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Isaac and journalist N.P. Chandrasekharan, Mr. Sainath said there had been no discussion in the media on the Union budget admission under the head ‘statement of revenue forgone by the government’ that Rs 5 lakh crore, including Rs.80,000 crore in direct corporate taxes, had been written off by the government.

“This means that 80 per cent of the tax that you can collect has been forgone voluntarily,” he said, ruing that “the media may take photographs of Mayawati’s currency garlands, but they will not talk of the money that is going to big corporations”.

The media also turned a blind eye to the ‘largest recorded wave of human suicide in history’, he said pointing out that the data available with the National Crime Records Bureau showed that two lakh farmers had committed suicide due to debt and distress between 1997 and 2008. “How much are the media concerned with this issue?” he asked.

Credibility challenged

Challenging the credibility of experts and economists featured by the dominant media, Mr. Sainath said that no mainstream economist could predict the advent of the great recession of 2008.

Arguing that it was the ‘structural compulsion’ of the capitalist, mainstream media to lie that economic recovery was complete, Mr. Sainath said ‘private treaty journalism’ (wherein media houses become shareholder in large corporations) being practiced by them was the ‘mother and father’ of paid news. If media organizations became part-owners in business, they should be called equity firms also doing the business of journalism.

They lied about the state of the economy as they had much at stake. The threat about the linkage of the press to business firms had been predicted by the past Press Commissions, he said.

‘Serving the powerful’

While liberation journalism characterized by dissidence set the Indian media apart till Independence, the dominant media at present was the ‘lapdog of the powerful’ instead of being the ‘watchdog of democracy’. “Conventional journalism is about the service of power,” he said, adding that throughout history, great journalism had only come from dissidence.

“In the last 30 years, what we have witnessed is a conversion of the once radical and revolutionary media form a vehicle of popular struggles, ideas and aspirations into a vehicle of profit—a revenue stream—for the powerful and richest people in the country, some of them also the richest people in the world. But this does not mean that you cannot do good journalism. There are zones of

Media has degraded, says Sainath

Express News Service

KOCHI: Post-Independence, the media in India has gradually transferred to a vehicle of profit and a revenue-seeking stream with no value from a vehicle of popular aspirations once, Magsaysay award winner and journalist P Sainath has said.

The idea that the dominant media is the watchdog of democracy is a false concept, he said, adding that private treaty was the new norm of the media.

Speaking at a media seminar on ‘People’s right to criticize the media’, organized by the T K Ramakrishnan Cultural Centre here on Saturday, Sainath said Press Commissions had observed that the linkage of media with the multi-nationals had been a major threat. “There was a demand in Parliament to delink media from big business,” he said. Sainath said that ‘private treaty,’ a deal between a media organization and a private corporate where the media house agrees to project the interests of the corporate in the form of journalism for a fixed value of shares from the latter, had been a growing trend in Mumbai and New Delhi.

“The private treaty not only promotes the interests of the corporates but also gives them immunity from investigative journalism and from being exposed. The media has become a revenue seeking stream with no value,” he said.

Sainath said the media monopoly had become an arm of other vested interests.

“The Fourth Estate is becoming the real estate. There’s very less difference between the two,” he said. Exposing the vested interests within the media, Sainath said though two lakh farmers committed suicide during the period 1997- 2008, there had been no major news articles or discussions in major newspapers or TV channels regarding the issue.

He said the Union Government had written off corporate tax worth Rs 5,00,000 crore in the Budget, which amounts to about 80 percent of the tax eligible for collection. Answering a question from Finance Minister Thomas Isaac, Sainath said the monopoly in media should be fought. He said alternatives to the existing system of media were possible.

P Rajeev MP presided over the function.

The book ‘Vyajasammithiyude Nirmithi’ (Manufacturing of fake consent), jointly written by Finance Minister Thomas Isaac and Kairali TV News Editor N P Chandrasekharan was released on the occasion.

Thomas Isaac said the attempt was to analyze the media culture in the state in the backdrop of some recent incidents.

K E N Kunhahammed spoke.

PM

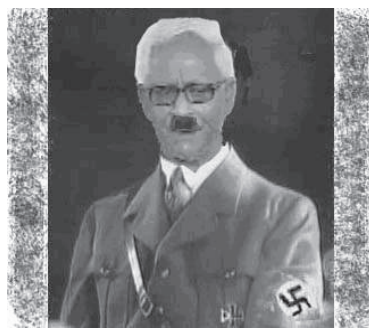
autonomy within the media and we should exploit those spaces... The choice is whether to be a journalist or a stenographer.”

According to Mr. Sainath, the resolution of problems in the media requires very serious public action.

“People should take their role as citizens of a democracy very seriously and fight monopoly because the root of the problem is control of information and communication by a handful of people. As journalists, we should practice guerrilla journalism,” he said.

PM

THE HITLERS WAGING WAR ON INDIAN PEOPLE



ADIVASIS, DALITS AND ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE LED BY MAOISTS Vs **CORPORATE SHARKS AND MNCs LED BY KHADI-SAFFRON GANGS**

300,000 ARMED TROOPS (ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND CENTRAL FORCES + TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND STATE FORCES) PLUS TWENTY THOUSAND SALWA JUDUM GOONS Vs

TEN THOUSAND ARMED GUERRILLAS + MILLIONS OF STARVING MASSES

TATAS, MITTALS, JINDALS, ESSAR, VEDANTA Vs **BUDRUS, DUDI MUYES, SODI SAMBHOS, IRUMAIS**

WELL-FED WELL-EQUIPPED MERCENARY FORCES OF THE RICH Vs **ILL-FED, ILL-EQUIPPED ARMY OF THE POOR**

BATTLE-GROUND: WEST MIDNAPUR-BANKURA-PURULIA TO NORTH ANDHRA AND NORTH TELANGANA

OVERALL COMMANDER: HERR PDOLF CHIDAMBARAM

DEPUTIES: RAMAN SINGH, NAVEEN PATNAIK, BUDDHADEB, RR PATIL

KILLERS IN THE FIELD: VISHWARANJAN, SRP KALLURI, RK VIJ, AMARESH MISHRA,..

ACCOMPLICES: MEDIA MERCENARIES LIKE ARNAB GOSWAMY, CHANDAN MITRA, SAPANDAS GUPTA....

OBJECTIVE: CLEAR THE MINERAL-RICH REGION OF MAOISTS AND HAND OVER TO IMPERIALISTS AND COMPRADOR BUSINESS HOUSES

**METHOD: KILL ALL! BURN ALL! DESTROY ALL!
DRIVE THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION TO STRATEGIC HAMLETS**

FOR ALL UPDATES..... PEASE WATCH....

MANMOHAN SINGH'S FAIRY TALES

(CORPORATE AWARD WINNING DOCUMENTARY) IN PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA

