

PEOPLE'S MARCH

Voice of the Indian Revolution

Dantewada Strikes Back

Dantewada strikes back.

Dripping with the blood of hundreds of children

Its bullet-ridden body gasping for breath

Humiliated, harassed, raped and mutilated

Dantewada strikes back

Breaking the encirclement

By hordes of thugs descending from Delhi and Raipur

By hordes of jungle warfare

And Institutes of counter-insurgency

By Washington, London, Tel Aviv, and what have you?

Dantewada strikes back

In defence of unsung mothers, daughters and sisters

Crying in pain from the festering wounds

Left by the death hunters out to destroy their life's greenery

Dantewada strikes back

In defence of unheard fathers, sons and brothers

Buried in unknown places, exhumed and relocated by the powers that be to escape

the prying eyes of civil rights nuisance-mongers

Helpless, neglected, alienated, marginalized

Dantewada strikes back

Fulfilling the demands of its children

For Dudi Muye, Sodi Sannal, Tuniki Sinnal, Madivi Deval, Dudi Pojjal,.....

For Gompad, Gachampalli, Singanamadugu, Gattampadu, Gollagudem,

For Gumiyapal, Palodi, Dokpad, Palachelima, Kachalaram.....

Dantewada strikes back

**To ward off the non-stop savagery by the lawless goons
sent by the "civilized" gentlemen sitting in corporate board rooms,**

To foil the heinous designs of the slave-holders

planning the biggest land grab in history after Columbus

Dantewada strikes back

To protect its jal, jangal, jameen, ijjat

To protect its resources from the monster of development

To fight back attempts to annex its territories into the prison-house

Of the Shining Bharat of Tatas, Mittals, Jindals

Dantewada strikes back

To defend its people from thugs and plunderers, dacoits and murderers

To protect its house from all predators

To defend the people's government

Dantewada strikes back

Heralding a new spring thunder,

Charting the path for a billion people

Hungry, starving, undernourished, emaciated,

Suffering countless injustices and humiliations

Dantewada strikes back

To defend its right to live.

-Nishant-

"SOMETHING WENT WRONG"

bigdeal Shreyas Navare



Why can't Chidambaram.... 16

New concrete structures for the police 17

Children at risk as schools become barracks 19

The Right to Education 20

Let us unitedly fight back 31

Women Against Sexual Violence 33

Excerpts from Tehelka Tapes 34

International Women's Day (IWD) 22

Vedanta continues to dole out lies 38

Tribal unrest 39

State violence in Kalinganagar 40

Press Releases 42

Dantewada Attack is a Fitting Reply to Chidambaram's "Myth" of Operation Green Hunt 5

Chidambaram's Lalgarth Visit 11

The Food Security Bill—a Bizarre Drama 13

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

Union budget and Operation Green Hunt: Two faces of imperialism

During the night of 22nd February, Central Reserve Police Forces murdered Lalmohan Tudu, a popular leader of People's Committee against Police Atrocities, an organisation which is fighting against the economic ruin of tribal areas and state repression, in front of his own house in Lalgah. CRPF personnel called him out along with his two relatives and shot them dead in front of his wife, daughter and mother. A couple of days later, far from the poverty stricken villages of 'India's hinterland', where people are dying out of hunger and police bullets, Finance minister of India presented the nation a budget that envisages to make 'development more inclusive'! At a first glance, burning villages of Dantewada and air-conditioned corridor of secretariats in central Delhi appears to be at poles apart. So does P. Chidambaram's job as the commander-in-chief of Operation Green Hunt and Pranab Mukherjee's role as the 'messiah of the poor'. But like all good puppet shows, this is just an appearance. The threads which control these actors in their respective settings are controlled by a skilful puppeteer – the global monopoly capital – the likes of Shell, Tata and Walmart. While the 'incorporated India' and its flag-bearer, the media, applaud this 'performance', the script of 'inclusive development' remains the same as in last two decades – loot the mass and transfer the booty to wealthy few – unfolds, now, at a faster pace than ever before. The tragedy of dispossession and plunder, the tragedy of destruction of grassroots development at the behest of imperial capital by its Indian stooges continue with an unprecedented urgency.

Anatomy of plunder

It is perhaps necessary to take a closer look at the composition of imperial capital of our time. In the era of neo-colonialism, the identities of neo-colonisers are also changing. It is not only Citibank, Coca Cola or Rio Tinto which dictates the term today but so does Tata and Reliance, their geographical origin notwithstanding. However the emergence of monopoly capital of Indian origin and its symbiotic relationship with multinationals do not necessarily mean that Indian capitalism has matured. On the contrary, India is becoming a dependent entity of imperial capital by every passing day. Chhattisgarh government, alone, has signed more than one hundred MoU's in last few years and opened up its mineral resources for multinational corporations. It is imperative for global monopoly capital, for its own sustenance, to ensure (ever expanding) absolute command over the means of production – predominantly material objects of production such as land and mineral as well as labour. For instance, if electricity is required for export industry or production of automobiles for Indian rich then Kalinganagar farmers must be evicted from their land to make way for power plants. In turn they will join the huge army of reserved unskilled labourers which will keep labour disciplined and cheap. Thus the strategy of global capital is extremely simple: impose un-freedom on the productive labour by denying them access to objects of production, which gets concentrated in the hands of a few, so that dispossessed people become entirely dependent on the monopoly capital for their survival. Local agents of big multinational corporations,

including the erstwhile feudal ruling class, receive a share of the loot in return of enforcing economic policies that facilitates such plunder. When a community shows resilience and resists its pauperization, armed forces are brought in to teach them a lesson. The nexus of Essar, Vedanta, Man Mohan Singh and Mahendra Karma plans swift retribution in the form of Salwa Judum and Operation Green Hunt. This is the context in which current budget must be analyzed.

'Heinz'ing and unhinging of agriculture

Let us first look at the agricultural sector, which is, still, by far the largest sector in terms of employment. Almost 60 percent of Indian population is dependent on agricultural and allied activities for their survival. However, one of most striking features of budgets in the recent past happens to be the shrinking infrastructural expenditure in this sector. Compared to 2008-09, in 2010-11 government spending on agriculture has been cut by almost 22%. The actual magnitude of cut is even more severe, if one adjusts for the current inflation.

This must be compared against a 50% increase in the expenditure for energy sector and 25% increase in transport sector. Interestingly, energy sector has been privatised a few years ago and road transport is one of the few areas which are open to 100% foreign direct investment. Going back to agricultural infrastructure, while 699 Crores have been allocated to irrigation and flood management this year compared to 609 Crores two years ago, corresponding figures for tourism, which employs, even by a wild estimate, not more than 2% of the population, but essentially serves the

rich, are 762 Crores and 454 Crores respectively.

To add to the misery of farmers, recent years saw a huge increase in input prices such as fertiliser and electricity. Both these products are now controlled by the private firms and the government has taken no steps to control prices. In fact, the new Nutrient Based Subsidy policy for fertiliser is nothing but a euphemism for complete decontrol over prices. Effectively, subsidy to fertiliser companies will continue at the current level, however, they will be free to charge any price from the farmers. It is not difficult to identify the beneficiaries of such policy when we see that fertiliser import has increased seven folds in last five years. On the other hand, increase in input prices will lead to further inflation. Already price of food has increased by 20%, inflation of some items such as pulses, sugar and eggs are even higher. This budget will only add to the misery of working people and middle class, while importers and speculators will laugh all their way to banks.

The current budget is silent on the issue of credit availability as well. Between 1990 and 2003, lending to agriculture as percentage of net bank credit has shrunk from 16% to mere 10%. Farmers remained at the mercy of informal moneylenders who charge usurious interest rate resulting in suicide of two Lakhs farmers since 1998. Nothing has been proposed to rectify such abysmal situation. The budget proposes to recapitalize Rural Regional Banks but no allocation has been made specifically for this purpose. In any case these regional banks have remained in control of local semi-feudal elements and are a major source of corruption.

If we go beyond the rhetoric, it is obvious that the budget lays foundation for opening of retail trade in agriculture to private sector. Incentives have been offered for private ownership of cold storage and food processing

industries. This is going to spell disaster for millions of small and middle farmers, landless workers and traders. Big retail multinationals will force wholesale and retail sellers out of the market, thereby extending their monopoly over procurement and sale of all agricultural products including essential items. Grain prices will be controlled by importers, future traders, big retailers and food processing companies like Walmart and Heinz. Working people have no other option but to intensify their struggle against this conspiracy of the multinationals and their henchmen. When 25,000 farmers participated in a rally in Punjab to protest against high electricity prices, police arrested their leaders in order to crush the movement.

True origin of fiscal deficits

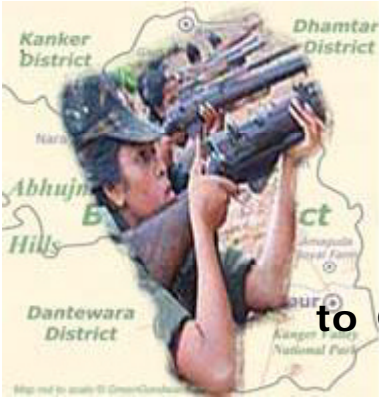
Finance Minister claimed that the government has increased demand to boost economy move out of recession but this claim falls flat if one looks at the expenditure figures. Expenditure on employment and social welfare has decreased in real terms and so has expenditure on economic activities. So the demand boost, if at all, could have only originated from the tax-exemptions handed out to rich and corporations. Even according to the government estimates, in 2009-10, revenue forgone in corporate tax alone (not including tax evasion through financial juggleries) is a mammoth 80,000 Crores compared to 67,000 Crores in 2008-09. To put these figures into perspective, government spends about 30,000 Crores for education and 7,500 Crores for public health. It is calculated that the effective tax rate for corporate sector is 22%, well below the statutory tax rate of 34%. Naturally this comes at the expense of small enterprises and working population. The revenue forgone in customs duties is even bigger; it has reached a staggering 40% (25 thousand Crore) of aggregate tax collection in 2009-10. This budget fails to offer any solution

to this crisis. On the contrary, all sorts of tax-breaks continued to be offered to the rich, even new ones were introduced while social expenditure were slashed. For example, new tax deductions were introduced on investment in tourism, branded jewellery and for the real estate sector, while the allocation to Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, which is the last resort of employment generation in rural economy, has decreased in real terms (nominal increase by a ridiculous 2.5%). The big beneficiaries of tax/duty exemptions are mining, real estate and exporters, who make a huge fortune while the poor and middle class bears the burden of high fiscal deficit. India's long term external debt has multiplied seven folds since 1990 and it spends 5 % of its GDP on interest payment and debt servicing. Under the pretence of financing fiscal deficit, which at the first place is caused by big business, profit making Public Sector Units are being sold to multinational corporations. The current budget commits itself to continue this process. It is reported that 10% of Coal India, one of the biggest producer of coal is going to be sold very soon, while 8.4% of NMDC, the largest producer of iron ore has already been sold to private sector. On top of that the state has also found a new instrument of transferring resources to private sector. In the name of Private-Public Partnership in infrastructural development, huge public fund and land is being handed over to monopoly capital at throw-away rates. Energy and transport sectors have witnessed several major scams (for example, Ganga expressway) through this channel.

Two faces of imperialism

This budget continues to dispossess people instead of expanding their control over resources as should be the path of a true democratic society. Whatever minimum control over

Contd..... on Page 10



Dantewada: Biggest Ever Attack by PLGA Guerrillas on the Paramilitary Forces who are Destroying the *Jal, Jangal, Jameen* and *Ijbat* of the adivasis

Dantewada Attack is a Fitting Reply to Chidambaram's "Myth" of Operation Green Hunt



April 6, 2010 will go down in the history of the revolutionary war in India as a Red Letter Day. It has become a day of great rejoicing for the millions of adivasi men, women and children who had suffered decades of exploitation, oppression, humiliation and suffering in the hands of the rapacious parasitic marauders who had robbed their *jal, jangal, jameen*, destroyed their homes, shattered their lives, reduced them to the status of animals to be hunted and killed at will by the licensed goondas hired by the state and by state-sponsored vigilante gangs. The indignities suffered by these hapless adivasis in the hands of the outsiders are indescribable.

And more recently, after the launch of the countrywide coordinated unprecedented cruel armed offensive in the name of Operation Green Hunt by the Congress-led UPA government, the plight of the adivasi masses had become even more terrible. Over three hundred thousand people had to flee their homes and lands just to preserve their lives from the murderous attacks by the beasts in uniforms that began to pour into their lands from all over the country on the orders of Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram-Pranab gang. Behind the curtains, in the green room, are the Tatas, Mittals, Jindals, Essar, Vedanta, POSCO and a host of other companies waiting to lay their hands on the tempting wealth the land of the indigenous people beholds. And at the top of all, the No 1 Enemy of the world people and the most powerful, cruel and savage beast in Washington directs this genocide in the heart of India assuring all assistance to its satraps in New Delhi.

In just Bastar alone, since August 2009, 114 adivasis had become unfortunate victims of this death hunt unleashed by the imperialist and corporate vultures and the cunning jackals who represent them in the guise of various parliamentary parties. Not one of these 114 adivasis murdered by the armed hooligans hired by the Indian State is a Maoist guerrilla. Not one of them was in possession of any deadly weapon. Not one of them has any case in the court or is wanted even on false criminal charges usually filed by the lawless anti-people police. Yet all these helpless adivasis became victims of Chidambaram's war in his so-called noble intention of reclaiming territory from the Maoists and make it a part of *Shining Bharat*—the *Bharat* that shines with hourly suicides of farmers; the *Bharat* that shines with heart-rending deaths of children due to unbearable pangs of hunger, malnutrition and disease; the *Bharat* that shines with 77 per cent of the population eking out their existence with just Rs. 20 a day; the *Bharat* of the Hindu communal fascists who roam like heroes committing murders of Muslims, Christians and whoever questions their fascist acts and have the full backing of the Indian State; and a *Bharat* that shines on a handful of the filthy rich just seven of whom control wealth that exceeds the combined total of 300 million Indians.

Starting with the brutal murders of Oyam Sagar, Pujari Pandral, Hapka Lingu, Tati Lakmu, Tati Aitu, Karam Somli in Bijapur district on August 10, 2009 to the gruesome gang-rape and beheading of Kumili in Narayanpur district on February 10, 2010, one is shocked, stunned and depressed at the sheer savagery and ghastliness exhibited by the perpetrators of these inhuman crimes. One becomes more depressed because the perpetrators of these crimes against humanity are men in uniform who are supposed to enforce the law and adhere to the Indian Constitution, on each of whom millions of rupees of people's money are spent for special training, and millions of rupees are paid when any of them is killed in battle. While it is shock and depression for the observers, it is a struggle for survival for the adivasis. They cannot survive without hitting back at these dacoits and savages who are looting their homes, burning their food grains and belongings, murdering virtually everyone, raping their women, and abducting people and illegally detaining them for indefinite periods.

That's how and why the adivasis decided to bare their chests and dare the uniformed dacoits, murderers and rapists. It is essential if they have to survive. That is why they rallied under the leadership of the CPI(Maoist) and joined the army of the oppressed and suppressed people of the country—the PLGA—and made a firm resolve to die fighting in collective

armed resistance than die unarmed like sheep and goats in the hands of these murderers sent by the Indian State. And that's how and why Dantewada erupted like a volcano reducing the thieves and plunderers, rapists and murderers to ashes. Dantewada's rage is the righteous indignation of an entire people who are driven to the wall by a mighty well-equipped murderous force that represents the Indian state and, due to which; there can never be any hope of getting justice to the hapless victims through the so-called rule of law. The pain and anguish, the unending sorrow, the tears of mothers for their dead children and of children for their dead mothers, the tears of wives for their dead husbands and of husbands for their dead wives, the tears of sisters for their dead brothers and of brothers for their dead or sexually assaulted sisters, have all converged into an irresistible rage that engulfed the invading troops like a forest fire.

Those sitting in TV studios and in A/c rooms and make their artificial and speculative so-called news analyses that is completely disconnected from the stark realities can never understand this forest fire, the pain and rage that had transformed into a mighty counter-offensive near Chintalnar in Dantewada. Those who cannot think beyond what happens in Metro cities or a few major urban areas and are engaged in packaging every trivial event in the lives of celebrities or other trash as news can never understand the pain and anguish of the people that had driven them to hack their tormentors and murderers into pieces. Have those who shed tears in TV studios and in newspaper articles for those paramilitary personnel who died in Dantewada ever thought of those unsung and unheard victims of the brutal acts of these very "brave" men? About the hundred and fourteen men, women and children who had died at the hands of these mercenary troops without any hope of justice?

The stories of savagery that are simply unimaginable in civilized societies, stories of gruesome murders and sexual assaults, abductions and cruel tortures, destruction of homes and shattering of lives are found again and again at every place in the entire adivasi-inhabited stretch of land as one travels from Lalgaharh to Surjagarh. And that is why this entire belt, the so-called Red Corridor, is seething with revenge for the perpetrators of the worst crimes against innocent unarmed people. Dantewada ambush and wiping out of an entire company of the CRPF is the natural outcome of this fury for revenge. With meticulous planning this rage will transform into more such daring attacks on the invading troops of our Emperors in Delhi and their Rajas in states.

No wonder, the people of the entire country, particularly in the seven states where Operation Green Hunt is launched by the Central and state governments—Chhattisgarh (Dandakaranya), Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh—are enthusiastically celebrating the daring Dantewada attack by the PLGA and the punishment given to the mercenary forces of the Indian state. It is a day of symbolic redemption for the families of those abducted, tortured and murdered by the paramilitary forces. For the adivasi women who were raped and sexually abused in manifold ways by these uniformed hooligans, it is a day of fulfilment of their long-felt desire for revenge.

The stark contrast between the prices of death of the uniformed mercenaries on one hand and the poor adivasi citizens on the other should shock the country. Huge amounts to the tune of four million rupees are paid to the families of the police and paramilitary jawans who die in the hands of the Maoists and people; a job is given to one member of their families; and several other incentives. But what

about the poor adivasis who die in the hands of the police and paramilitary forces? What about the hundreds of families of the poor innocent adivasis who had been murdered in cold blood by these mercenaries in uniform? Almost all these families are left without their breadwinner. They have nothing to bank upon, their lands are snatched away, houses are destroyed and many are even dragged to court the transport charges for which they simply cannot afford. Why are no tears shed for these hundreds of poor souls by our TV anchors and media analysts? Why is there so much of apathy and even contempt for these children of India that they do not even figure in the panel discussions or analyses of all the political analysts? It is this apathy and contempt towards our own citizens by the well-fed well-dressed gentlemen and self-styled spokespersons for India that is provoking even greater anger and creating a feeling of alienation among vast sections of poor destitute masses. Those who talk of a moment's silence for the dead jawans and write obituaries in papers, should search their conscience (which most of these "gentlemen" do not have anyway) and question themselves why they did not shed a drop of tear for the tragic deaths (cold-blooded murders) of the adivasis and Maoists when they died in much larger numbers and in more horrifying conditions. They should demand that the ordinary adivasis who are killed must be given adequate compensation, and that the rulers should stop treating adivasi deaths as deaths of flies while those of the policemen and paramilitary as invaluable for the country.

Finally the biggest ever victory by the heroic PLGA guerrillas led by the CPI (Maoist) in Dantewada has vindicated the superiority of the Maoist principle of guerrilla war. By wiping out an entire company of the highly-trained CRPF battalions the PLGA has opened a new chapter in the history

of the ongoing revolutionary war in India. The paramilitary and the special police forces, however much they are trained in special schools of jungle warfare set up for countering the Maoists, at various counter-insurgency warfare training institutes and by the imperialist armies, they cannot win the war against the people for the simple fact that their very cause is unjust and their war is predatory. The armed foot soldiers sent to war front themselves do not know why, what for, and even against whom they are fighting. The 62nd battalion, to which the 75 dead jawans including an assistant commandant and a deputy commandant belong, is one of the 24 battalions deployed in Chhattisgarh to suppress the growing self-assertion of the oppressed people, smash their organs of revolutionary people's power, destroy their alternative models of development, and to grab the entire natural resources in this mineral-rich region. It is also one of the 60 battalions sent by Chidambaram to Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar and Maharashtra to carry out the genocide of adivasis. In the current war thrust on the people by the UPA government close to a quarter of a million troops of the centre and the states are engaged in "recapturing" the area from the hands of the Maoists and to hand it over to the tiny parasitic class of comprador corporates and imperialist MNCs. It is a war between the overwhelming majority of the impoverished people on the one hand and the handful of ever-fattening billionaires on the other. By its successful daring surprise attack in Dantewada basing on the invincible Maoist principles of guerrilla war, the PLGA had scored a major tactical victory in the war despite the superiority of the enemy in terms of numbers and fire power.

The huge cache of highly sophisticated arms and ammunition seized from these mercenaries include

21 AK-47 rifles, six LMGs, seven SLRs, one Stengun and other arms. The tactical victory in Dantewada is a fitting reply to Chidambaram's arrogance and boastfulness. And it has nailed his shameless naked lie that the brutal Operation Green Hunt is a myth invented by the media.

The Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee, in a press release after the Dantewada ambush explained why the operation was undertaken. It stated that the counteroffensive was to mark the centenary of the Bhumkal Adivasi rebellion and to send a message to Chidambaram to halt his blood-bath in the name of Operation Green Hunt. It said the ambush was a retaliation for the mass killings of unarmed innocent adivasis and rape of adivasi women. The statement said that PLGA had lost eight comrades in the daring operation in which 300 guerrillas were involved contrary to the claims by the police officials that 1000 were involved. It also said that no pressure mines or any modern technology was used and the CRPF Company was wiped out through direct exchange of fire.

In short, the Dantewada ambush is an inevitable logical outcome of the unending terrible provocation by the uniformed goondas sent by Chidambaram and Raman Singh to the adivasi areas to create a brutal reign of terror. They have an unwritten licence to abduct, torture, rape and murder any adivasi or Maoist without any questions being asked. This dehumanization of the police and paramilitary forces is consciously encouraged by Chidambaram, Raman Singh, Vishwa Ranjan and others, notwithstanding their holy chants of peace and *ahimsa*. Behind their sophisticated-looking rhetoric lie the raw, beastly, cannibalistic passions that devour human beings for establishing their absolute control over the resources and lives of the people.

As a statement by the spokesperson of the CPI (Maoist) has pointed out:

"Their vision goes no farther than that of a local daroga, as aptly pointed out by a JD(U) spokesperson referring to Chidambaram. And their tactics fare no better than those of a street rowdy. As long as their fascist mind-set refuses to see the socio-political-economic roots of Naxalism and continue to treat it as a disease or a problem while the oppressed people see it increasingly as a remedy and a solution to their problems, Dantewada-type attacks will continue to take place at an even greater frequency and intensity."

Dantewada's Tremors Shake Delhi:What Went Wrong?

From the moment the news of the daring Maoist ambush in Dantewada began pouring in the entire political and security establishment of the country has become shaken to the very core. The immediate aftermath of Dantewada ambush witnessed tumultuous events: the resignation offer and the humbling of an arrogant Home Minister, the intense infighting breaking out within the Congress and other mainstream parliamentary parties, the unending blame game between various parties, bureaucrats and various wings of so-called "security forces", the call for an introspection of the failed tactics of Chidambaram, shrill cries for bringing in the Army and Air Force, and hysteric calls for silencing dissent of every kind and so on. The Dantewada earthquake was so powerful that the tremors were felt all over the country not sparing any party or establishment.

"What went wrong?" was the question on everyone's lips. "Something drastically went wrong" wailed the Home Minister Chidambaram but did not know what went wrong. But what? None had any satisfactory answer. Almost year of intense meticulous planning had gone into the making of Operation Green Hunt. Several battalions of central

paramilitary forces, who have considerable experience in dealing with the insurgency in Kashmir had been withdrawn and specially deployed in Maoist areas. Even if millions of people of our country are dying of starvation and extreme deprivation, unlimited funds were allotted to the states for the modernization of the police forces, intelligence agencies, rewards for the informers, and so on. 40,000 men from CRPF were trained by the Indian Army in counter-insurgency. Special commandos with names that could change the very nature of the men like Grey Hounds, Cobras, Jaguars, Scorpions, and Hawks and so on were given. Helicopters are provided to evacuate any injured personnel immediately and the best treatment is provided. Yet, what went wrong? All the military experts, retired intelligence chiefs, chiefs of the defence services, various paramilitary forces, DGPs and ex-DGPs and the media men with the police brains had all put together their brains to find out what went wrong.

Now the time has come for bringing in the Army and the Air Force, cried out some who got paranoid that the Maoists might come to their door-step in no time. The daily news of ever-increasing spread and intensity of the people's war—from a mere 60 districts to more than 220 districts covering more than a third of the country—is indeed frightening. And had not the Home Secretary Gopal Krishna Pillai predict that the Maoists are capable of bringing down some sectors of the Indian economy to their knees? And that they are planning to capture power in the entire country by 2050? The spectre of Maoism is giving nightmares to those who have every reason to fear. For these day-light robbers, there is everything to lose—their ill-gotten riches, their black money tucked away in various foreign banks and even spread out carelessly in their own homes until today under a government that they control. What

would happen if the Reds come to their doorstep? The very thought of it sends shivers down the spines of the corrupt, immoral, scamsters and mafia gangsters. Hence the faster the Maoists are bombed into extinction the better for Shining India. Any more delay will bring the half-naked emaciated creatures from the other world crawling all over your palaces demanding their share in your Shining India. So bomb them to save Shining India. Such screams rent the air. 2050. Oh! My God! Dantewada seems to be a step closer to it! So hurry up before it's late.

Chidambaram's resignation drama

An arrogant Chidambaram had boasted just a day before the Dantewada ambush that things were fast improving in Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra. And that the problem was more complex in Jharkhand, Bihar and Orissa. In Lalgarh too, (a day before Dantewada) his boastful claim that the region was almost reclaimed from the Maoists became an object of ridicule after a land-mine hit the central forces at a place near Lalgarh just 5 km from the place he was to have a meeting with the West Bengal security establishment. A 24-hour bandh call by the PCAPA too had crippled the administration and paralysed the three districts on the day of Chidambaram's visit. That Lalgarh was as defiant as ever and that the Maoists were in as much control of the area as before became clear to all.

And now after a day of his claim that all is well in the central war front and that within 2-3 years the entire area under the Maoists would be "reclaimed" and that the "Maoist menace" would be finished once for all, Dantewada ambush hit him like a terrible earthquake. He had no answers for this massive and deadliest attack by the Maoist revolutionaries in their entire history. "Something went drastically wrong," was all he could manage to mutter. There were stinging attacks from several quarters. KPS Gill

blasted the entire strategy of Chidambaram as a failed strategy. He held the government's thoughtless strategy as responsible for the death of 76 CRPF personnel. That the government had made the CRPF men sitting ducks for the Naxals was a common refrain of several so-called security experts and the media. And when criticism of the strategy began to surface within the Congress itself Chidambaram drew up another trick from his sleeve. RESIGNATION. He knew that Sonia and Man Mohan will not accept it. In fact, the threat of resignation would subdue the criticism and garner more support from within the party and others as well.

At this hour of crisis for the rulers, when Maoists have become a deadly threat and a common enemy for all, how can one relinquish the responsibilities and run away. Such ran the logic of several parties that pledged unconditional support for Chidambaram's war. BJP had gone a step further and said that resignation of Chidambaram would "mean a victory for Naxals". And with this logic it pledged all-out support to any moves by Chidambaram to curb the "menace."

Nationalism, patriotism and jingoist frenzy was whipped up a scale unheard of since the Kargil war. "If this is a war, so be it," shot out a cornered Chidambaram. "This is a war against India", howled the saffron brigade. Raman Singh consoled Chidambaram that very soon things would be alright. There should be closer coordination between the Centre and the states appealed Buddhadeb and his "Left" comrades. The Congress, BJP and the so-called Left seemed to unite as one to confront the Maoists leading the vast masses of the poor of India. Assured of this expected support Chidambaram ended his fake resignation drama and began his plans for the genocide. However, the contradictions and dog-fights within the

ruling classes do not allow such smooth resolution of conflict. Even as the central leadership of the BJP was pledging all-out support to the Congress and Chidambaram in their war against Maoists, the Congress opposition in Chhattisgarh were demanding the resignation of BJP's Raman Singh for his total failure in protecting the lives of the jawans. A 24-hr bandh was called by the Congress in Chhattisgarh in protest against the state government's policies that had led to the great debacle in Dantewada. The intensification of the people's war would further aggravate intra- and inter-ruling class contradictions.

Butcher Vishwa Ranjan thundered that revenge will be taken, more Maoists would fall to his "brave" forces and that the tide would turn very soon. Like a street rowdy he howled that the body count would soon be reversed. For he knows achieving it is very simple. At least a few hundred poor adivasis are in illegal detention of his mercenary forces. Just dress them in Maoist uniforms, bump them off and claim to have killed so many Maoists in fierce encounters. That is the secret behind his confident assertion that Maoists will lose more of their men within a short time. Ever since the start of Operation Green Hunt that was how he and his blood-thirsty forces had managed to show to the world that their casualties were lower than those of the Maoists. By showing 114 innocent adivasis as Maoists this fraud DGP imagined that he could fool the world. But how can these white lies boost the sagging morale of his forces who know that all these were nothing but cold-blooded murders? Fascists have no shame. And like every fascist in history Vishwa Ranjan too does not bother if he becomes a laughing stock through his naked lies.

Oppressed people led by the Maoists will defeat the brutal anti-people Operation Green Hunt

That Maoists, with the active participation and support of the people, will emerge victorious in this war is a foregone conclusion. The reason is simple. Maoists are fighting a just war. They are waging a People's War. They are fighting against extremely corrupt, rapacious, anti-people exploiting classes and their 'democratic' system that is rotten to the core. Maoists enjoy tremendous support of the masses. They are loved by the people who protect them as the apple of their eye, provide them food, funds, logistical support and information about enemy movements. It is the people who had ensured the astounding success of Maoists in Dantewada. It is the people who warned the Maoists about the movements of the paramilitary and police forces. It is the people who actually participated in every operation carried out by the Maoists against the enemy. For it is the people who need to end this brutal war by throwing out those who are waging war. They know that if the police and paramilitary succeed in defeating the Maoists then their entire lives would become a veritable hell. Forest officials, contractors, bureaucrats, mining companies and outside traders and landlords would once again start treating them like dust. The people would never want to go back to the previous hell. That is why they would fight to finish. There is no question of surrendering to the threats of the reactionary rulers. We will die fighting rather than die without a fight like lambs or sheep. This is the motto of the adivasis.

For Maoists the adivasi area is their home. No other than a senior police officer himself had brought out this fact: "The Maoists know every tree in the forest, and even how many branches are on a tree." Can a bunch of mercenaries hired for fighting a war which is not theirs and who does not know for what and for whom, and why

they are fighting in the first place defeat the Maoists who are ideologically motivated, familiar with the terrain and local language and culture, and deeply rooted among the masses? Chidambaram's men do not even know against whom they are fighting. When the Maoists are indistinguishable from the people then how and with whom would they fight? These are stark and simple things discernible to the naked eye though not to those who want to execute the war at any cost.

Then there are other things like the problem of language and communication with the local population, inhospitable terrain, deadly Malaria, insects and reptiles which the media had reported as cited by some jawans, lack of clean drinking water (ironically the media and security experts shed tears at the hardships faced by these men to fetch water from 2-3 Kilometres away from their camps but say nothing about how poor adivasis had been living for decades in these conditions), lack of food, scorching heat in summer and with all this the growing discontent and frustration among the state's forces as they hear through media reports on scams in purchase of bullet-proof jackets and other life saving equipments. It will not take long before these forces realize that they are being used as cannon-fodder in a war waged in the interests of a handful of imperialist companies and the Indian corporate business houses. Desertions, disobedience, refusal to join duty are already a growing feature as several reports indicate. This will soon grow into an alarming proportion. How will Chidambaram and his gang of predatory war-mongers achieve their aim of grabbing the mineral wealth of these regions in the heart of India?

Now is the time for all peace-loving, democratic-minded citizens of the country to rise up as one voice and

demand an immediate end to the brutal counter-revolutionary predatory war waged by a handful of corporate vultures for plundering the resources of our country? Let us use all means at the disposal of the people of our country to isolate, expose, oppose and militantly resist the heinous attempts of the reactionary rulers and their imperialist backers. Let us declare war on this fake democratic system which is rotten to the core that feeds itself by waging a cruel unjust war on the people. If the rulers do not heed the saner voices and continues its foolhardy quixotic and fascist venture then what more can the people do than create more Dantewadas all over the country?

PM

Contd..... from Page 19

The prolonged occupation is also taking its toll on students. In Kerlapal, the CRPF's occupation of the senior school building has forced students of Classes XI and XII to study in the sheltered veranda. "There are no chairs and the students are constantly distracted," said a teacher. "The black board is makeshift, making it difficult for both teachers and students." Class IX students have been accommodated in the middle school building by moving Class VI into a poorly-ventilated equipment shed. This was supposed to be a temporary arrangement; it has been five years.

In Bhusaras, Dantewada, a hostel warden told The

Contd. From..... Page 4

resources people had within a modicum of welfare state are being eroded systematically. For instance, profit making public sector firms are being divested; robbing people of much needed revenue that runs essential services such as public distribution system (no wonder that the government plans to dismantle the public distribution system completely within next two years). This lays the foundation of a society where people are left to the mercy of global capital. The same story is unfolding today in Chhattisgarh as well where people are

Contd..... from Page 16

Survey-III (NFHS-III). Of the total deaths over the four-year period from 2005-06 to 2008-09, around 13 per cent deaths were reported only from Bundelkhand.

The question any ordinary citizen would ask fraud Chidambaram is: where is your development programme for these regions where naxalites are almost absent and 60 per cent of children are suffering from malnutrition? When you cannot provide even food and drinking water to the vast majority of children what trash you are yelling everyday at the top of your voice that you would develop the regions under Maoist control after reclaiming these by using your brute force? Don't fool the people with your disgusting chatter and endless lies, Mr. Fraud! First do something for these dying children if you have an iota of concern for people instead of territory. But you wouldn't because you are "in a state of denial for too long" to put it in your own words. You have been deprived of the minerals and forest wealth in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Maharashtra, West Bengal and other states due to the Maoist "threat". Your war is not for development of the regions and people's lives but for the loot and plunder of the mineral wealth of the regions where your capitalist masters have been denied entry by the ever-growing mighty Maoist movement.

PM

Hindu how she struggled to fit fifty girls in two rooms and a veranda after the 195th Battalion of the CRPF moved into the girls' hostel. "I stacked the beds one above the other with the younger girls on top and the elder girls at the bottom," she said. The girls have since been moved to a permanent location. Now there are three rooms for fifty girls, an outdoor toilet without doors and no water.

At a bus stand in Narayanpur, troops returning from leave wait for a bus to take them to their camps located in schools on the Orcha road. "I used to have an open mind," read a T-shirt sported by a soldier. "But my brains kept falling out."

PM

being uprooted from their villages to make way for mining, controlled by multinational corporations. People are getting alienated from their livelihood, forest and land, to serve as fodder of global capital. Thus Operation Green Hunt and Union budget, both serve imperial interest, one through brute force and the other under a veil of constitutional legality.

Securing the 'nation' against its own people

Last but not the least important aspect of this budget is a phenomenal

growth of defence expenditure. In 2009, India spent a massive 141 thousands Crore in defence, which was 30 percent higher than the previous year. As the chasm between the ruling classes and the masses is widening up at a fast pace, to curb the rising discontent of the masses ruling classes are spending fanatically on arms and ammunitions. However, from Chhattisgarh to Manipur people have started raising their voices against the imperial capital and its Indian agents. One day, perhaps sooner than later, it is bound to grow into a chorus.

PM

“Maoists are cowards! Why are they hiding in the forests?”—Union Home Minister Chidambaram during his Lalgarh visit.

Adivasis have the last laugh at the abysmal ignorance of this English-speaking “gentleman” about the forests of India.

During his visit to Lalgarh on April 4, Union Home Minister Chidambaram once again revealed his absolute disconnect with India’s ground realities. It was the adivasis who had the last laugh at the ignorance of the man who heads the most important post of internal security about the dwelling places of almost 90 million Indian people. By saying that Maoists are hiding in the forests this agent of the corporate sharks revealed his ignorance of the fact that forests are home to the indigenous people of India and that Maoists had become a part of these people ever since they began their revolutionary war in the country to liberate it from the clutches of the imperialists, feudal forces and the comprador bureaucratic capitalist class.

Chidambaram began his brutal war on the adivasi people and the Maoists who lead them without even having the basic knowledge that the Maoist movement has begun to grow by organizing the most marginalized sections of the Indian society who live in these forested regions. That for over four decades Maoists have mingled and integrated with the adivasis of these forests like fish in water, married the adivasis, took on their names, and adapted themselves to the conditions in these forests. For Chidambaram, it appears, forests are some picnic places, or holiday resorts where people like him can spend time peacefully reading books as he had expressed in an interview to a TV channel sometime ago. For him forests are uninhabitable places or places where human habitation should be dismantled completely. For him these are regions waiting to be exploited of

their mineral and forest wealth by the greedy outsiders. That is why he had unleashed the brutal Greed Hunt to exterminate the indigenous people and pave the way for the plunder of the natural resources by the tiny class of parasitic corporate elites that he represents.

How fit is a man who poses the question why the Maoists are hiding in the forests for the job he is supposed to handle is a thing that his reactionary political class has to decide.

By abusing Maoists as cowards Herr Chidambaram reveals the crude impulses lurking behind his seemingly sophisticated looks. In the inverted world of this man just about everything looks upside down. Bravery is cowardice and cowardice is bravery. That which exists materially need not exist for this man. And that which doesn’t exist in reality can be created from thin air. That’s the greatness of our magician Chidambaram.

Even when the entire world knows and acknowledges the fact of his Operation Green Hunt this man hasn’t the courage to accept its existence. What better example of cowardice can one cite than his incessant denial of something that is in front of our eyes? And how does this inventor of new definitions of established words see bravery? He thinks it is “bravery” if a dozen unarmed adivasis in Gompad are caught and murdered by mortar-bearing, LMG-wielding paramilitary forces sent by him to Chhattisgarh. He thinks it is the “bravery” of his policemen when they mercilessly cut off the breasts of a 70-year-old woman or chop off the fingers of a two-year-old child. Or sexually assault poor

hapless adivasi women and murder them in cold blood. Or his gun-toting mercenaries bravely steal pigs, hens, goats and the property of the adivasis. He thinks it as “bravery” when his CRPF men hide in the darkness like thieves, catch hold of an unarmed popular mass leader like Lalmohan Tudu, and murder him secretly. Herr Chidambaram himself reveals his own “bravery” by claiming in public that Tudu was killed in retaliation by the joint patrol party when it was attacked by the Maoists. With his new definition of bravery no wonder, this Nazi avatar yells at the “cowardice” of the Maoists who had given up their families, jobs, property and whatever they had and chose to live among the most deprived sections of society—the adivasis in the remote forests—and are prepared to become martyrs for the cause of the oppressed.

Why is Herr Chidambaram speaking such language? This is important to understand so as to understand how the war will be waged under his stewardship. Herr Chidambaram’s Nazi outbursts reveal the fascist culture of the neo-liberal rulers of India. It is the language of not just Chidambaram but that of a Jayanti Natrajan, an Arun Jaitley, a Chandan Mitra, a Buddhadeb, an Arnab Goswamy, Sapan Das Gupta and all the neo-liberal apologists whatever be their colour. Chidambaram and this neo-liberal gang know that Maoists are not hiding in the forests. They know that Maoists have mingled with the adivasis like fish in water. They know that Maoists are the only capable force who can lead the adivasis in their just war against the worst forms of exploitation and oppression

perpetrated by the plunderers and thugs whom men like Chidambaram politically represent. They know that their class can never lay its hands on the forest resources without defeating the Maoists. But when the Maoists are deeply entrenched and embedded among the adivasi masses, when it is impossible to eliminate the Maoists without exterminating the adivasis, Chidambaram's dilemma deepens. His hesitation is not because of any moral consideration. He would not hesitate to throw a few bombs and destroy the entire forest population along with the Maoists. If only the civil rights groups and democratic intellectuals minded their own business, how easy his job would have been! How much can one Arnab help him in his mission of extermination? Especially when his arguments have become schoolboy's jokes! Or how much help can a few sarkari and police intellectuals who have no appeal or credibility in the society render? If not for this growing public opposition to his crazy megalomaniacal war plans, this neo-Nazi Indian avatar would have turned entire regions of central and eastern India into graveyards by now. This "brave" man has not abandoned his pet project of using overwhelming military force and air power to reduce entire regions into rubble. That's how he receives his daily briefings from his masters in the Washington who have been doing it in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan today.

Chidambaram has taken the Operation Green Hunt as his personal prestige issue despite his desperate attempts to deny its very existence all along not even realizing that he has become a laughing stock through such white lies. He has been reassuring himself that he would wipe out the Maoists before he completes his tenure. However, every Maoist success and the resultant defeat of Chidambaram's mercenary forces is driving him towards a state of insanity and depression. Thus his claims about the time-frame for the State's decisive victory over the Maoists range anywhere from 2-3 years to an indefinite period depending on which side seemed to be scoring successes at a given point of time. Chidambaram's behavior is like that of a hysterical schoolboy watching a sports match who goes into bouts of depression and ecstasy depending on the progress of the match. A minor success or what has been perceived as a success basing on false claims by the officers in the field would throw Chidambaram into a bout of ecstasy and jumps to the conclusion that he would finish off the Maoists within 2-3 years. Which he did after murdering comrade Shakhamuri Appa Rao, Kondal Reddy in Andhra Pradesh and hoping that comrade Kishenji might have died or seriously injured in the March 24 encounter. One big success on the part of the Maoists would make

his time-frame indefinite. Such is the mental frame of this blue-eyed boy of the imperialists and the Indian corporate houses. However, all his assessments and expectations are turning upside down. Two days after the war-mongering hawks in the Union Home Ministry had declared that most of Lalgargh has been reclaimed came the land-mine blast by the Maoists close to the place where Chidambaram was to address a meeting. Then the people of Jangalmahal issued a call for 24-hour bandh of the entire region to protest against Chidambaram's visit and the police atrocities against innocent people. The desperate attempts by Chidambaram to woo the people of Lalgargh came to naught with hardly anyone turning up to meet him or responding to his quixotic call to boycott the Maoists. Having little interaction with Indian reality this megalomaniac has begun to lose his sanity and hence has changed the very vocabulary of what constitutes cowardice and bravery. With the further intensification of the people's war all the dreams of Chidambaram will collapse like a pack of cards and he will either end up in a lunatic asylum or will be punished in the people's court before his tenure ends. Will he realize and mend his ways and end the unconstitutional attacks by his armed paramilitary forces on the people? Or get pushed into the dust-bin of history?

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 countries	\$ 24.00
Rest of the World	\$ 24.00

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.)

The Food Security Bill—a Bizarre Drama and a big hoax played by the UPA government on hungry stomachs. Universal Public Distribution System is the need of the day, not a few doles.

The so-called Food Security Bill, the draft of which the Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee had promised to place before the public very soon in the course of his Budget speech in end February, is yet to see the light of the day. What is amusing, however, is the endless speculation in the media about the supposed struggle of Sonia Gandhi against the other leaders in the Congress on the issue and her disapproval of the draft prepared by the Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) headed by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee on the ground that it falls short of the requirements as it has not taken a comprehensive picture of poverty in the country.

The draft bill that was returned to its authors—the EGoM—has reduced the monthly quota of food for a poor family from 35 kg to 25 kg, has no nutritional security, no provision for the homeless, and has even downsized the number of BPL families in a cavalier manner. It does not provide for cash transfer through food coupons. And it has also kept enough legroom to increase the issue price of cheap grains from the current Rs. 3 a kg. Harsh Mander, the Supreme Court-appointed commissioner on food security said: *“The Bill absolutely needs rework. It has reduced the notion of food right to virtually nothing.”* **To put in a nutshell, the draft food security bill is a mere eye-wash and a Himalayan fraud played on the poor of this country. If passed it would create more food insecurity for the poor.**

The Congress had promised in its poll manifesto *“a right to food law that guarantees access to sufficient food for all, particularly the most vulnerable sections of society.”* But through the food security bill, which it is contemplating to introduce almost

after completing one year in office, the Congress has made a complete mockery of its poll promise. The draft bill has not only repackaged the existing so-called poverty alleviation schemes but has also drastically reduced the benefits which the poor had been getting earlier. In some states rice is provided to around three-quarters of the population at Rs. 2 a kilo. **The Congress-authored draft bill reduces the number of households, increases the issue price to Rs. 3 a kilo, and also reduces the quota supplied to each household! Thus it has tried to snatch away even what the poor have been getting until now.** It had gone back on its promise of providing 35 kg a month by eating up 10 kg.

How many Indians are Poor?

To place such a question even after 62 years of so-called Independence displays the utter callousness of the criminal rulers and their contempt for the toiling millions on whose sweat and blood they live like parasites. The EGoM headed by Pranab Mukherji could not even get the correct number of the below-poverty-line (BPL) families which is decided on the basis of 13 socio-economic parameters, including calorie intake and income.

The official approach to head count of the poor in our country has always been to play down the number through sheer jugglery of the worst kind. According to the government estimates approximately a third of our country's population is absolutely poor. According to the Suresh Tendulkar committee, 37.2 per cent of Indians qualify as poor. But the Planning Commission deliberately brought the number down to 27.2 per cent. Another estimate from the state governments puts the figure at 10.52

crore or 45 per cent of the population. But if one takes other indicators that other countries take, the number will be even greater. For instance, the number of undernourished constitute over 60 % of the population even according to official statistics. If one takes basic housing, health care, sanitation, and other minimum necessities that are taken for granted in other countries the number of the poor goes much higher than what the government or other committees estimate. The so-called food security bill does not take these factors into consideration when calculating the BPL. Sections such as rag pickers, construction workers, street vendors, cycle rickshaw drivers, domestic workers, and several other wretched of the earth do not find a place in the BPL category of our Pranab Mukherjee-led Committee.

Bizarre Drama

What is amusing in this entire bizarre drama enacted by the Congress vis-à-vis India's hungry and undernourished bloated bellies is its damage-control exercise sought to be done in the name of its party High Command and the de facto head of the government, Sonia Gandhi. A Media hype is consciously built around the so-called pro-poor approach of Sonia as opposed to others in the Congress leadership. The draft bill was said to have been sent back to the same EGoM for redrafting after Sonia's supposed disapproval. This is a despicable ploy employed by every parliamentary party to save its face when confronted by sharp criticism. Thus we have a Prime Minister Vajpayee intervening to reassure the Muslims and Christians while his BJP and other saffron gangsters were threatening to decimate the religious minorities or intervening

to curtail some harsh economic burdens imposed on the people by his own government. We have a Prakash Karat and a Yechuri trying to re-interpret the policies of Buddhadeb and trying to pose themselves as favouring a non-military solution to the Naxal issue even as Buddhadeb unleashes a gruesome armed onslaught against the adivasis and the Maoists in West Bengal. We have a Sonia Gandhi who intervenes to bring down the burden on the people after the steep hike in fuel prices by her own Union Cabinet. And now her intervention in reworking on the food security bill to make it more humane!

All these are nothing but cruel jokes played on hungry stomachs by the criminal rulers. And the media builds up hype around these leaders and plays up the petty concessions to create illusions among the people that everything would be fine under a Sonia. That was how the image of an Indira Gandhi was built up in a planned manner. Nothing was wrong with Indira Gandhi or her policies. It was her sycophants, the bureaucrats and those who were to implement these policies and schemes further down who were at fault. So went the logic. Now Sonia is projected as the human face of the Congress. She would act as the last reserve for a failed party. Thus the party would collectively initiate an anti-people measure, gauge its impact on the people, and then would tone it down if needed by bringing Sonia into the scene as a messiah. Eventually both the Congress and Sonia stand to gain while people are reduced to fools.

How 800 Million Live

The facts regarding hunger and poverty in India are startling and expose in all nakedness the emptiness of the innumerable promises made by the hypocritical, opportunist parliamentary parties in over six decades of rule.

The total number of undernourished

persons has increased from 210 million in 1990-92 to 252 million in 2004-06. India has about half the population of world's undernourished children. What is worse, there has been a general decline in calorie consumption in recent decades.¹ The percentage of children below five years of age who are underweight is now 42.5 per cent. The percentage of children below three years who are undernourished is 40 per cent.²

The callousness and contempt for the poor on the part of our rulers can be seen from their desperate gimmicks and heinous attempts to cover up the reality of poverty. One can recollect the statistical jugglery resorted to by Rajiv Gandhi during the second half of 1980s to lower the number of poor and hungry. These heinous attempts continue notwithstanding the hype built around his widow who controls the government de facto. The worst examples of this callousness are the Union Home Minister Chidambaram and the Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, who had been desperately trying to cover up the stark figures of the poor behind their sophisticated (which is in fact abysmally crude notwithstanding their flawless English) rhetoric. Both these anti-people Ministers had gone on record saying that the figures of the poor cited by various authentic researchers are a myth.

According to a report in The Hindu of March 28, 2010, Union Home Minister Chidambaram and Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee described as 'myth' the perception that 77 per cent of Indian people lived on Rs. 20 a day. Chidambaram said that Arjun Sengupta report had not derived such a conclusion. Pranab Mukherjee, delivering the valedictory address at the 'National Convention on Law, Justice and the Common Man' organized by the All India Congress Committee in New Delhi, said three studies conducted on the extent of

poverty in India have arrived at different conclusions based on different sample surveys they have used to determine how many people were living below the poverty line. The terms of reference of these committees were narrow, affecting the conclusion. Chidambaram said the Left parties in West Bengal were propagating the myth that 77 per cent of the people had an income of only Rs. 20 a day.³ No wonder, the so-called Empowered Group of Ministers (E-GOM) headed by Pranab Mukherjee had created more insecurity for the poverty-stricken masses of our country through their draft food security bill.

The strong opposition from several civil society groups and social activists had prompted the Congress leadership to redraft the Bill to make it more palatable for the critics and the people at large. Even if it is merely on paper! None would believe that anything good can come out of this Bill for the vast majority of the undernourished, hungry millions who are dying like flies even as the government claims of surplus food stocks in its godowns. And stark irony is over several million tonnes of food grains rot in the godowns due to criminal apathy and neglect of our rulers who exhibit nothing short of contempt for the poor of this country in whose name they had catapulted to power. **Why are these rogues maintaining criminal silence when millions of children are going hungry and are dying in hundreds every day? What would make these criminals jerk out of their inertia and take measures to distribute the rotting food grains from their godowns? And when the pathetic plight of the poor is getting worse with every passing day why are these criminals contemplating on increasing the budget for police, paramilitary, defence forces and spend huge sums for waging war on these very people?** One has to grasp this fascist mindset, **anti-people attitude and criminal**

contempt for the people of this country on the part of the reactionary rulers. Nothing short of a revolutionary overthrow of these criminals ruling the country in the name of the people and fake democracy can eradicate poverty and ensure food security for all.

Bogus welfare schemes only fatten the rich

The fact that 230 million people of our country virtually go to bed hungry every day shows how bogus are the so-called social welfare schemes pompously trumpeted by the successive governments. And the *aam aadmi* rhetoric brings nausea to anyone who witnesses the terrible tragedy afflicting such a huge population that is equal to the entire population of the United States or the combined population of entire Europe. Every government has introduced these schemes which mean nothing to the people of this country except death and destitution. Schemes with pompous sounding names such as Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the Kishori Shakti Yojana, the Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls, the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls of the Ministry of Women and Child Development; the Sarva Siksha Abhiyaan and the Mid-Day Meals Programme of the Ministry of Human Resources Development; the National Rural Health Mission and the National Urban Health Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Food Security Mission and the National Horticulture Mission of the Union Agriculture Ministry; the Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission, the Total Sanitation Campaign, the Swarna Jayanthi Gram Swarajgar Yojana, and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme of the Ministry of Rural Development; and the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, Annapoorna

and the Targeted Public Distribution system of the Ministry of Food, and such grandiose schemes with the avowed aim of improving the nutritional status. Then why has hunger increased by leaps and bounds? And why do children eat mud in Ganne village in Uttar Pradesh as reported in the Hindustan Times?⁴

It is futile to debate whether a Sonia has greater concern for the hungry millions of the country and about the so-called struggle between Sonia and other leaders in the Congress party.

The irony of the situation is that our politicians and analysts continue to grapple with the “problem” of defining poverty and counting the poor. Sitting in their A/c rooms these ivory tower intellectuals can never understand the excruciating hunger and the pangs of poverty. Hence the debate goes on even after six decades of fake independence whether the numbers given by a certain committee are correct and whether those of another committee are a myth, and so on. The official approach appears to be restrict support to BPL families.⁵ Hence we have the tragic case of children of Ganne village eating mud while their family earning Rs. 400 a month disqualifies for the BPL category! The number of BPL families varies from 9.25 crore (Suresh Tendulkar Committee) to 20 crore (Justice D.P. Wadhwa Committee). Taking four persons as the average size of a family, we have 37 crore to 80 crore people coming under BPL.

Food security involves safe drinking water, sanitation and health care. But the rulers have little concern for the provision of clean drinking water, sanitation or health care to the villages but are more interested in the construction of four-lane roads, Expressways, passing through these

villages. Their concern is more about how to transport the mineral and forest wealth from these regions, speed up the transport of raw materials and finished commodities across the country for obtaining super profits for the corporate business houses and for the imperialists abroad. **Thus we have the strange paradox of absolute non-availability of drinking water, toilets and primary health centre in a village but an ultra-modern highway passing through it with mineral water bottles being sold at the nearby dhaba.**

What does it cost the government to provide the basic necessities to the poor of this country? Only a small fraction of the enormous profits amassed by the landed gentry and the comprador capitalist class—not an impracticable task given the huge sums accruing to a handful of ever-bulging billionaires in our country. In fact, in 2006, the National Commission on Farmers in its recommendations on building a sustainable nutrition security system calculated that about 60 million tonnes of food grains will be needed to sustain a universal PDS. What is required for the BPL families is only some additional cash expenditure to meet the lower prices of food grains allotted for them. People of the country should agitate for a Universal PDS along with subsidized rations for those coming under BPL. It is estimated that food stocks with the government would touch 60 million tonnes by June 2010.⁶ But they would only rot in godowns just like the system which produces them.

1—MS Swaminathan ‘Pathway to food security to all’, *The Hindu*,

2—*Ibid*

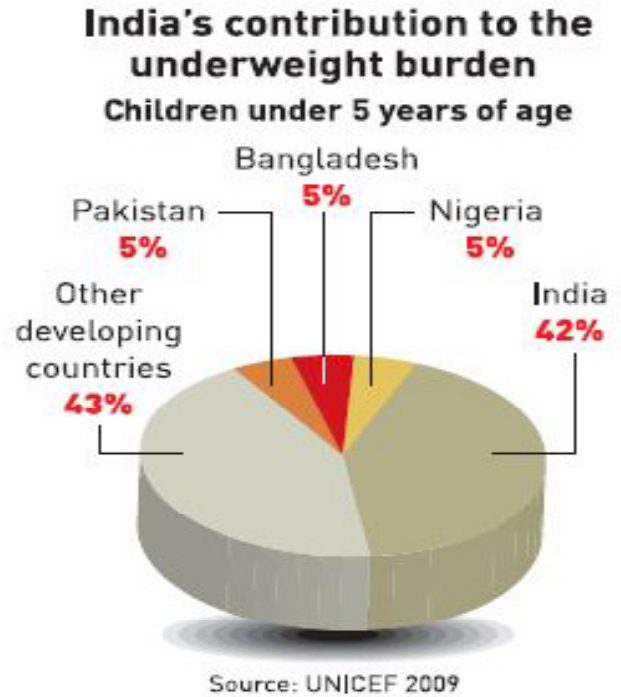
3—*The Hindu*, March 28, 2010

4—*Hindustan Times*, April 5, 2010

5—MS Swaminathan

Why can't Chidambaram's development bogey reach out to these people?

Save the dying children before dreaming of bringing development to remote regions under Maoist control through Operation Green Hunt



One lakh twenty two thousand four hundred and twenty two is the number of “malnutrition-affected” children who have died in Madhya Pradesh over the past four years, according to Health Minister Anup Mishra’s confession in the State Assembly in the third week of February. Shivraj Singh Chouhan

of the BJP, who rules the state, had dubbed the reports by independent human rights organizations as a myth and invention just as the Congress’s Home Minister Chidambaram denies as myth his Operation Green Hunt. After repeated denials of several independent human rights reports over the past one year, the BJP government in MP finally admitted that with 60 per cent children affected, malnutrition is a major problem in the state. The Minister admitted that 60 per cent of the children in the State are suffering from malnutrition, confirming the figures stated in the National Family Health

Contd..... on Page 10



New concrete structures for the police and paramilitary in the guise of Schools

How long will Chidambaram's Paramilitary forces deprive children of their education?

Presently, school buildings in remote rural regions, particularly the adivasi-inhabited regions, are being constructed at a pace unheard of in the post-1947 history of our country. It looks as if the ruling classes of India had suddenly become extremely benevolent towards the educationally most backward sections of our society—the adivasis. Incredible indeed! For education has always been the most neglected sector in the annual budgets of the states and the union government. How have the rulers become so much generous towards the children of our country, particularly in the adivasi regions? Wherefrom comes this new-found love for the most deprived sections of our society?

The facts related to the condition of the children in our country are bizarre, to say the least. A significant number of children in the remote rural areas are dying like flies due to extreme malnutrition and disease owing to lack of food and drinking water. The adivasi population, constituting over 8 crore that is equivalent to the population of Germany or the combined population of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Argentina, has no access to safe drinking water. Worse still, instead of providing them with safe drinking water, the successive governments in states and the Centre, whatever the colour of the ruling regimes—khadi, saffron, red, yellow and so on—had only snatched even the hitherto available water from these hapless people. Most of the sources of drinking water are rendered unsafe for drinking by the pollution of rivers and streams by the imperialist MNCs, the corporate business houses, and the Public Sector projects set up by the GOI in the name of mining and development. This has made the

condition of the children, in particular, most vulnerable since they become easily affected by diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases.

A significant chunk of the children from the rural areas is compelled to or lured into work as bonded labourers in sweat shops and many even go begging in the streets. Most of the existing schools have no adequate number of teachers, or where teachers are appointed they rarely visit their schools. The teachers are often compelled to go on strike just to get their salaries which are denied to them for several months by the village panchayats and state governments. A visit to the adivasi villages in several parts of the country where Maoists have hardly any presence shows that the schools are generally not functional, teachers are rarely found, and the buildings are used for purposes other than education. And where schools are said to function one can count the single-digit attendance of children. Owing to acute poverty prevailing among most households the children in these villages are seen as sources of income and domestic help rather than make them obtain school education.

When the condition of our children and our schools is as described above, why do our Man Mohan Singh, Chidambaram sahib and all their ultra-modern “developers” derive satisfaction and succour from their “benevolent acts” of school construction while not caring an iota for providing drinking water or address the problem of pathetic malnutrition prevalent in vast adivasi-inhabited areas? What is the secret behind this hectic developmental activity by the various governments in a region that had witnessed only callous apathy and criminal negligence for over six decades by the Indian rulers? Even now when

the adivasis have to walk for 30 km to show to even a namesake doctor and most die of lack of treatment, why are our Man Mohan Singhs and Chidambarams interested more in constructing school buildings, rather than primary health centres, in these regions?

The very sight of a school building in these areas is enough to grasp the secret behind this “benevolent” and “humanitarian” venture. The cement buildings with RCC roofs and solid walls hang out as islands in a sea of thatched huts with mud walls. In ordinary times, one would not have wondered why they looked more like police stations than schools. And that is how the rulers had managed to go ahead with their plan of massive construction of school buildings in remotest places like Abhujmaad where, the government agrees, it had not even conducted a survey until date. Come 2010 and the place has become a hub of construction activity. For it is the year of Green Hunt or the hunt to wipe off all greenery from the existing forests. So the secret of Chidambaram or what one would call in the south of our country as *Chidambaram rahasayam* is to actually construct buildings that would serve as camps for his paramilitary forces who are deployed to wage a bloody war on the adivasi people and the Maoists who lead them in their struggle for a life of dignity and liberation from the exploitation and terrible oppression by the rapacious plunderers and thugs who are protected fully by the Indian State and all the parliamentary parties. These buildings become acceptable as they double up as schools while the real ulterior motive of using them as the camping stations of the police and paramilitary is disguised under the veneer of education of tribal children.

Many well-meaning democratic intellectuals, human and civil rights organizations fall prey to this ingenious but heinous tactic of the ruling classes who have unleashed the most brutal bloody war under hypocrite Chidambaram.

Anti-Maoist propaganda by some human rights and other groups

A hue and cry is raised by some so-called human rights groups that Maoists have been targeting the school buildings and preventing the children from receiving primary education. The so-called “mainstream media”, hired by the tiny parasitic corporate elite, has gone all out of its way to condemn the bombing of school buildings, panchayat buildings, anganwadi centres, and hospital buildings all of which are non-functional in general but have attracted the attention of these organizations just because Maoists have been destroying them. These so-called voluntary organizations, most of which are actually propped up by the imperialist and corporate interests, cry foul whenever there is an attack by Maoists on these buildings but never utter a word of disapproval when the so-called security forces occupy these buildings thereby depriving the children of schooling.

For instance, a report in the *Economic Times* of ...wrote under a provocative caption “A destructive school of thought called naxalism” thus: “A UN panels’ study has said that around 250 schools have been blown up in Chhattisgarh in the past one year by Naxalites and students are recruited in large numbers for



subversive activities. According to a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report, India figures among the four countries that have seen a marked increase in systematic attacks on schools, students and teachers between 2006 and 2009...In India, nearly 300 schools were reportedly blown up by Maoists between 2006 and 2009, according to the report. These include 50 in the two states of Jharkhand and Bihar in the year 2009. The UN found that dozens of schools have been occupied for security operations including at least 37 in Jharkhand in the first half of 2009. In February 2007, Chhattisgarh government sources said that more than 250 schools had been blown up in recent months.”

The daily that serves as the mouthpiece of the parasitic elite that is plundering our country and our people, calls for “*disrupting, dismantling and destroying the network of the Red thugs.*” Not a word is said as to why the school buildings are targeted, why the reactionary rulers have suddenly embarked upon the construction of school buildings at a hectic pace in the remotest regions of the country where more than 50 per cent of the population are living under chronic famine and even safe drinking water is not available for the overwhelming majority. Not a word is said as to why three lakh adivasis were forced to flee after the Indian rulers commenced their Operation Green Hunt under the direct supervision of the thug Chidambaram 9 months ago. And why another one lakh adivasis were displaced by Salwa Judum, the hired gang of armed hooligans created for serving the Tatas, Mittals, Jindals, Essar, Vedanta and other rapacious plunderers; why, between 2005 and 2009, over 700 villages were destroyed obviously along with the schools by these blood-thirsty murderous gangs deployed by



the Congress-led government at the Centre and the BJP government in Chhattisgarh. The UN report or its reproduction in the *Economic Times* deliberately avoid the crucial question: where are the children in these villages when entire villages are razed to the ground by Salwa Judum and the paramilitary forces? Why are they bothered more about school buildings than the children who are supposed to sit in them? If at all they are serious about education for the children they must first raise their voices against the eviction of the adivasi people from thousands of villages in Dantewada, Bijapur, Narayanpur, Kanker, Rajnandgaon and other districts of Chhattisgarh, in some parts of Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal. They must demand the immediate withdrawal of all police camps from school buildings and other buildings in the villages, stop murders, arrests, tortures, rapes and destruction of property of adivasi villagers which makes it impossible for their children to carry on their education. They must demand the establishment of peace in the villages by immediate halt to the bloody onslaught by the central and state forces against the innocent unarmed adivasi people. Without raising these demands, simply accusing the Maoists of disrupting the education of children through destruction of schools, is not only biased and irresponsible but is also a futile and diversionary tactic that helps the ruling class oppressors to obfuscate the real issue.

PM

Children at risk as schools become barracks in anti-Maoist war Chhattisgarh defies the Supreme Court and security forces are still in occupation of school premises despite assurances to the contrary.

Aman Sethi

The Hindu March 27, 2010

School's out! In Kerlapal, Dantewada, battle-weary soldiers of the B company of the 2nd Battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force peer over barbed-wire fences as skinny schoolboys in sky-blue shirts play cricket. The force has occupied the senior school and with it the basketball court and part of the playing field; but the game must go on.

As paramilitary troops pour into Chhattisgarh to fight the Maoists, the absence of military barracks has forced soldiers and children to share the only concrete structures in the countryside – the village school.

A PIL filed in the Supreme Court has drawn attention to the militarization of Chhattisgarh's schools, but the State government is in denial. On February 18, 2010, the counsel appearing for Chhattisgarh told the Supreme Court that all schools occupied by security forces had been vacated. To quote from the Supreme Court order of February 18: "It is also stated by learned counsel appearing for the State that the schools, hospitals, ashrams and anganwadis have already been vacated and they are no longer been used for camps or places for shelter of the police force."

However, an investigation by The Hindu in the three districts of Dantewada, Narayanpur and Bijapur found numerous sites where the security forces continue to occupy school land or have simply appropriated school land for their barracks. These findings contradict the claims made by Chhattisgarh in the Supreme Court, suggesting that the counsel for the State was either dangerously misinformed, or guilty of making false statements in India's higher court.

In Dantewada district, The Hindu found security forces operating out of a senior school in Kerlapal, a junior and middle school in Karli and a tribal girls' hostel in Bhusaras.

In Narayanpur district, the G-company of the 39th Battalion of the CRPF moved into the middle school and gram panchayat building of Bhatpal village as recently as on February 10 – a week before Chhattisgarh's counsel made his submission in court. Officers at the site said a portion of the school would be permanently handed over to the CRPF and that the construction of barracks was underway. In Munjmetta village, the 139th Battalion has taken over a primary and middle school and moved the children to adjacent structures.

In Bijapur, even the Collector's office is in a college building. A list signed by the Superintendent of Police shows 16 schools as occupied by the security forces. When contacted by The Hindu over telephone, SP, Bijapur, Avinash Mohanty said "relocation is an ongoing process", but CRPF

sources confirmed that the force was yet to relinquish any occupied site."

"When forces occupy schools they blur the line between civilian and military targets and put the children at risk," said Meenakshi Ganguly, senior researcher for Human Rights Watch and author of a study on the militarisation of schools in Jharkhand. "Children – particularly girls – begin to drop out as their parents do not want them near the force."

Fears that basing the force in schools could provoke a backlash from the Maoists were realized on March 15, 2007 when they attacked a police outpost based in a residential girls' school in Bijapur district's Rani Bodli village. Even as young girls from Classes I to V covered in their hostel. Maoist cadre killed 55 policemen in an adjoining wing of the building.

The only three police personnel who survived did so by hiding in the girl's hostel.

Maoists have also targeted unoccupied school buildings, allegedly to deny security forces shelter. According to the Collector's office, in the two-year period from 2006 to 2008 Maoists destroyed 70 school buildings in Narayanpur district alone. Not a single school has been rebuilt.

In Palachalam village, Dantewada, Maoists destroyed the sole school that catered to students from at least three neighbouring villages and built a giant red minar in its place. Now, children as young as ten years of age are forced to go to a residential school in Maraigudum, more than 20 kilometres away from their homes and their parents.

"Troops need a concrete structure they can defend from attacks, which, in most cases, is the village school", said Ravideep Singh Sahi, Deputy Inspector-General for Bastar of the CRPF. "We are trying to construct regular barracks, but contractors and labourers are unwilling to work in sensitive areas."

Mr. Sahi hoped that the force and villagers could work together. In Bhatpal for instance, the CRPF donated a computer to the senior school in an attempt to foster goodwill with the villagers.

Privately, many CRPF officers expressed frustration with existing accommodation. "A camp needs proper barracks, security and a clear line of fire," said a senior CRPF officer, "The current facilities are adhoc at best."

Contd..... on Page 10

The Right to Education: A Paper Right without Substance

On March 31, 2010 the Union Minister of Human Resources Department, Kapil Sibal, announced that Right to Education will be a fundamental right from April 1. This means the state governments and local bodies are obliged to provide free and compulsory education to every child from 6 to 14 years. The Constitutional amendment was actually made nine years ago but nothing more was done in this regard. Now the UPA government has taken up this Act called the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, with the pressure from the World Bank and the privatization lobby. The UPA government decided to introduce this to achieve the twin objective of projecting itself as a pro-people government wedded to the welfare of the people while at the same time accomplishing its secret agenda of giving a big boost to private schools instead of trying to set up common schools. The ceding of Rights to the people is the easiest thing to do whereas ensuring the protection of these Rights and their implementation is the most difficult task. Kapil Sibal and his UPA government did the easiest thing but has neither the wherewithal or the mechanisms to implement the so-called Right to Education. In fact, the UPA government has done the same with regard to Food Security while it neither has the mechanism nor the will to stop the rotting of the huge stocks of food grains and distribute them to the starving dying hundreds of millions of our poor people. But the net gainers and the real beneficiaries of these Rights are a handful of the rich who make a fast buck out of everything that is ostensibly meant for people's welfare. RTE is no exception to this general rule in a society based on horrifying exploitation.

Under the RTE the only obligation for the private schools is to reserve 25 per cent of their seats for children from the economically weaker sections. The private schools will now flourish in a massive way with government funds. Who will get permission for setting up schools is anybody's guess. Those wielding money power and can bribe the officials and politicians will be the real beneficiaries of this Right to Education. Under the façade of the Right to Education, the UPA government also wants to divert people's attention from its plans to expand the elitist, private education by allowing imperialist educational institutes and universities to set up their campuses in India. Due to the massive amounts of money that will be spent for the implementation of the RTE, it has come as a big boon to the corrupt politicians and officials who are neck-deep in scandals involving funds allotted for various people's schemes.

Needless to say, like every fundamental right the RTE too will remain more on paper rather than in implementation. We know the fate of other fundamental rights which are too dear for the poor to enjoy. Seeking justice and redressal for any violation of these rights would imply adequate funds on the part of the victim for approaching a court of law. All the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Indian Constitution have been more often than not violated by the police, the feudal forces, the comprador class, contractors and the governments. The vast majority in our country simply cannot afford the means to fight against the might of the violators of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Although the RTE is said to come into force from April 1, 2010 the private schools have expressed their inability to implement the 25 per cent quota for the children of the economically weaker sections this academic year.

The Hard Facts

220 million children go to schools but only 18 million reach college. 40 per cent of the eligible children do not go to school. And out of those who go, 75 per cent drop out by the time they reach class VIII. Survey of Education Report says half of India's children in Class V cannot read a Class II-level text book or do basic mathematics. Lack of teachers is one of the most important causes for this pathetic situation. A 2005 World Bank report mentioned that 25 per cent of teachers were absent from school, and only about half of those present taught anything. 1,20,000 elementary schools have only one teacher. Even these teachers hardly go to schools when they are situated in remote areas. Currently, more than 5.23 lakh teacher posts are vacant. An additional 5.1 lakh teachers are required to meet the pupil-teacher ratio to 30:1 as stipulated under the RTE Act. But without addressing the problem of absenteeism on the part of teachers and their disinterestedness in teaching the children, will appointing another 5 lakh new teachers solve this problem?

Another serious constraint is the lack of funds for implementing the RTE. The amount required to implement RTE over the next five years is a massive Rs. 1.78 lakh crore i.e Rs. 34,000 crore every year for the next five years. The Central government has allotted only Rs. 15,000 crore for 2010-2011. Even if the states meet their share of funds the shortage of funds in the very first year is estimated to be around Rs. 7000 crore. The share of expenses between the Centre and states will be 55:45 ratio. But there is demand from virtually all states that the ratio should be 65:35 between the Centre and states. Without such a ratio the states say it will be impossible for them to implement the RTE due to acute shortage of funds.

The states are obliged to recruit and deploy teachers at a ratio of 30:1, establish neighbourhood schools within three years and train all teachers all of which require huge sums of money which the state governments are not prepared to spend. 5.48 lakh untrained teachers at the primary level and 2.25 lakh at upper primary level have to acquire necessary qualification within five years of the RTE Act coming into force. The Mayawati government in Uttar Pradesh has already come out with the demand for Rs. 18,000 crore from the Centre.

Impracticable Provisions

There are also several impracticable provisions in the Act that are only meant to encourage more corruption. For instance, the Act monitors the infrastructure in schools including the number of class rooms, sanitary conditions, and safe drinking water and so on. This is an amusing provision going by the fact that several such existing laws related to the quality of schools and other educational institutions lie unimplemented. As it is, out of the 1.29 million government and private schools, over 60 per cent did not have electricity, 46 per cent did not have toilets for girls, and 50 per cent did not have compound walls to ensure the safety of the students. UP alone needs to construct 100,000 class rooms to meet the provisions stipulated under the RTE. Another provision that will remain merely on paper is: schools that do not meet the infrastructure standards within three years will be de-recognized and that untrained school teachers must get the requisite professional degree within five years. State governments and local bodies



will have to establish primary schools within one kilometre of the neighbourhood and upper primary schools (Class VI to VIII) within three Kilometres. In the absence of a school in small hamlets, the state government shall make adequate arrangements like free transportation and residential facilities.

Can hungry children really enjoy the RTE?

The fundamental problem of the children in our country is hunger, malnutrition and disease. How can children of the poor who form the overwhelming majority of the Indian population ever get into the school when their basic problem of hunger and poverty is not solved? Now it is a well known fact that the poor cannot afford to send their children to schools even if education is free and compulsory. They would rather prefer to have their children tend the fields, look after cattle or help them in other domestic works than sending them to school that would fetch nothing tangible for the family or alleviate their miserable condition. For many poverty-stricken families children are a source of extra income and hence without addressing the issue of poverty and hunger it is futile to speak of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 years. RTE stipulates a fine of Rs. 10,000 for preventing a child from attending school or making him/her work! Needless to say, this will be as “effective” or rather as ineffective as the dowry act, bonded labour abolition act or untouchability act in the rural areas. There is a gross under estimation in the figure of 8 million cited by the government regarding the total number of children between 6-14 years who do not go to school.

Kapil Sibal should first think of how to free the huge number of children belonging to this age group who are forced to do work in various sectors out of economic compulsion. Any one

with some degree of sincerity would first devise means of freeing the child from the unbearable conditions of exploitation in sweat shops and other informal works and ensure freedom from hunger. What is the plan of Mr. Sibal for achieving this basic objective without which RTE would be a mere showpiece? Absolutely nothing.

What would RTE produce ultimately?

The Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh did not face the problem of hunger and poverty when he studied at school. There is nothing of substance in what he said while introducing the Bill: *“I am what I am today because of education.”* The fact is Man Mohan Singh would not have been what he is today if he chose to serve the people of India and protect the interests of our country instead of serving the imperialists and a tiny parasitic corporate elite that are plundering our country’s resources. It is also true that the kind of education the exploiting classes want to impart will only create self-seeking, anti-people comprador agents like Man Mohan Singh. Or else, which other Sikh would shamelessly continue in a Party that had massacred 3000 people of one’s own community in 1984 and which has been trying to suppress the facts related to the role of its leaders in the genocide? And even rewarding the culprits like Kamal Nath with ministerial posts and murderers like Sajjan Kumar with Z plus category protection?

Hence one of the major things of concern with regard to education is: what type of education is sought to be given to children from 6-14 years which are the most crucial years in terms of moulding of the minds? By making education free and compulsory the exploiters also wish to inculcate their reactionary ideas among the young and transform their minds in accordance with the needs of the

Contd..... on Page 37

International Women's Day (IWD) is the story of ordinary women as makers of history

Rajitha



Introduction:

International Women's Day (IWD) is the story of ordinary women as makers of history; it is rooted in the centuries-old struggle of women to participate in society on an equal footing with men. The idea of having an international women's day was first put forward at the turn of the 20th century amid rapid world industrialization and capitalist economic expansion that led to protests over working conditions.

A Century is passed after that. In this historical context it is time to reflect on progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of women's rights and social change.

IWD, March 8, is a holiday celebrated by the oppressed around the world. It is a holiday that came out



of the struggle of women. In particular, the struggle of immigrant garment workers in New York's Lower East Side provided the inspiration for the demand that there be a special day to celebrate the struggle of women.

International Women's Day was the fruit of the efforts of women in the Second International. Clara Zetkin, the legendary German Communist leader and an international Socialist leader proposed in the Second International conference of socialist women held in Copenhagen (Denmark) in 1910, that women throughout the world should focus on a particular day each year to press for their demands. Zetkin and others emphasized the international scope of their vision, calling on "the Socialist women of all countries [to] hold each year a Women's Day," and declaring that "The Women's Day must have an international character."

The conference established a Women's Day, international in character, to honour the movement for women's rights and to assist in achieving universal suffrage for women. It would commemorate the US demonstrations and honour working women the world over. **The conference decided that every year, in every country, they should celebrate on the same day a**

"Women's Day" under the slogan "The vote for women will unite our strength in the struggle for socialism". It was decided to have a Woman's Day in every country as a form of struggle in getting working women to vote. This day was to be a day of international solidarity in the fight for common objectives and a day for reviewing the organized strength of working women under the banner of socialism.

Over 100 women from 17 countries, representing unions, socialist parties, working women's clubs, and including the first three women elected to the Finnish parliament, greeted Zetkin's suggestion with unanimous approval and International Women's Day was the result. (It was again passed unanimously a few days later in the general International Socialist Congress. Com V.I. Lenin, the great leader of the Bolshevik Party and the Russian Revolution, was among those who voted at this conference to establish this tradition). Since then it has been celebrated worldwide by class conscious workers and those fighting for the liberation of women and the emancipation of all humanity.

That conference also reasserted the importance of women's right to vote, dissociated it self from voting systems based on property rights and called for

universal suffrage - the right to vote for all adult women and men.

That is how it began and was celebrated for the first time internationally in 1911.

Before we go in to the history of what have happened in these 100 years, let us remember the struggle of the immigrant garment workers of the Lower East side of New York, who stood as inspiration for the IWD.

A Brief History of the struggle of Garment Workers:

Those ordinary women who stood as inspiration for having a women's day were the "garment workers" of lower east side of New York City. Most of these women were migrant workers from Russia, Italy and Poland. Due to the rapid Industrialisation and capitalist economic expansion these women workers were heavily exploited. They worked up to 15 hours a day and were paid by rate per piece. They were charged for needles, thread, electricity, and even the crude boxes they had to sit on because there were no chairs. They were issued harsh fines—for being late, for damaged work, for taking too much time in the toilet. Children also worked for long hours, huddled in the corners of the shops, snipping threads from finished garments.

The garment trade shops in the big cities, such as New York, were deplorable. Fire hazards were rife, light was scant, the sound of machinery deafening, the environment polluted. Women were fined virtually for anything - talking, laughing, singing, machine oil stains on the fabric, stitches too large or too small. Overtime was constant and required, but no special pays for overtime work.

In the period of intense labor activity following the Civil War, when widowhood and general hard times forced thousands of women into the labor force, thus causing panic and

hostility on the part of men, women found themselves excluded from most of the national trade unions. So they formed their own, including the Daughters of St. Crispin, a union of women shoemakers. During this era unions were formed by woman cigar makers, umbrella sewers, and printers, as well as tailoresses and laundresses. The clothing workers formed some of the most famous unions in U.S. history, notably the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, founded around 1900.

The first all women strike took place in New England Tailoring trades in early 1820's. Many followed. The strike at Lowell cotton Mills became famous among the initial strikes. The initial protests of walk outs could not get them the results. So slowly they started getting organized. Workers of Lowell Cotton Mills formed Lowell Female labour Reform Association in 1844. The prime demand was the ten hour a day.

Women from clothing and textile factories staged a protest on March 8, 1857 in New York City. The garment workers marched and picketed, demanding improved working conditions, ten hour a day, and equal rights for women. They were protesting what they saw as very poor working conditions and low wages. The protesters were attacked. Their ranks were broken up and dispersed by the police. These women established their first labor union in the same month two years later. More protests followed on March 8 in subsequent years.

Fifty one years later, on March 8, 1908, their sisters in the needle trades in New York marched again, honoring the 1857 march, demanding the vote, and an end to sweatshops and child labor. 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay and voting rights.

In spite of many arrests and heavy fines, brutal beatings by police and hired thugs, the women, many of them teenagers, continued the walkouts. Middle and upper class women inspired by the strikers came out to the pickets to give their support and they too were arrested. And when newspapers covered these unusual arrests, the public began to find out about the brutal conditions and slave wages of the women strikers.

With the support of the National Women's Trade Union League, founded in 1903 - a combination of working women and middle-class, often professional women who supported the working women's struggle - the shirtwaist makers launched a series of strikes against Leiserson and Company and Triangle Waist Company, two of the most notorious shops in New York.

After months of small shop actions, the women decided to escalate the struggle by calling for a trade wide general strike. And in defiance of the heads of the union, on November 22, 1909, the "Uprising of the Twenty Thousand" began. It culminated in the first long-term general strike by women, putting to death the tiresome arguments that they were unable to organize and carry out a long and strenuous struggle.

The Women's Trade Union League provided bail money for arrested strikers and large sums for strike funds. The strike was ultimately broken, as settlements were made shop by shop, but the talent and endurance of the women made it impossible for people to go on claiming that labour organizing was for men only. The strike lasted for months and ignited strikes in other areas. Though the strike itself was only partially successful in terms of changing work conditions, the "uprising" did change some important things. It challenged the image of what uneducated immigrant women could

do, and it filled the East Side and many women and immigrants and oppressed people more broadly with pride and a sense of strength.

In 1908 the Socialist Party in US appointed a Women's National Committee to Campaign for the Suffrage. After the meeting, this Committee recommended that the Socialist Party set aside a day every year to campaign to women's right to vote, a big step for socialists and welcomed by women working for suffrage.

The First Women's Day was observed across the United States on 28 February in 1909 and large demonstrations took place calling for the vote and the political and economic rights of women.

The International Women's Day was marked for the first time on 19 March, 1911 in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland and other European countries.

Review of the century

Two different movements have sought to achieve women's liberation over the past hundred or more years, Marxism and feminism. Both wish to eradicate women's unequal and oppressed position in present-day society, and to replace it with the full and genuine equality of men and women. However, they explain women's oppression in very different ways, and pursue strategies which are quite opposed to one another.

Feminism sees the basic division in the world as that between men and women. The cause of women's oppression is men's urge to dominate and control them. History is the story of the unchanging patriarchal structures through which men have subjugated women. The only way to abolish these structures is for women, of whatever social class, to unite against men, of whatever class.

For Marxism, however, the fundamental antagonism in society is

that between classes, not sexes. For thousands of years a minority of men and women have co-operated to live off the labour of the overwhelming majority of working men and women. The class struggle between exploiter and exploited, whatever their sex, is the driving force of historical change. Women's oppression can only be understood in the context of the wider relations of class exploitation. Marx and Engels were able to show, by developing the materialist concept of history, that only the class struggle can achieve socialism and women's liberation. The exploitation which men and women workers alike experience in their work leads them to organize collectively against capitalism. It is the struggle of this united working class which will sweep away oppression and exploitation alike.

Because of its prevailing views, the women's movement falls into using the terms "women" and "women's oppression" in a vague, undifferentiated and a-historical way. For female slaves oppression meant physical cruelty, sexual exploitation, forced separation from their children. For the leisured, financially comfortable plantation mistress it meant social and legal restrictions, and repressive sexuality. For working-class women the industrial revolution meant brutal capitalist exploitation plus the horrors of childbearing in terrible conditions (the vast majority of children dying in infancy). For the capitalist's wife it meant an oppressive leisured life. To lump all women together in one word is to miss the specific historical conditions and to sidestep the role of the rich ladies in the enslavement and exploitation of working women and men.

Women are not a separate group; they are dispersed throughout the population. If women are the most exploited of workers, they are also among the exploiters.

When it comes to present-day women's oppression, the many proponents of the women's movement talk of that oppression as a product of "patriarchy". Male domination is thus interpreted as a supra-historical factor, existing independently of class society or capitalism.

Engels argues that it was the rise of private property and the division of society into classes which led to the subjugation of women. Under capitalism the production of the necessities of life is a social process, while reproduction – the rearing of children – is a private process, taking place largely in the enclosed family. The oppression of women is rooted in the dichotomy between the two. Hence the fight for women's liberation cannot be separated from the fight against capitalism.

Oppression in itself does not necessarily lead to a struggle for liberation. The oppression of women, by dividing them and imprisoning them in the four walls of the home, leads most often to powerlessness and submission. Only where women, as workers, have collective power do they gain confidence to fight exploitation, and are then also able to fight their oppression as women. The other side of the coin is that women workers, like other oppressed groups, are in a period of social crisis often more spontaneously revolutionary than men. The struggle of workers against exploitation is the key to their successful struggle against *all* oppression. Hence the first step for working-class women in entering the arena of struggle for their liberation as women is to leave the isolation of the home and enter the social area of production.

For bourgeois sociologists, economists and historians, exploitation is mere exploitation; for Marxists it is the axis of class struggle, the springboard for human liberation. The brutalization led to a struggle, by

women and men, for social changes to the benefit of the working class as a whole, as we see.

In human history, including women's history, revolutions are the peaks. The role of women in the English revolution of the seventeenth century, when for the first time modern ideas of women's liberation and a new sexual morality blossomed, and in the French revolution of the eighteenth century and the Paris Commune of the nineteenth century, demonstrate the indomitable struggles of working-class women.

Beginning of IWD celebrations:

IWD was marked for the first time on 19 March, 1911 in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland and other European countries, where more than one million women and men attended rallies. Socialists held strikes and marches on the same day. In addition to the right to vote and to hold public office, they demanded the right to work, to vocational training and to an end to gender discrimination on jobs.

Clara Zetkin organized the first IWD on March 19 in 1911 in Germany. A million leaflets calling for action on the right to vote were distributed throughout Germany before IWD in 1911.

In 1913 International Women's Day has remained the "working women's day of militancy". In those bleak years meetings were forbidden. But in Petrograd, at the Kalashaikovsky Exchange, those women workers who belonged to the Party organized a public forum on "The Woman Question." Delegate fee was five kopecks. This was an illegal meeting but the hall was totally packed. Members of the Party spoke. But this animated "closed" meeting had hardly finished when the police, alarmed at such proceedings, intervened and arrested many of the speakers.

As the nascent annual event developed, it took on the cause of peace as well as women's rights. Furthermore, on the eve of World War I, women across Europe held peace rallies on March 8, 1913. Elsewhere in Europe, on or around 8 March of the following year, women held rallies either to protest against the war or to express solidarity with their sisters. In 1915, Zetkin organized a demonstration in Bern, Switzerland, to urge the end of World War I. Women on both sides of the war turned out.

Observances spread to France, the Netherlands and Sweden.

In 1914, "Women Workers Day" in Russia was better organized. Both the workers' newspapers concerned themselves with the celebration. Because of police intervention, they didn't manage to organize a demonstration. Those involved in the planning of "Women Workers Day" found themselves in the Tsarist prisons, and many were later sent to the cold north. For the slogan "for the working women's vote" had naturally become in Russia an open call for the overthrow of Tsarist autocracy".

In 1914 the Bolshevik Central Committee decided to create a special committee to organise the meetings for IWD. Meetings were held in the factories and public places to discuss issues concerning women's oppression, and to elect representatives from those who had participated in the discussions and proposals, to work on the new committee.

The propaganda work of the paper 'Rabotnitsa' was now becoming ever more central to the work of the Bolsheviks. On its editorial board were such stalwarts of women's liberation as comrades Krupskaya, Innessa Armand, Stahl, Kollontai, Eliazarova, Kudelli, Samoilova, and Nikolayeva and other female workers of St Petersburg. These women were totally

dedicated to the revolutionary cause, they organized meetings, called aggregates and generally focused the work, developing the revolution. Each factory had its own representatives on the editorial board of 'Rabotnitsa' and there were weekly meetings, where all would participate and review the reports received from the different areas. The paper was also used as an instrument to raise the level of understanding in both trade union and political structures, which were still lagging behind the consciousness of the masses, towards a better understanding of the role of women workers.

In March 1917 the Bolsheviks created a bureau to promote revolutionary work among women workers. The party called for a Congress for all women workers, to discuss the best way to involve and organize women in the revolutionary struggles then taking place. In this period Lenin wrote many articles on the need to find new strategies and specific organizational models to attract women workers to socialism.

Demonstrations marking IWD in Russia proved to be the first stage of the Russian Revolution. With 2 million Russian soldiers dead in the war, Russian women again chose the last Sunday in February to strike for "bread and peace". This was led by women in St. Petersburg. The government attempted to stop the demonstrations called to celebrate International Women's Day. This provoked clashes with workers, especially in the Putilov factory in St Petersburg, which ended in a mass mobilization of workers. The women came out onto the streets and spoke to the soldiers, who then refused to open fire against the demonstrators, turning their bayonets against the Tsarist monarchy. During 1917 the general consensus of opposition to the imperialist war increased, strengthening the Bolsheviks, who had been

courageously denouncing the imperialist war since 1914.

Coming on the rise of long struggle and many strikes, IWD 1917 inspired thousands of Russian women to leave their homes and factories to protest the terrible shortages of food, the high prices, the world war, and the increased suffering they had bitterly endured. The protest inspired the last push of a revolution. A general strike spread through Petrograd. The IWD strike merged with riots that had spread through the city between March 8-12. The February Revolution, as it became known, forced the Czar Nicholas II to abdicate four days later and the provisional Government granted women the right to vote. That historic Sunday fell on 23 February on the Julian calendar then in use in Russia, but on 8 March on the Gregorian calendar in use elsewhere. (Russia switched from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar in 1918, which moved the dates of the February revolution [Feb. 24–28, old style] to March.)

This was a milestone in the emancipation of women: the first occasion on which the complete economic, political and sexual equality of women was put on the historical agenda. New political, civic, economic and family codes were promulgated, aiming to wipe away at one stroke centuries-old inequalities. The new government granted women the vote, passed divorce and civil laws which made marriage a voluntary relationship, eliminated the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children.

Following the October Revolution, the IWD was made into an official holiday, and during the Soviet period it continued to celebrate “the heroic woman worker”.

International Women’s Day

The first time International Women’s Day was held in Russia was in 1913. It was held six days early, on 2 March (17 February by the old calendar then

in use) for fear of police interference. The Bolshevik newspaper **Pravda** commemorated the day with a special six-page issue, and a holiday committee was set up by the Bolshevik-controlled Petersburg Committee of the Social Democratic Party, consisting of a group of women textile workers and Bolshevik activists. Celebrations took place in five cities: St Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Samara and Tblisi. The largest was in St Petersburg. Over a thousand people – out of a larger number who failed to get in – crowded into the hall, which was heavily policed both outside and inside, the police occupying the first two rows. One of the main speakers, a textile worker, Ianchevskaia, summed up the meaning of the assembly thus: “The women workers’ movement is a tributary flowing into the great river of the proletarian movement and giving it strength.”

These words and the general spirit of International Women’s Day grated on the nerves of the bourgeois feminist Dr Pokrovskaia. She wrote:

As we expected, the women workers’ day did not protest at all against the subordinate position of wives in relation to their husbands. They spoke primarily of the enslavement of the proletarian women by capital, and only in passing mentioned domestic subservience ... Mme Kudelli was wrong in asserting that economic interests are the most important for the woman worker. Personal freedom stands higher.

Her conclusion was: all men benefitted from male privilege; all women must join together to fight it.

In 1914 the government refused a request for ten meetings in the larger workers’ quarters of St Petersburg to celebrate International Women’s Day on 8 March, allowing only one, and this was heavily policed. Three of the five planned speakers were arrested and the police refused to allow

substitutes. Disappointed and angry, many of the large numbers present spilled out into the streets, singing revolutionary songs, only to be eventually dispersed by the police, who made mass arrests.

In both 1913 and 1914 there were deep differences between the Mensheviks, who wanted only women to participate in the celebrations, and the Bolsheviks, who insisted that International Women’s Day should be celebrated not only by working women but by the entire working class.

During the war it was far more difficult to celebrate International Women’s Day. But despite a government ban the day was commemorated in 1915 and 1916 by small meetings and celebrations.)

During the 1930’s the question of women’s liberation was swept aside in Europe under the hammer blows of economic crisis and Nazism which culminated in the outbreak of the Second World War. It had a devastating effect on the people of the world. No country is untouched by this depression. In those years of war from 1939 to 1945 there were no celebrations. The powers of the world changed and along with it the women’s movement also had undergone a lot of change. In the US after the end of the world war, IWD was not celebrated till the sixties though it is celebrated very rarely and sporadically in Europe.

The stage for class struggle shifted from Europe to Asia during the Second World War and resulted in the success of the Chinese revolution.

Chinese women began celebrating IWD in 1924, paralleling a strong women’s movement in the Chinese Communist party. The first strike by women workers occurred in 24 silk factories of Shanghai in 1922 in which 20,000 joined and demanded a 10-hour working day and 5 cents wage-increase per day. The first rally of women, under party leadership, was

held on Women's Day (8 March) of 1924 in Canton, where a group of girl students and women workers raised slogans: "*Down with imperialism*", "*Down with warlords*", "*Same work same pay*", "*protection for child labour and pregnant mothers*", "*Equal education*", "*Abolish child brides and polygamy*", "*Prohibit the buying of slave girls and the taking of concubines*", "*Formulate a child protection law*". These anti-imperialist and anti-feudal slogans echoed throughout the country and ushered in a new phase in the women's movement. After the revolution, China made IWD an official holiday, as in the USSR.

One of the first acts of the People's Republic of China was the abolition of prostitution in 1949. The Marriage Law of 1950 and the later additions to it gave more rights to women than western bourgeois law could do.

Drifting away from the working class:

Women's liberation returned to the agenda in the 1960s. It was the boom period in America, with job opportunities opening up for women. A large number of middle class women were drawn in to the women's movement as they faced a lot of sexist attitudes of men who competed with them for those jobs especially the professional ones. These women were convinced that advances did not lie in politics or political parties, but in the development of human faculties, "the emancipation of the person". It took but a short time for the whole of the American WLM to turn into a collection of small groups, consisting of about eight women each, in which women talked to each other about their individual experiences and analyzed them together. This is called 'consciousness raising'.

This trend for "consciousness-raising" groups to become an end in themselves was by no means the only

trend in the women's liberation movement in its early years. Many women, especially socialist feminists in Britain, argued that consciousness-raising was important not because it improved women's lives but because it gives women the confidence to take part in political activity. Alas, it doesn't. You don't build your confidence by separating yourself off from the struggle going on in the world around you. If you do, then just the opposite happens: you never get the chance to develop the skills and arguments necessary for political activity. As the experience showed, women tended to cling more and more to their small groups, and when these broke up, to drop out completely.

In a curious way, "consciousness-raising" does not challenge the prevailing ideas that the family and personal relationships are separate from society at large, ruled by their own laws. "Consciousness-raising", after all, aims to change the *ideas* of the individuals concerned – in the belief that with the "right ideas" they could then go on to change their personal, sexual and family relationships. The logic of this is that personal relationships are moulded merely by the ideas which we carry in our heads, not by the real world in which we live. In contradiction to this, personal relationships arise from and are moulded by the total social relations of the society around us – and cannot ultimately be changed in isolation from that reality.

The end result of this fragmentation was the mushrooming of "oppressions". Black women were claiming that white feminists oppressed them on grounds of colour. Lesbians were claiming they were oppressed by heterosexual women ... and so on. This was the result of believing, in the first place, that the source of oppression was one group of individuals: men. When women in the women's movement, now separated from men, still felt oppressed, they reacted by

seeking out another group of individuals to blame. In this way you end up blaming those who agree with you and leaving the social system – the real source of oppression – untouched.

With the general political weakness of the American left, even at its high point, and the growing economic recession of the 1970s – a reality no one could deny – the WLM, composed of tiny, fragmented groups and torn by intermittent squabbles, proved powerless. Women who were not content simply to contemplate their own consciousness, but wanted some action, turned towards the respectable, conservative Women's Rights organisations, of which the most prominent was NOW, the National Organization of Women.

The movement of women into NOW has been part of a general move rightwards urged on by the economic depression.

NOW's mode of operation is very traditional. It leans towards the Democratic Party, urges women to rely on the courts and Congress for reforms, and indulges in lobbying as a major activity. Typically members of NOW have been very involved in the campaign for the ordination of women in the churches. In three years "over 40 women have become episcopal priests". Some 15,000 women attended one of its conventions in November 1977, including three "First Ladies"!

NOW has proved ineffective not only in failing to advance women's conditions, but even in blocking the attack on women's rights in recent years, especially since Reagan became President. Thus, the Equal Rights Amendment, which was declared by NOW to be the "number one campaign" which it fought at the expense of all other women's issues, failed in 1982, as not enough states could be persuaded to ratify it.

In Britain the trade unions had more than half the working population in membership. In Britain there is a Labour Party with a mass vote among the working class. The revolutionary socialist organizations are also stronger in Britain, with greater influence in the working class. Although there has never been a fusion of the women's and trade union movements in Britain, there have been a few noteworthy common actions.

Equal pay was an important issue in the 1960s. By 1962, according to a TUC survey, 19 trade unions, representing 200,000 women, had equal pay agreements with employers. Thirty unions did not. Many unions were pushing not only for equal pay but for maternity leave, equal job opportunities and equal terms and conditions of work. In 1963 the Trades Union Congress passed a resolution calling on the next Labour government – which was in fact to take office the following year – to make equal pay a requirement in law. The Women's Advisory Committee of the TUC followed this with an *Industrial Charter for Women*, demanding equal pay, equal opportunities for training, re-training facilities for women returning to industry, and special provisions for the health and welfare of women at work. They had very little immediate success.

But towards the end of the 1960s there was a general struggle for increased wages throughout the trade union movement. The demand for equal pay became one aspect of this. A crucial strike took place in 1968 by sewing machinists at Ford's Dagenham plant, followed by those in the company's Halewood plant on Merseyside. The women organized their own strike committee and brought Ford to a standstill. Their victory raised their pay to 92 per cent of the men's rates, although they failed to raise their grading from "unskilled".

The strike by the women at Ford

inspired many other women workers. Out of it arose the National Joint Action Campaign for Women's Equal Rights (NJACWER), which adopted a five-point charter and called on the TUC to lead a campaign for equal pay and opportunity. [2] In May 1969 the campaign organized an equal pay demonstration which was supported by women trade unionists from all over the country.

Trade unions now made promises that they would fight for equal pay as part of their recruitment campaigns, and women streamed in as new members.

1970-74 were years of mass working-class struggle, including two national miners' strikes, a national dockers' strike when five dockers – the "Pentonville Five" – were jailed for picketing, and more than 200 factory occupations. These years also saw an impressive array of women's strikes. In 1970 London night cleaners fought for union recognition. The same year 20,000 Leeds clothing workers (85 per cent of them women) went on strike. Flying pickets closed clothing factories further afield in Yorkshire. Tens of thousands of teachers, three-quarters of them women, were also on strike over pay for the first time in half a century. 1971 saw a London telephonists' pay dispute, while at Brannan's, a small thermometer factory in Cumberland, women struck to defend trade union organization. In 1972 women joined the occupations of Fisher-Bendix on Merseyside and Briant Colour Printing in London. The same year women at Goodman's, part of Thorn Electrical Industries, successfully struck for equal pay. In 1973 hundreds of thousands of hospital workers (the majority women) went on their first ever national strike. In the same year two hundred women in GEC, Coventry, struck for eight weeks over piece rates. Asian women at Mansfield Hosiery Mills struck over racial discrimination, and there was a

national NALGO strike – mainly of women. There were many other women's strikes in this period of mass upsurge.

Parallel with this, there was progress in the women's movement. The groups which started in 1969 mushroomed. The first organization to be set up was the London Women's Liberation Workshop, which followed the American example in being a network of small groups with information services. It stated:

...the men lead and dominate, the women follow and submit. We close our meetings to men to break through this pattern, to establish our own leaderless groups and to meet each other over our common experience as women ... For this reason, groups small enough for all to take part in discussion and decisions are the basic units of our movement ... to further our part in the struggle for social change and transformation of society.

A few months later, in February 1970, the first National Women's Liberation Conference was held in Ruskin College, Oxford. Nearly 600 women turned up, mostly from the new women's liberation groups, some from NJACWER and some from Maoist and Trotskyist groups. The conference adopted a structure of small women's groups based on localities, loosely co-ordinated through national meetings to which each group could send two delegates. The conference also set up a Women's National Co-ordinating Committee.

On 6 March 1971 International Women's Day was celebrated for the first time in London and Liverpool. The demonstrators carried on their banners four basic demands (worked out by the Women's National Co-ordinating Committee): for equal pay now, equal education and job opportunities, free contraception and abortion on demand, and free 24-hour nurseries. The four demands clearly identified the

aim of the women's movement as being to bring changes in the real world. They were *political* demands in that they were demands on the state, and they well suited the needs of working-class women.

Unfortunately a number of factors pushed the growing women's movement away from the working class. A measure of how the women's movement distanced itself from the working class is the changes in its platform of demands. In 1975, two new demands were added: "Financial and legal independence" and "an end to all discrimination against lesbians and a woman's right to define her own sexuality". In 1978, at the last National Women's Conference, the following demand was added: "Freedom from intimidation by threat or use of violence or sexual coercion, regardless of marital status; and an end to all laws, assumptions and institutions which perpetuate male dominance and men's aggression towards women." The original four demands were clear, aimed at changes in the real world and directed towards the state; the added ones largely related to "attitudes" and "assumptions", to "personal politics".

The British movement, like the American, was torn by a lesbian/straight feminist conflict. Later it confined itself to establishing refuge centers for battered women and rape victims, set up by feminists or by social workers not associated with women's liberation.

There is also a network of other centres: women's aid and women's study centres, women's collectives for writing and publishing, health, psychiatry, legal advice, child care, carpentry. To their participants these make up a "complete alternative feminist culture".

For socialists refuges for battered women and their children are an important social service, which needs to be defended like hospitals or

schools. But in no way can they be seen as more than palliatives, of marginal impact on the human wreckage caused by capitalism.

The women's movement received a new lease of life with the rise of the Peace Movement, centred around Greenham Common, the airbase in Berkshire used for Cruise nuclear missiles.

A feminist writes: "Nuclear weapons are an expression of the twisted values of a male-dominated society ... We see nuclear weapons and nuclear power as particularly horrendous results of male domination."

They do not recognize that nuclear weapons are the fruit of a capitalist class society with its massive concentration of economic, political and military power. Hence the only way to get rid of the weapons is by overthrowing capitalism, by disarming the capitalist class and arming the working class.

Adoption of IWD by the ruling class:

United Nations involvement principally began in 1977 when the General Assembly passed Resolution 32/142 inviting each country to proclaim, in accordance with its historical and national traditions and customs, any day of the year as United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace.

March 8 was not specifically designated in this resolution. However, many countries have chosen to observe the celebration on this day.

In adopting its resolution on the observance of Women's Day, the General Assembly cited two reasons:

to recognize the fact that securing peace and social progress and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms require the active participation, equality and development of women;

to acknowledge the contribution of women to the strengthening of international peace and security.

This is a far cry from the world of the majority of women. The abyss between these feminists and working-class women was highlighted at the International Women's Year Tribunal organized by the United Nations in Mexico in 1975. Here two worlds met. On the one side were the middle-class women led by Betty Friedan, the founder of NOW and one of the original inspirers of the women's movement in America. On the other were working-class women, among them Domitila Barrio, a Bolivian miner's wife and mother of seven. She had for fifteen years organized miners' wives in struggles to aid their husbands on strike. An indication of the miners' conditions was that their life expectancy was a mere 35 years. Domitila Barrio had organized a long hunger strike of women, and had gone to prison a number of times, on one occasion suffering a miscarriage while in custody. She bitterly attacked the rich feminists who turned up to the conference. To the president of the Mexican delegation she said:

Senora, I've known you for a week. Every morning you show up in a different outfit and on the other hand I don't. Every day you show up all made up and combed like someone who had time to spend in an elegant beauty parlour and who can spend money on that, and yet I don't. I see that each afternoon you have a chauffeur in a car waiting at the door of this place to take you home, and yet I don't. And in order to show up here like you do, I'm sure you live in a really elegant home, in an elegant neighborhood, no? And yet we miners' wives only have a small house on loan to us, and when our husbands die or get sick or are fired from the company, we have ninety days to leave the house and then we're in the street. Now, senora, tell me: is your situation at all

similar to mine? Is my situation at all similar to yours? So what equality are we going to speak of between the two of us? If you and I aren't alike, if you and I are so different?

The rich women, she claimed, were blind to the conditions of women like herself:

They couldn't see the suffering of my people; they couldn't see how our *companeros* are vomiting their lungs bit by bit, in pools of blood. They didn't see how underfed our children are. And, of course, they didn't know, as we do, what it's like to get up at four in the morning and go to bed at eleven or twelve at night, just to be able to get all the housework done, because of the lousy conditions we live in.

She could not understand Betty Freidan's statement that she, Domitila, and her friends were "manipulated by men".

Women's Movement in India

The vast majority of women live in villages weighed down by feudal oppression that takes many forms. Intense economic exploitation, crude and brutal social oppression, a culture that not only denies her independence but also denigrates her in all possible manners. Hence, women from the oppressed classes have had a stake in the destruction of the feudal rural order and have come forward to do so.

In the anti-feudal peasant struggles in the past century women have played a very militant and active role. In the Tebhaga struggle in the 1940s the participation of women was very high and Nari Bahinis were formed for self-defence when state repression began. In the Telengana peasant uprising from 1947 to 1951 too women participated in large numbers and peasant and tribal women became guerrilla squad members and there are many accounts of the bravery and tenacity displayed by these women in the face of encirclement by the Indian Army, in the face of torture and sure death. Thus

when the Naxalbari uprising took place in 1967 in North Bengal under the leadership of Charu Majumdar it is not surprising that poor peasant women and girls participated with full enthusiasm. In the Srikakulam struggle the participation of women was remarkable. Women became commanders of the armed squads and struck terror in the hearts of the moneylenders and landlords of the area. The armed struggle in fact began after an attack on women by the goondas of a landlord when they were on their way to participate in a peasant conference. The names of the women martyred in this struggle, women who preferred to be felled by the bullets of the armed police rather than surrender still shine high – Nirmala, Ankamma, Saraswati. Thus these women defied their families and society to take on roles, which directly challenged their traditionally acceptable roles in society. They displayed tremendous heroism and determination to make the anti-feudal struggle a success. But the revolutionary movement at this time did not take up the conscious task of organizing women's organizations and taking up the struggle against manifestations of patriarchy. In the face of severe repression these movements were suppressed.

When communist revolutionaries regrouped themselves and began building up the anti-feudal peasant struggles in the late 1970s once again there was an upsurge of participation of women in the struggles. In the plains of Central Bihar, in the fields and villages of Telengana (AP) the peasant movement grew like a storm. Among the first issues the movement confronted was the feudal privileges of the landlords over the wives and daughters of the labourers working in their fields, especially of the Dalit castes. Subject to worst form of abuses and vulgarities of the landlords' men, bent down due to starvation and poverty, these poor women were easy

prey for the landlords and their henchmen. Many of the violent struggles in Bihar and Telengana in the first part of the peasant movement in the 70s and 80s was to end this abuse and molestation, going in the name of "tradition". These struggles provided the background for the growth of the women's movement.

The women's movement has grown with the growth of armed struggle. Contrary to general opinion the launching of armed struggle in the early 80s by the communist revolutionary forces in various parts of the country, the militant struggle against feudal oppression gave the confidence to peasant women to participate in struggles in large numbers and then to stand up and fight for their rights. Women who constitute the most oppressed among the oppressed, poor peasant and landless peasant women who have lacked not only an identity and voice but also a name, have become activists for the women's organizations in their villages and guerrilla fighters. Thus with the spread and growth of the armed struggle the women's mobilization and women's organization have also grown leading to the emergence of this revolutionary women's movement, one of the strongest and most powerful women's movement in the country today. But it is unrecognized and ignored, a ploy of the ruling classes that will try to suppress any news and acknowledgement as long as it can.

Early in the dawn of this new century remarkable developments are taking place on the women's front in India. Deep in the forests and plains of Central India, in the backward villages of Andhra Pradesh and up in the hills among the tribals in the State, in the forests and plains of Bihar and Jharkhand women are getting organized actively to break the shackles of feudal patriarchy and make

Contd..... on Page 32

Let us unitedly fight back the forthcoming fascist attack on women of Dandakaranya and on the mass organizations!

An appeal by KAMS to fraternal mass organizations, progressive democratic women, intellectuals, students and all democrats

Dear friends,

Krantikari Adivasi Mahila Sangathan is working in the Dandakaranya comprising seven districts of Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh with a population of about 40 lakhs. Women comprise about 19 lakhs 88 thousands among them. It is working in an area where various tribes like Madia, Muria, Dorla, Rajgond, Halba, Bathara and many nationalities are residing. The women here work for about 16 hours everyday in the fields, homes, as labourers, gatherers of forest produce etc. Though they labor day and night, they are being exploited and are denied all rights. Feudal patriarchy is exploiting women's labour and is suppressing all their rights. It has relegated women to a secondary position in the society. The feudal, comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie ruling classes of our country, with the backing of the imperialists are directly responsible for the continuation of exploitation and oppression of women as they are the ones who are strongly entrenching patriarchy in our society. The revolutionary movement entered into DK in 1980 in such a social background.

KAMS is working since three decades in DK with the aim of liberating women. It mobilized and led women in the struggles against forest officers, paper mill managements, *tendu* leaf contractors and the exploitation, sexual harassment, atrocities and violence of traders from plains. It gave a helping hand to young women who stood against the tribal patriarchy oppressing them. It gave a call to the *adivasi* women to rise under the leadership of KAMS and fight for women's liberation. It gave solid support to the fraternal organization, the DAKMS. It mobilized women to resist the police who came to attack their villages and chased them away.

KAMS gives full support to the DK revolutionary movement which is carried on with the following aims - 'Land to the tiller', 'Forest to the *adivasis*', 'State Power to the oppressed people', 'Women's Liberation'. We work shoulder to shoulder with our fraternal mass organizations in the armed struggle and political propaganda against the exploitative government and its army. We participate in the election boycott actively with the aim of establishing people's power as an alternative to the parliamentary politics in which we have lost confidence. The ruling classes who could not tolerate this are perpetuating brutal violence on the *adivasi* women.

KAMS supports all the struggles of the oppressed people against the exploitative ruling classes, not just in DK but also in India and abroad. We support nationality liberation struggles. We expressed solidarity to the movement which erupted when Manorama was killed in Manipur. We exposed the social fascist communists who had murdered Tapasi Malik in Singur. We hailed the militant participation of women in the people's struggles of Nandigram and Lalgadh. We hailed the Kashmiri women who raised their voices for Azad Kashmir. We gave the call to support the fighting people of Andhra Pradesh. It gathered public opinion in support of the demand to release Com. Budhni Munda (Sheila Didi), the president of 'Nari Mukthi Sangathan' by conducting a signature campaign.

Unofficial ban is continuing in Maharashtra on KAMS from 1991. The government tried to hamper the activities of KAMS from 1991 to 1993 by using TADA against it. POTA was brought in 2002. From then on, unofficial is continuing under MCOCA in Maharashtra. Before the formation of Chhattisgarh, the Madhya Pradesh

government has been observing Anti-terrorist day from May 1992 and has been continuing unofficial ban on all revolutionary mass organizations since then. The Central government had banned the revolutionary mass organizations KAMS and DAKMS and Bal Sangams (Children's organization) on April 19, 2005 under the Central government's Unlawful Activities Preventive Act.

Within a month of assuming office the Central government had banned the CPI (Maoist) on June 20, 2009 under the Unlawful Activities Preventive Act (UAPA), a new fascist Act. A revolutionary women's organization which believes in the politics propagated by that party was also not spared from the ban. That ban is continuing on our organization too.

The state unleashed terror on us from 1990. Thousands of *adivasi* women were incarcerated under TADA between 1990 and 1995. Chaithe Pallo was an ordinary *adivasi* woman who is undergoing life sentence from 2004 October. She was booked under TADA in 1991. *Adivasi* women who had never left their villages had to go to Rajnandgaon, Nagpur, Chandrapur etc. for hearings of TADA cases. Women underwent untold sufferings in the Jagdalpur, Dantewada, Amaravathi, Chandrapur and Nagpur jails. Missings of KAMS activists had started by 1993. There is still no trace of Tara, Pramila, Sukbatti and Jayawanta who had gone missing still.

The Feudal representatives like Kalma Masalu (Mahendra Karma) who could not tolerate the KAMS which had challenged their tribal feudal authority and patriarchy, tried to crush it under their feet in the name of Jan Jagran. Women had resisted and withstood the two Jan Jagran campaigns of 1990 and 1997. From June 2005, Jan Jagran changed its face.

In the name of 'Salwa Judum' it is hounding and killing us like a man-eater. It turned us into homeless people in Dantewada, Bastar and Bijapur. Home, field, hut, paths, trees, shrubs - no place was safe for us. The Judum goons pounced on us like hungry wolves and bled us literally. The Naga, Mizo and CRPF forces cut our bodies into pieces. The fact that one or more women were raped in almost all the families shows the scale of the sexual violence perpetrated on us. Our bodies were cut, our breasts were cut, our private parts were pierced with sharp weapons and the wombs of pregnant women were cut open with bayonets. As if this was not enough now the state is readying itself for a massive offensive against us.

Many intellectuals and democrats had stood by us in defeating the fascist Salwa Judum offensive of the exploitative ruling classes. The 'Committee against Violence on Women' along with other women formed an All India Women's team and toured in Dantewada district and gave press statements condemning the fascist violence on us. The members of National Commission for Women condemned the sexual atrocities and violence on the women in *Rahath Sibirs*. Any little support from anybody who stood by us in these difficult times gave us a lot of confidence.

People say suppression always leads to resistance. If we do not defeat Salwa Judum, there is no protection for us. If we do not fight we can never defend the rights we have won in these 25 years of struggle. We learnt to fight while being in the battle field.

From the time of elections to Chhattisgarh assembly in 2008 November till the completion of Lok Sabha elections in May 2009, more than 500 companies of para-military forces were deployed in DK. Presently elections to Maharashtra assembly are taking place. The Chief Minister Ashok Chavan and Home Minister Jayant Patil are asking the

Centre to send eight battalions of army to the state. They are giving statements that they would form *Adivasi* Battalions and Koya Battalions. Already forces like C-60 and STF are present in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh respectively. The Grey hounds from neighboring state of AP are already raiding our villages and hounding us. The Grey hounds are the cruel force of AP who had killed hundreds of revolutionaries and people, especially hundreds of women too. They are not just confining themselves to AP, but are also entering the neighbouring Odisha and Chhattisgarh states and perpetuating killings and gang rapes. They were in the forefront in suppressing the women's movement in AP by killing women activists and women leaders. This notorious force which had gang raped *adivasi* women in Vakapalli is now coming to DK to suppress the women's movement here too. The deployment of COBRA battalions built with the sole aim of wiping out the revolutionary movement has started. In the borders of Dantewada and AP,

Contd..... from Page 30

the new democratic revolution. It is a women's liberation movement of peasant women in rural India, a part of the people's war being waged by the oppressed peasantry under revolutionary leadership. For the past few years thousands of women are gathering in hundreds of villages to celebrate March 8. Women are gathering together to march through the streets of a town like Narayanpur to oppose the Miss World beauty contest, they are marching with their children through the tehsil towns and market villages in backward Bastar to demand proper schooling for their children. They are blocking roads to protest against rape cases, and confronting the police to demand that the sale of liquor be banned. And hundreds of young women are becoming guerrilla fighters in the army

two battalions have been deployed. The trio of Sonia-Man Mohan-Chidambaram is the main leader behind this offensive.

The central and state governments are issuing statements that they would start the offensive after Diwali. With the sole aim of wiping out the revolutionary movement the police and para military forces are perpetuating all kinds of atrocities on us. They are resorting to bloody massacres with the evil design of wiping out the very existence of our Koya community in order to loot the natural resources which are abundant in our areas.

We request all democratic women, mass organizations and people to stand by us in all manners you can by condemning this unjustified, inhuman, undemocratic and cruel offensive which the exploitative ruling classes are planning to launch against us.

In solidarity,

Krantikari Adivasi Mahila
Sangathan (KAMS)

Dandakaranya. October, 2009.

of the oppressed, throwing off the shackles of their traditional life of drudgery. Dressed in fatigues, a red star on their olive green caps, a rifle on their shoulders, these young women brimming with the confidence that the fight against patriarchy is integrally linked to the fight against the ruling classes of this semi-feudal, semi-colonial India and are equipping themselves with the military knowledge to take on the third largest army of the exploiters. This is a social and political awakening among the poorest of the poor women in rural India. It is a scenario that has emerged far from the unseeing eyes of the bourgeois media, far from the flash and glitter of TV cameras. They are the signs of a transformation coming into the lives of the rural poor as they participate in the great struggle for revolution.

PM

WOMEN AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND STATE REPRESSION

Overview: In October, 2009, about 25 organisations from across India met in Bhopal to address the increasingly rampant use of sexual violence as a method of State repression. While women's organisations in states under the AFSPA have long protested the gory list of rapes, murders and disappearances of women in their regions, the State, rather than heed the call of justice and contain its security forces and police, is continuing its violence on women's bodies as a method of intimidating communities across even more regions of India. Even as the women of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Jammu & Kashmir continue to reel under the ongoing brutalities committed by both the armed forces and the insurgents, the deployment of the paramilitary, the army regiments and the state police commando units in substantial parts of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal makes a mockery of the State's Constitutional commitment to protect its own citizens.

Under the broad banner of "Women against Sexual Violence and State Repression" we have come together to strongly and unitedly say "NONOWHERE....NEVER...and NOT ON ANY PRETEXT" to sexual violence against women.

We demand that the State take immediate and active steps to stop the sexual violence against women across the country- through conflict resolution and through containing its armed forces. In this Centenary year of 8th March - International Women's Day we would like this cry to rage from

struggling women all over the country.

As a part of our campaign's strategy of women physically gathering and publicly protesting in areas that are under active armed deployment by the State, we, together with women's organisations in Chhattisgarh, held a Convention in Raipur on 12-13 December, 2009. Now, in deeper solidarity and with more voice, intent and power, this national Campaign is concretely moving forward to show our opposition to the ongoing violence against our sisters in the Northeast of India. If justice is to be served, we need a strong and powerful coalescence of women across India to prevent more rapes and sexual torture of women by the armed forces and police, to punish those guilty and to ensure that the State does not turn a blind eye to its own agencies' gross violation of women's right to a life without violence.

INVITATION!!!! TO OUR NEXT MEETING

You are invited to participate in our next meeting on 6-8 May, 2010 in Imphal, Manipur. This meeting is jointly hosted by various women's rights organisations of the North-East. Starting with the landmark Nupilal (Women's War, the first organized women's protest) in 1904, these organisations have been very alert, brave and vocal in protesting against the unabated and unresolved violence dominant in the seven North-eastern Indian states for nearly 40 years. Civilian freedom has been oppressively curtailed in these states and security forces have been given special powers and significant immunity in all their violations. Despite the 2005 report of the Ministry of Home Affairs explicitly and unequivocally calling for both the

repeal of the AFSPA (1958) and significant amendments to the UAPA (1967, amended 2004), innumerable women continue to be subject to sexual violence, rape, abduction and killing; many youth and children don't know a life away from violence. It is time society across India wakes up to the injustices meted to these societies through sheer civilian indifference, State callousness, Union ineffectiveness and army brutality. Your physical presence here is a statement of solidarity with our sisters in the North-east in asking for judicial justice, executive fair play and legislative accountability in the dealings of the State and to ensure peace and order in all areas of the Indian Union.

Contributions: You can also support us by sending a money order or cheque to this Campaign; receipts will be provided. This is a non-funded grassroots effort by women from across India to stem the violence being perpetrated upon our bodies and on our societies both by the State's forces and by the inability of our government to resolve conflict in a meaningful, sustainable and effective manner. Please contact Rinchin (rinchin@gmail.com), Arati (aratichokshi@gmail.com), Sree (saheliwomen@gmail.com) or your local representative to join us, endorse this call and/or to contribute monies.

Women against Sexual Violence and State Repression

As represented by: AIPWA, AISA (Delhi), APDR (West Bengal), Action India, All Tripura Indigenous and Minority Association, Alternate Law Forum, Baiga Mahapanchayat (Chhattisgarh), Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Udyog Sangathan, Committee against Violence on Women (Tamil

Contd..... on Page 38

Excerpts from Tehelka Tapes on Gujarat Genocide Zero tolerance to Maoists but how much more tolerance for the proven murderers in saffron clothing?

Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP) held a press conference on March 22, 2010 to release portions of Tehelka tapes of the Sting Operations related to Narendra Modi's direct involvement in the genocide of Muslims in 2002.

The exposure of the extrajudicial confessions of Tehelka's Operation Kalank (October 25-27 2007) unequivocally established the direct role of chief minister Narendra Modi in directing and masterminding the massacre. These tapes have been authenticated by the CBI under direct orders of the National Human Rights Commission. Both the Gujarat High Court and the Supreme Court of India directed that they be used as evidence at the appropriate time. The detailed and extremely courageous exposure by *Thelka* and its then correspondent Ashish Khetan also point to the involvement of several persons in the conspiracy to commit mass murder and economic destruction.

Summons was issued to chief minister Narendra Modi on charges of mass murder and criminal conspiracy. The criminal justice system in our so-called democracy would do everything to acquit the real criminals in positions of power and punish innocent or petty criminals. It is necessary for every civil rights activist and democratic individual to understand the criminal justice system if only to realize the need to overthrow it lock, stock and barrel. No more proof will be required to hang mass murderer Narendra Modi than the evidences given by his own men even if unknowingly in the sting operation conducted by Tehelka in 2007. However, the criminal justice system in our country totally biased in favour of the affluent and influential sections will never deliver justice to the victims.

We reproduce some of the excerpts from the Tehelka tapes released at a press conference on March 22, 2010 by the CJP in public interest. These portions expose (a) the arms and bombs distribution in different parts of Gujarat before the Godhra incident i.e. February 27 2002 and b) the direct or indirect role of Narendra Modi alleged by BJP and VHP/Bajrang Dal cadres on camera that amount to extra judicial confessions. In a CJP invitation to the press conference its secretary Teesta Setalvad explained the main exposures in the tapes as follows:

Thelka's Operation Kalank

Modi's Role

I. BABU BAJRANGI (PATEL)

Role in Massacre

Modi's Role In Helping Bajrangi Abscond

Bajrangi also speaks of -How Police Machinery was made ineffective on Modi's Instructions

Manipulation of the Judiciary

2. ARVIND PANDYA

State Government Lawyer

"Modi Nahi Hota To Kuch Nahi Hota"

Modi's Role in Subverting Entire Criminal Justice System

3. DHIMANT BHAT

Accountant MS University

Speaks of Modi's Direct Role & VHP Meeting on Night of February 27, 2002 planning the post Godhra Conspiracy

4. HARESH BHATT

former MLA Godhra

Speaks of Three Days given by Modi to do as they will

5. RAJENDRA VYAS

VHP Ahmedabad City President

In charge of Train (Sabaramati Express) speaks of the behaviour on board the train

6. SURESH RICHARD CHARA from NARODA PATIA (AN ACCUSED)

Modi's Visit to Patia on evening of February 28 2002 to garland murderers and rapists saying they have accomplished a wonderful job.

7. DHAWAL PATEL

VHP ZILLA SANJOYAK SABARKANTHA

Speaks of Arms Distribution prior to the Godhra Train Burning Pointing to A Conspiracy

8. ANIL PATEL

Gujarat VHP Vibhag Pramukh

Arms Distribution prior to the Godhra Train Burning Pointing to A Conspiracy

Not only did the Modi government allow the mob fury to continue unabated, it also tried to shelter the perpetrators from the law. Modi himself arranged for Babu Bajrangi, the prime accused in the Naroda Patiya case, to stay at Gujarat Bhavan in Mount Abu, and transferred two judges to help Bajrangi get bail

Since the police were in control all over Gujarat, Modi instructed them to side with the Hindus, thus giving the rioters a free hand for three days until pressure from higher quarters necessitated the calling in of the army.

Now we reproduce some excerpts from the Tehelka tapes:

SURESH RICHARD CHARA (accused in Naroda Patia Massacre)

Richard: [On the day of the massacre] we did whatever we did till quite late in the evening... at around 7.30... around 7.15, our Modibhai came... Right here, outside the house... My

sisters garlanded him with roses...

TEHELKA: Narendrabhai Modi

Richard: Narendra Modi... He came with black commandos... got down from his Ambassador car and walked up here.... All my sisters garlanded him... a big man is a big man after all...

TEHELKA: He came out on the road?

Richard: Here, near this house... Then he went this way... Looked at how things were in Naroda...

TEHELKA: The day the Patiya incident happened...

Richard: The same evening...

TEHELKA: February 28...

Richard: 28...

TEHELKA: 2002...

Richard: He went around to all the places... He said our tribe was blessed... He said our mothers were blessed [for bearing us]...

TEHELKA: He came at about 5 o'clock or at 7?

Richard: Around 7 or 7.30... At that time there was no electricity... Everything had been burnt to ashes in the riots... **Richard:** We'd finished burning everything and had returned... That was when the police called us... They said some Muslims were hiding in this sewer... When we went there, we saw their houses had been completely burned down but seven or eight of them had hidden in the gutter... We shut the lid on it... If we'd gone in after them, we might have been in danger... We closed the lid and weighted it down with big boulders... Later, they found eight or ten corpses in there... They'd gone there to save their lives, but... they died of the gases down there... This happened in the evening... the *dhamal* [killing spree] went till night, till about 8.30...

TEHELKA: So you went in again...

Richard: We were inside... By evening, things had cooled down... We were tired also... After all, a man gets

tired out... Hurling stones, beating with pipes, stabbing, all this... The way we came out from inside could only be done by a man of strong heart...

Richard: Mayaben was moving around all day in an open jeep...

TEHELKA: On the day of the Patiya massacre...

Richard: [She was saying] Jai Shri Ram, Jai Shri Ram... wearing a saffron headband... She kept raising slogans... She said, carry on with your work, I'm here [to protect you]... She was wearing a white sari and had on a saffron band... I had also tied on a saffron band...

TEHELKA: It is being said the Chharas also committed rapes...

Richard: Now look, one thing is true... *bhookhe ghuse to koi na koi to phal khayega, na* [when thousands of hungry men go in, they will eat some fruit or the other, no]... *Aise bhi, phal ko kuchal ke phak denge* [in any case, the fruit are going to be crushed and thrown away]... Look, I'm not telling lies... Mata is before me [*gesturing to an image of a deity*]... Many Muslim girls were being killed and burnt to death anyway, some people must have helped themselves to the fruit...

TEHELKA: There must have been a couple of rapes...

Richard: Might even have been more... then there were the rest of our brothers, our Hindu brothers, VHP people and RSS people... Anyone could have helped themselves... who wouldn't, when there's fruit?... The more you harm them, the less it is... I really hate them... don't want to spare them... Look, my wife is sitting here but let me say... the fruit was there so it had to be eaten... I also ate... I also ate... I ate once

TEHELKA: Just once?

Richard: Just once... then I had to go killing again... [*turns to relative Prakash Rathod and talks about the girl he had raped and killed*]... That

scrap-dealer's girl, Naseemo... Naseemo that juicy plump one... I got on top...

TEHELKA: You got on top of her...

Richard: Yes, properly...

TEHELKA: She didn't survive, did she?

Richard: No, then I pulped her... Made her into a pickle...

BABU BAJRANGI

What They Said About Modi

'To Get Me Out On Bail, Narendrabhai Changed Judges Thrice'
Transcript (EXCERPT): BABU BAJRANGI

Modi has a definite soft spot for the man who would later stall the film Parzania. The regard is mutual

AUGUST 10, 2007

TEHELKA: The day Patiya happened, didn't Modi support you?

Bajrangi: He made everything all right, otherwise who would have had the strength... It was his hand all the way... If he'd told the police to do differently, they would have f****d us... they could have... they had full control...

TEHELKA: They had control?

Bajrangi: They were very much in control all over the city, all over Gujarat... [But] for two days, Narendrabhai was in control... from the third day... a lot of pressure came from the top... Sonia-wonia and all came here...

TEHELKA: Didn't Narendrabhai come to meet you [in jail]?

Bajrangi: If Narendrabhai comes to meet me, he'll be in deep trouble... I didn't expect to see him... Even today, I don't expect it...

TEHELKA: Did he ever talk to you over the phone?

Bajrangi: That way I do get to speak to him... but not just like that... The whole world starts singing...

TEHELKA: But when you were absconding, then he.....

Bajrangi: Hmm... I did speak to him twice or thrice...

TEHELKA: He'd encourage you...

Bajrangi: *Marad aadmi hai* [he's a real man], Narendrabhai... If he were to tell me to tie a bomb to myself and jump... it wouldn't take even a second... I could sling a bomb around me and jump wherever I was asked to... for Hindus...

TEHELKA: Had he not been there, then Naroda Patiya, Gulbarg etc...

Bajrangi: Wouldn't have happened. Would've been very difficult.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2007

TEHELKA: Did Narendrabhai come to Patiya the day of the massacre?

Bajrangi: Narendrabhai came to Patiya... He could not make it to the place of the incidents because there were commando-phamandos with him... But he came to Patiya, saw our enthusiasm and went away... He left behind a really good atmosphere...

TEHELKA: Said you were all blessed...

Bajrangi: Narendrabhai had come to see that things didn't stop the next day... He went all around Ahmedabad, to all the places where the *miyas* [Muslims] were, to the Hindu areas... told people they'd done well and should do more...

Bajrangi: [After the massacre] the commissioner issued orders [against me]... I was told to leave my home... I ran away... Narendrabhai kept me at... the Gujarat Bhavan at Mount Abu for four and a-half months... After that, [I did] whatever Narendrabhai told me to... Nobody can do what Narendrabhai has done in - Gujarat... If I did not have the support of Narendrabhai, we would not have been able to avenge [Godhra]... [After it was over,] Narendrabhai was happy, the people were happy, we were happy... I went to jail and came

back... and returned to the life I'd led before.

Bajrangi: Narendrabhai got me out of jail..... He kept on changing judges.... He set it up so as to ensure my release, otherwise I wouldn't have been out yet... The first judge was one Dholakiaji... He said Babu Bajrangi should be hanged — not once, but four-five times, and he flung the file aside... Then came another who stopped just short of saying I should be hanged... Then there was a third one... By then, four-and-a-half months had elapsed in jail; then Narendrabhai sent me a message... saying he would find a way out... Next he posted a judge named Akshay Mehta... He never even looked at the file or anything.... He just said [bail was] granted... And we were all out... We were free..... For this, I believe in God... We are ready to die for Hindutva...

Haresh Bhatt (a Bajrang Dal leader): He had given us three days... to do whatever we could. He said he would not give us time after that... He said this openly... After three days, he asked us to stop and everything came to a halt...

TEHELKA: It stopped after three days... Even the army was called in.

Bhatt: All the forces came... We had three days... and did what we had to in those three days...

TEHELKA: Did he say that?

Bhatt: Yes... That is why I am saying he did what no chief minister can do...

TEHELKA: Did he speak to you?

Bhatt: I told you that we were at the meeting.

and the upper castes too have come out now in support of the Parivar...

Bhatt: In Ahmedabad, there were two persons... I won't tell you the place... that is secret... it is the Parivar's... In Ahmedabad, the party has a farmhouse... we started... supplying everything... made a plan... If the

police makes arrests, then [we were to secure] the release [of those in custody]. That night, we sat up and made a panel of advocates... If Hindus were injured, then how to take them to hospitals... how we were to help... We made the whole plan... to start a Hindu jehad... we were successful in Gujarat... We were thinking what should we do... so we got three-foot long iron rods... iron bars, and if the cadre was from the Bajrang Dal, then trishuls... In other words, we made a plan and supplied the samaan [weapons]... it was very necessary... After we supplied the samaan, the Hindus got very motivated... Until Godhra happened, the upper castes would never come out... Baniyas... Patels... they would never come out... But we mobilised them... told them that we had prepared teams from the police and amongst advocates... that if they went to jail, we would get them released...

Conspirators & Rioters

'The Idea Came From Modi Himself'

Transcript: DHIMANT BHATT

The chief auditor of MS University, Bhatt reveals the minute planning and mobilisation that went into the attacks

MAY 19, 2007

Dhimant Bhatt: I have two charges... I am chief auditor for the entire university [MSU] as well as chief accounts officer... this is a financial matter... everybody needs funds... this is why it is hectic... I am a staunch Hindu... suppose somebody from the Sangh says we have to promote Hindu fundamentalism, I will be the first to volunteer... I will go and say, brothers, put the Sangh's lathis aside and pick up AK-56s ... pick up AK-56s because if you have to develop Hinduism, it is clear who the enemies are... There are two who are against Hinduism... Muslims, who are open... but the Christians... they are like a bacterial virus ... and there's a third, the Communists, who are developing

now... red waale... If you have to fight them, you need power and that power will not come from the lathi... only the bullet will do... we go to RSS shakhas ... pick up the lathi and use it... All that is fine but now they should be replaced with AKs and a Hindu brigade should be formed...

HARESH BHATT, who was the Bajrang Dal Rashtriya Sah Sanyojak in 2002 and is now the BJP MLA from Godhra, till the riots a Congress stronghold, made a never-before admission that bombs were made at a firecracker factory he owned. He describes how they assembled country-made explosives, including rocket launchers. These were then distributed to murderous mobs in Ahmedabad

IN 2002, despite curfew in Ahmedabad, swords were brought in from Punjab and country pistols from UP, Bihar and MP. Bhatt boasts that none of these states were under BJP

Contd.....from Page 21

rulers. We all know how the saffron brigade is poisoning the minds of the young both in its own private schools as well as government schools where it is in power. By misusing state machinery and government funds, and 100 per cent tolerance exhibited by the central government, the most unscientific and chauvinist education is taught that preaches absolute religious intolerance, the RSS concept of Akhand Bharat and unbridled jingoism to the children poisoning their minds. The entire education system itself reflects the unjust socio-economic system producing elitist, individualist, undemocratic, feudal, colonial and selfish values among the children to create servile, snobbish, self-seeking individuals who have only contempt for manual work and the toiling masses. So one can understand what would be the end product of the RTE to the extent it is implemented within the framework of the existing socio-economic system.

PM

rule then. The consignment of arms crossed the borders not once but many times. "There were tens and tens of them," Bhatt reveals

IN AN UNRELATED but crucial disclosure, Bhatt says that he trained 40 young men who then went on to demolish the Babri Masjid in December 1992. He trained them like the army does, and ran obstacle courses for them and taught them how to climb a 30-ft rope. The camp still exists in Ahmedabad

DHAWAL JAYANTI PATEL of the VHP used dynamite in his quarries in Sabarkantha. With the help of an old RSS hand, Amrudh Patel, who was an expert in handling explosives, bombs were made in the quarries using dynamite and RDX-based powder

ANIL PATEL, the VHP Vibhag pramukh, talks of how explosives were made in Sabarkantha and then supplied to Ahmedabad.

Contd.....from Page 44

wealth, the focus of this joint offensive led by the central forces under the direct supervision of fascist Chidambaram is to eliminate the Maoist leadership in the country. In a similar episode last may, comrade Patel Sudhakar, a member of the central committee of CPI (Maoist), was abducted and murdered in cold blood by the APSIB-Grey Hound goons. Central leaders like Ashutosh, Kobad Ghandy, Balraj and Chintanji were arrested and placed behind bars, along with several state Party leaders in the past one year. Popular mass leaders like Lalmohan Tudu of PCAPA are murdered in cold blood and Chhatradhar Mahato arrested on false charges. Even those who question police atrocities and the state's brutal onslaught against innocent people, civil liberties and human rights activists, sincere Gandhians and other social activists, are not spared the rod. Private vigilante gangs are set up in all areas where the Maoist movement is strong and indiscriminate attacks are unleashed on unarmed adivasi people.

Let us pay our red revolutionary homage to comrades Sakhamuri Appa Rao and Kondal Reddy by pledging to carry forward their cherished dreams with redoubled determination and relentless spirit. Let us vow to avenge their martyrdom by defeating the biggest country-wide brutal armed offensive unleashed by the comprador-feudal ruling classes backed by imperialists, transform PLGA into PLA, guerrilla war into mobile war, and guerrilla zones into base areas. Let us train up thousands of able Red successors to our beloved martyred leaders. Let us foil the desperate attempts by the reactionary rulers to deprive the Indian people and the CPI (Maoist) of their leadership by preserving our leading cadres and developing innumerable Maoist leaders from the oppressed masses of India.

Azad, Spokesperson,
Central committee, CPI (Maoist)

VHP leader Anil Patel says even Congress workers joined in the attacks, and that senior police officers were very helpful

TEHELKA: How were the activists motivated?

Patel: The incident was being repeated on TV. The killing of the karsevaks was being played and replayed [throughout the day]. All of us, including the Congressmen felt that we [Hindus] had been attacked. They did everything alongside us, even triggered the bomb to demolish the mosque ...

TEHELKA: In Ahmedabad, bombs were made in Hareeshbhai's own factory. How did it work here?

Patel: There are a lot of boring industries here, because of which dynamite is available... Then, we also had some experts. They made [explosives] and supplied them to Ahmedabad as well...

PM

Vedanta continues to dole out lies emboldened by Chidambaram's absolute support

The story of Vedanta is also the story of Chidambaram: both survive on advertisements, paid news and endless lies. The ex-member of Vedanta's Board of Directors becomes a vedantist and says his Operation Green Hunt is an illusion, a myth invented by the media even as hundreds of unarmed innocent adivasis are murdered by his mercenary forces, voiceless helpless adivasi women are gang-raped by his "security" forces, and hundreds of thousands are driven away from their homes fearing uninterrupted attacks by these trigger-happy goons. And the Union Home Minister's mentor, Vedanta, spends huge sums to project itself as the benefactor of adivasis. An entire page of advertisement on VEDANTA's "good deeds" appeared in almost all English dailies on March...2010. The advertisement talks of building schools, hospitals, roads, providing job opportunities, and on how this multi-national fraud is changing the lives of the poor. The language is hundred per cent same as that used by Chidambaram when he spoke at a press conference after the chief ministers' conference on February 7. The biggest liar of the decade, Chidambaram, said: *"I have asked the Chief Ministers of the naxal-affected states to rush in with developmental work like schools, roads, hospitals, drinking water, job opportunities....."* This, despite the fact that the vast majority of the people in the Indian countryside is surviving on a meager Rs. 20 a day and suffers from chronic hunger, malnutrition, diarrheal diseases due to complete unavailability or acute scarcity of drinking water, unemployment, and extreme misery. 50 hunger-deaths in Orissa, several more in MP run newspaper headlines. Yet, these are of no concern to the hypocrite who head the Union Home Ministry who continues to assure that everything would be well if the Maoist monsters are decimated and the territories under their control reclaimed.

Four European investors have already pulled out of Vedanta by selling off their stakes in the company citing "serious concern about its approach to human rights and the environment." The latest to pull out of this multi-billion swindler is United Kingdom-based Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust which sold off its 2.2-million pound stake in Vedanta. A week prior to this, the Church of England decided to sell off its 2.1 million pound stake. The first high-profile withdrawal was from the Norwegian government's pension fund which sold its \$13 million stake in 2007, while the Martin Curie Investment sold its 2.3 pound stake last year. The objections raised by these trusts to the unethical activities of Vedanta are interesting.

According to a news report published in the third week of February this year, Susan Seymour, chair of the investment committee at the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, has charged the unethical acts of this multi-billion fraud in unequivocal terms: *"We have heard first-hand about Vedanta's environmental and human rights abuses in Orissa and believe that Vedanta is pushing industrialization to the detriment of the lives and lands of the local people. This behavior may be legal, but is morally indefensible."*

There is a lot that our Man Mohans, Chidambarams, Naveen Patnaiks, Raman Singhs, Buddhadebs and other comprador agents of imperialists have to learn from these foreign companies. While these companies are opposing Vedanta, our own so-called Indians ruling our country are cringing before Vedanta and acting like boot-lickers. Chidambaram, of course, would say that all these charges against Vedanta are a myth. As much of a myth as the OGH.

Contd.....from Page 33

Nadu), CPDR (Maharashtra), Campaign for Justice and Peace (Karnataka), Chhattisgarh Mahila Adhikar Manch, Chhattisgarh Mahila Mukti Morcha, Dalit Adivasi Manch (Chhattisgarh), Dalit Stree Shakti (Andhra Pradesh), HumAnE (Orissa), HRLN (Madhya Pradesh), Hengasara Hakkinna Sangha (Karnataka), Human Rights Alert (Manipur), IRMA (Manipur), IWID, Jagori (Delhi), Jagrit Adivasi Dalit Sangathan (Madhya Pradesh), Jan Jagruti Manch (Chhattisgarh), Lalgargh Morcha, Lokayata (Maharashtra), MARA,	Madhya Pradesh Mahila Manch, NBA (Madhya Pradesh), Namma Manasa (Karnataka), Nari Mukti Sanstha (Delhi), Navsarjan Sanstha (Gujarat), Naya Chhattisgarh Mahila Sangh, Nirantar (Delhi), PSSK (Chhattisgarh), Patel Pat Chaunki (Chhattisgarh), Pratidhwani (Delhi), PUCL (Karnataka), Rachna Manch, Rohidas Mahila Kalyan Samiti (Chhattisgarh), Saheli (Delhi), Sahmet (Madhya Pradesh), Samajwadi Jan Parishad (Madhya Pradesh), Samata Vedike (Karnataka), Samanatha Mahila	Vedike (Karnataka), Sangini (Madhya Pradesh), Vanangana (Uttar Pradesh), Vidyarthi Yuvjan Sabha, Women's Right Resource Center (Madhya Pradesh), Yuva Samvaad (Madhya Pradesh), Stree Adhikar Sanghatan (Uttar Pradesh), Stree Jagruti Samiti, Trade Union Solidarity Committee (Maharashtra), Women Against Militarization and State Violence (The Other Media), Women's Right Resource Center, Women's Education Forum (Chhattisgarh), and many individuals.
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

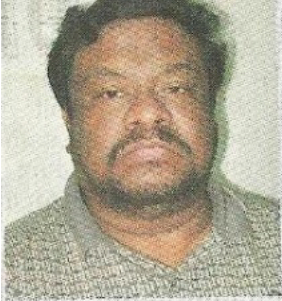
PM

Tribal unrest Provider as marauder

As the people of Junglemahal drift close to desperation, it is the state that is to blame

Soumitra Basu

From THE SUNDAY INDIAN, 4 April 2010



Soumitra Basu
Chairman, Indian Institute of
Marxist Studies, Kolkata

An epic is being enacted, or an apology of it! Chidambaram started it, with a number -72 hours, Kishenji retorted with another unit – days.... Nothing came of it. Neither took it seriously. Both procrastinated. This is a fine management technique one that creates huge media hype and thus social capital is formed. Things did not change but perceptions did. Junglemahal is now a name, more than Nandigram.

People die or are dying, get raped, jailed, evicted and, of course, they are threatened on a quotidian basis. Lalmohan Tudu was bumped off in an encounter. His crime? A highly dangerous conspiracy against the state and the system – he was running a local hospital on the people's initiative. Compassion is extremely dangerous when people are the target. Police officers are disappearing too. Retaliation is often swift. The cycle goes on, on and on, the idyllic but somber rainforest is now bloodied. And procrastination is the response.

700 villages have been flattened and wiped out ostensibly for “development” – for mining important national resources. “National interest” serves city-dwelling billionaires who compete in the global arena. It will never serve the people in the nation-state. A rainforest does not have capital value and is, therefore, dispensable. People who live and who produce through their toil and let the wealthy live off their resources generated through indirect taxes, do not have a voice or opinion in a “in a democracy”. The voice that matters is that of those whose “national interest” is served.

Liberals and “independent” think tanks are clamoring about a colossal breakdown of an ostensible perfect development regime. A haven of representational neurocracy that we advertise as the best liberal model laments that people of the rainforest are now mere victims of neglect and corruption! What a revelation! Ask Lalita Tudu, thoroughly determined daughter of Lalmohun. She does care a fig for “development” or “administration”.

Ask those ladies who are either already raped or are preys of the future; ask the children whose parents are behind bars and do not know why; ask those who have lost their generations-old possession to some security mercenaries. Do they care about how many bore wells may be installed in some future time, or how many health centers and even schools? People have lived here on their own for millenniums. They expect nothing from the dikus (outsiders). So they do not appreciate their presence either. Adivasis have seen outsiders coming and going, and robbing them in every such new move and another thread of continuous stream of wealth outflow starts. These various streams of dikus of different races and people have now congealed into an all-powerful state. The state is now institutionalized diku. These people had to be subdued, imprisoned, strangled and dishonoured. “Development” follows the same track. The people of the rainforest and Junglemahal are fighting the war their predecessors had started millenniums back.

Dignity is all they want, dignity for the domiciled, dignity as human beings and dignity as producers. They are hardly swayed human beings and dignity as producers. They are hardly swayed by the lollipops of jobs, doles, “development” and, least of all, bore-wells. Binayak Sen, Himanshu Kumar, Anuradha Ghandy, Narayan Sanyal, Jayanta Bhattacharya, Naba Kumar Biswas are not dikus. They are kakus. The STATE is, the uniform-clad BABUs are, the *sahebs* in the white car are and definitely the security authorities are. An *Adivasi* mother knows who to watch out against and who to go to as friends. The state comprises of the liberal soothsayers as well, the think-tanks, the academicians, the NGOs, and all other “individuals” in addition to the four existing pillars we had known. Castes after castes, sections after sections are joining the ranks of the rebels. Previously Mundas were the rebels, then came the Santhals, then all other denominations of Vanvasis, then the Mahatos (Koiris) and now the domiciled Biharis and Bengalis. Marx conceived of withering away of the state. The means were rather mundane: build up mass organizations and render the government –sponsored institutions irrelevant. Now it is the state that is blasting itself off by unleashing a backlash. The state is the anarchist and terrorist here, it is pushing the whole populace into rebellion, it is losing all iota of credibility as provider and positing itself as a marauder.

The ruling establishment at the Centre is not bothered. The Congress has a long enough experience of wading through waters sullied by themselves. They know how to linger on without solving but creating more complex twists. Our Left parties have learnt how to parrot and even out-perform the Congress in their game. The people are now realizing this. There are two ways of looking at the same thing – a state way, and a people way.

State violence in Kalinganagar, Orissa: Tata sponsors Green Hunt in Kalinganagar to suppress the villagers protesting against Tata project

The following is a report by Debaranjan Sarangi taken from the Net:

- ❖ Orissa government has started war on people in Kalinga Nagar.
- ❖ The forces meant for 'Operation Green Hunt' like SOG forces were used for this purpose (as per media report Government of Orissa is formally launching 'Operation Green Hunt' from April 2010.)
- ❖ This entire mobilization of armed forces in Kalinga Nagar is for construction of common corridor.
- ❖ This common corridor is a connecting passage from main road to Tata's proposed project site
- ❖ This would help the administration and police to reach the Tata's project site without any hindrance from local villagers.
- ❖ Though the government of Orissa says that it would help transporting vehicles for other factories but there is already a road that exists for their transportation and they are using it.
- ❖ Many villagers have not yet received compensation for Tata project and even they are refusing to receive.
- ❖ But the government of Orissa has mobilized/deployed 29 platoons of State Armed police, 2 platoons of Special Operation Groups (SOGs), 70 senior police officers, 7 magistrates besides District collector and Superintendent of Police at the spot.
- ❖ Entire area has been cordoned off and section 144 has been declared.
- ❖ Media persons were not permitted to enter those villages and were forced to sit inside the police station. But photographers hired by the private companies were moving around within police cordon.
- ❖ On March 30, police has used 500 round rubber bullets and did blank firing to send the villagers back. When the people were withdrawing from the area, police chased them up to 3km and came inside Baligotha village.
- ❖ Inside Baligotha village, the police has burnt several houses and has beaten many old people.
- ❖ Some villagers are injured. Their exact number is yet to be known. Most of them are taking private treatment.
- ❖ '*Bisthanpan Birodhi Janamancha*', which is spearheading the movement in Kalinga Nagar, recently met the administration on March 28 after the latter invited for the discussion.
- ❖ The Mancha placed few things before the Admn, like (a) after Kalinga Nagar firing (on 2nd April 2006 when 14 tribals died for opposing Tata steel project) the Chief Minister has invited and met them twice. But none of the demands have yet been met. It speaks how far really the government of Orissa is serious about the problem of Kalinganagar. (b) The Mancha is not opposing the project. But land against land should be given and who are already displaced by previous projects should be rehabilitated properly.
- ❖ Administration has not accepted any of the demands but next day started their 'war' on the people.
- ❖ Surprisingly, those political parties who were opposing Kalinga Nagar firing and called Orissa bandh on 7th January 2006, are maintaining complete silence.
- ❖ Local newspapers are only giving the version of police. None of them has yet carried any interview of one of any leaders of the Mancha.

Other reports

A team of senior journalists and activists along with a doctor visited the villages around Kalinga Nagar. They report that about 50 people have been seriously injured with many having these new kind of plastic bullets still lodged in their bodies.

On March 31 the police had again blocked all roads and many people have been held on their way to the

villages. The police stations in Kalinga Nagar have turned into offices for Tata goons and the local mafia. Goons on bikes and in SUVs are patrolling all roads leading to the villages and are intimidating any unknown person they see on the road. Suresh Panigrahi of CPI (M) was threatened by the police as well as the goons and he was not able to reach Baligotha or other villages that are being targeted. At the

same time Tata goons have assembled at the common corridor construction site near Baligotha and are carrying out construction activities. The police are spreading rumours about Maoist presence in the area to be able to cut off the villages again and attack one more time.

The police had vandalized the 2 Jan 2006 martyrs' memorials...they have destroyed the personal documents of

the people...they have robbed money from homes... they have destroyed food stocks and carried away livestock, and killed cattle. It is as if we were returning to the medieval times of plunder and invasions. Two separate press conferences were held in Bhubaneswar by those who visited the area.

Concerned Citizens Committee on Kalinganagar Firing

Bhubaneswar: March 31, 2010

A citizens' committee which visited Baligootha Kalinganagar under the leadership of Justice Chaudhry Pratap Mishra (Retd Judge of Orissa High Court) on 30th March, 2010 after indiscriminate firing against peaceful protesters of Vistapan Virodhi Janmanch was reported in the media, has come across shocking instances of police and mafia brutality. The members of the committee which also included Sri Rabi Das (senior journalist), Shri Chitta Mohanty (writer and political activist), Sri Sudhir Patnaik (senior journalist), Sri Mahendra Parida, TU and human rights activist, met the victims of bullet injury in Baligootha, Chandia and Baragadia and saw the damages done to the houses, bovine wealth, food grains, food articles, motor bikes and cycles of the villagers.

The Sarpanch of Baligootha reported before the committee that his cash and golden chain also have been stolen from his house apart from the damage caused to food grains. Dabur Kalundia, another leader, also deposed before the team. Rabi Jarika, the leader of the agitating tribals who had sustained a bullet injury also narrated the incidents of the day and the politics behind the common corridor. The committee met men, women and children and about 25 injured persons including 9 women received treatment from the senior doctor who accompanied the committee along with a team of volunteers.

Observations of the Committee

1. About 30-40 tribals have sustained bullet injuries in the firing and 25 were treated by the doctor accompanying the committee. Four critically injured persons were in the hospital. Some have bullets stuck within their wounds. Though it appears to be rubber bullets, the kind of bloody wounds each one of the persons treated has received does not seem to be the work of rubber bullets.
2. No efforts by the administration to treat the injured. People don't wish to go out for treatment for fear of torture and arrest.
3. The police firing at the site of the controversial common corridor road near Baligootha was unwarranted and uncalled for and therefore looks to be preplanned.
4. 29 platoons of armed police, 2 platoons of NSG, 70 police officers and 7 magistrates does speak a lot about the firing and also speaks about the atmosphere of police terror prevailing in the area.
5. The witnesses report that familiar faces in the nearby localities close to the ruling party came in police uniform and attacked all houses in Baligootha. They did not carry guns. They had swords and other deadly weapons in their hand.
6. Civilian goons in the presence of police could be seen in the place in which 144 was declared, as reported by the people.
7. The houses of leaders of the Manch have been damaged and all important articles including food grains burnt.
8. Agitating and aggrieved tribals are spending sleepless nights under trees in fear of more attacks, since the police, goons of the company and certain criminal elements associated with the ruling party are

having a field day with good cooperation of the administration and police.

9. The presence of such a huge force itself threatens the peace of the area.
10. The administration does not seem to be sensitive to the cause of the tribal protesters as much as it is concerned for the companies in Kalinganagar.

Recommendations

1. The Hon'ble Chief Minister should immediately intervene and call an immediate halt to the controversial common corridor project
2. Since the administration has betrayed the people once more a dialogue should take place at the highest level with the CM on the demands of the tribals including the one calling for land for land. Even people owning land in the common corridor have not been consulted.
3. Instead of building police stations one after another in a small place with corporate funding the CM should ensure that every village gets developmental inputs particularly education, health, water, social security schemes such as widow pensions all of which have been suspended arbitrarily.
4. Law should not be taken to hands by any citizens and this law applies first to the police administration. All officers, civil and police, involved in the firing of 30th March and in criminal activities such as injecting a sense of fear among the tribals the day preceding the firing and conflicts must be suspended immediately and be subjected to trial.
5. Financial compensation to the tune of Rs 1 lakh for every person injured in the firing be given to the victims.

Justice Ch. Pratap Mishra (Retd)

Contd..... on Page 43

Hail the daring and the biggest ever guerrilla attack on the hired mercenaries of the Indian State carried out by the heroic PLGA guerrillas in Chhattisgarh!

Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram-Pranab gang is solely responsible for the loss of lives of CRPF jawans used as cannon-fodder in their dirty war on behalf of a tiny parasitic corporate elite!!

The heroic PLGA guerrillas led by the CPI (Maoist) have created history by wiping out an entire Company of the central paramilitary force in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh. The PLGA had wiped out over 80 CRPF mercenaries—a part of the huge armed mercenary force of over 60 battalions sent by Chidambaram to Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar and Maharashtra to carry out the genocide of adivasis. Several more mercenaries were injured in India's biggest ever guerrilla attack till date. A huge cache of highly sophisticated arms and ammunition was seized from these mercenaries that include mortars and LMGs. The CC, CPI (Maoist) sends its heartiest revolutionary greetings to the brave warriors of PLGA who have given a fitting reply to fraud Chidambaram and nailed his unabashed naked lie that his brutal Operation Green Hunt is a myth invented by the media.

The Dantewada ambush is a logical culmination of the unending terrible provocation by the uniformed goondas sent by Chidambaram and Raman Singh to the adivasi areas to create a brutal reign of terror. In just eight months, 114 innocent unarmed adivasi people were abducted, tortured and murdered in cold blood by these uniformed goondas. Several women were gang-raped by these lawless goons. Neither they nor their khadi-clad bosses have any respect for the Indian Constitution. They have an unwritten licence to abduct, torture, rape and murder any adivasi or Maoist without any questions being asked. This dehumanization of the police and paramilitary forces is consciously encouraged by Chidambaram, Raman Singh, Vishwa Ranjan and others, notwithstanding their holy chants of peace and *ahimsa*. Behind their sophisticated-looking rhetoric lie the raw, beastly, cannibalistic passions that devour human beings for establishing their absolute control over the resources and lives of the people. Their vision goes no farther than that of a local *daroga*, as aptly pointed out by a JD (U) spokesperson referring to Chidambaram. And their tactics fare no better than those of a street rowdy. **As long as their fascist mind-set refuses to see the socio-politico-economic roots of Naxalism and continue to treat it as a disease or a problem while the oppressed people see it increasingly as a remedy and a solution to their problems, Dantewada-type attacks will continue to take place at an even greater frequency and intensity.**

The atrocities committed by these forces, along with the state-sponsored Salwa Judum goons, Koya commandos and SPOs in Dantewada and Bijapur, make one shudder (leaving out Chidambaram and his animal species of cobras, jaguars, greyhounds etc) with horror and repugnance. Besides tales of unending abductions, horrifying torture, gruesome gang-rapes, and ghastly massacres of ordinary adivasis, the so-called “security forces” have kept in their illegal custody at least 20-30 adivasis from every village. Whenever they feel the need to show some success over the Maoists in terms of body count some of these hapless adivasi captives are bumped off with the claim that the “security forces” had killed Maoist guerrillas in “fierce encounters”. And to prove their claim to the world these Chidambaram liars put on military uniforms on the dead bodies of poor adivasis. With such a bizarre drama enacted by those supposed to be the guardians of law, then what other option do the Maoists and the adivasi masses have but to retaliate for their own self-defence?

Now the war-mongering hawks in the Union Home Ministry and various state governments, the political leaders and spokespersons of the parliamentary parties, the so-called defence analysts, police top brass and their agents employed in the media are yelling that an all-out war should be declared and the Maoists should be wiped out. The fact is, an all-out war has already been declared and executed in the most ruthless manner. What these vultures want is perhaps bombing of entire areas under Maoist control and achieving the peace of the graveyard. **If they indulge in such mindless barbaric acts, the Maoist revolutionary counter-violence will take on new and deadly forms which these apologists of state terror and state-sponsored terror cannot even imagine.**

The BJP and its saffron gang of Hindu fascist terrorists have been yelling like lunatics that Maoists had declared a war on India and that the BJP would endorse every move of the Congress to finish off the Maoists. In reply to these saffron terrorist gangsters we assert once again that ours is a war waged by the real India—the India of the oppressed, suppressed and depressed sections of society; the India of the hungry, impoverished, undernourished masses—against the India that shines for a handful of parasitic corporate elites, imperialist agents deriving enormous commissions and kickbacks through

nefarious deals, real estate mafia gangs who grab the land of the poor in the name of SEZs and various projects, unscrupulous contractors and mining syndicates who run a parallel state, horribly corrupt and degenerate political leaders and bureaucrats, licensed murderers in police uniforms who are infamous for the worst crimes against humanity, and such other traitors. Ours is a revolutionary war on the saffron gang of terrorists who are armed to the teeth and dream of transforming our country into a Hindu fascist state by enacting Gujarat-type genocides of religious minorities. Ours is a genuine People's War for achieving the real liberation of the people from all types of oppression and exploitation, and to establish a genuine people's democratic India. It is not a war on India but a war for the liberation of India from the clutches of rapacious plunderers.

The sole responsibility for the death of the CRPF men in Dantewada lies with Sonia-Man Mohan-Chidambaram-Pranab gang and the saffron terrorist Raman Singh regime in Chhattisgarh who are recruiting young boys and girls in a massive way and using them as cannon-fodder in their dirty counter-revolutionary war against Maoist revolutionaries, against the Maoist model of development, and in their greed hunt for the mineral wealth of the adivasi regions. The CC, CPI (Maoist), while offering its heart-felt condolences to the bereaved families of the dead jawans, appeals to the state and central paramilitary personnel to realize that they are being used as cannon-fodder in this war waged by the exploiting ruling class in the interests of a tiny parasitic elite against the poor and oppressed people of our country led by CPI (Maoist).

We appeal to all peace-loving, democratic-minded organizations and individuals in India to understand the context in which the Maoists are compelled to annihilate the so-called security forces who are creating a virtual reign of terror in adivasi areas armed with mortars, LMGs and grenades. **When dacoits try to loot your house you have to fight back. And that is what the masses led by the Maoists are doing in all these areas. When the CRPF dacoits enter and loot the houses of adivasis is it not justified to hit back?** The daring attack by our heroic PLGA on a superior enemy force in terms of fire-power became possible through the enormous mass support the Party and guerrillas enjoy. With the intelligence inputs from the people who are our eyes and ears and with their active participation we are confident of defeating the brutal enemy offensive in the name of Operation Green Hunt. There is no short-cut for achieving peace. **Only the most ferocious, most resolute, and the most heroic resistance on the part of the people can defeat the war-mongers and bring democratic space and peace for the people.**

Azad, Spokesperson,
Central committee, CPI (Maoist)

Contd..... from Page 41

State terror unleashed on protestors - Police invade villages

On March 28, 2010 the Bisthapan Birodhi Jan Manch leaders and villagers welcomed the Jajpur District Collector and had a discussion with him on the controversial common corridor, though they knew very well that the district administration had other motives. After talks with activists of Bisthapan Birodhi Jan Manch and more than 300 villagers, the Collector assured them that there would be no construction activity for the Common Corridor Road till the matter is resolved through dialogue. The administration has gone back on its words and started work. SP has said 'protestors will not be spared' and the Collector says "construction of the road will happen at any cost."

This gave the Manch no other alternative but to protest. But on 30th March, 29 platoons of armed police with 60 officers and hundreds of BJD

and Tata goons reached the place of dispute. They first denied media any entry to the place and then started attacking peaceful protesters. Many have been injured including women and children in indiscriminate rubber bullet firing and lathi charge. They entered the villages and unleashed a reign of terror. The area has become a war zone and more than a dozen people including women and children have been seriously injured. One person, Member Kalundia received bullet wounds in the chest and legs... Police has demolished houses and set them ablaze... Cattle have been indiscriminately shot at... Two days before Orissa Day the Govt celebrates with a bloodbath... The police had later vacated the village but have gathered about half a kilometer away in front of Rohit Ferro Chrome Factory where the construction of the common corridor road is to begin... All houses have been ransacked... food stocks

set afire... televisions, radios, etc have been destroyed... the girl who was beaten up by police has been admitted to the hospital... its not clear yet how many have been arrested but some 20-30 people have sustained serious injuries in the attack...

This is being carried out under the supervision of IG Special Operations, Arun Sadangi. Despite Sec 144 being imposed in the area, a large number of Tata supporters and BJD cadre have assembled at the site and are giving instructions to the police. All people who have a conscience must act now as democracy in Kalinganagar is being butchered in the most vulgar manner and the political and bureaucratic leadership of the state have completely sold themselves to the Tatas. There is not even a murmur of protest from any of the mainstream political party leaders which signifies the absolute power Tata wields over them.

PM

Red Salutes to Maoist leaders comrades Sakhamuri Appa Rao (Ravi) and Kondal Reddy (Ramana)!
Let us avenge the cold-blooded murder of our beloved leaders
by Chidambaram and his lawless goons!

Let us build country-wide wave of people's struggles to sweep away the fascist regime
led by Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram gang!!



On March 12, 2010 a former state committee member of Andhra Pradesh and current incharge of military intelligence wing of CPI(Maoist), comrade Sakhamuri Appa Rao, and a district committee member, comrade Kondal Reddy (also known as Tech Ramana), were murdered in cold blood by the notorious goons belonging to Andhra Pradesh Special Investigation Bureau and the AP Grey Hounds. The two leaders were abducted two days earlier from Chennai and Pune respectively, cruelly tortured by these neo-Nazi mercenaries hired by the Indian State, and taken to the forests where they were shot dead.

As usual, the story of an encounter was put forth by the government and the top police officials. As is the practice of the AP Grey Hounds and the SIB, the bodies were placed in the forests where these comrades had earlier worked—Comrade Sakhamuri Appa Rao's body was thrown in Nallamala forest while that of Kondal Reddy in Eturnagaram forest in Warangal. Through these SIB-Grey Hounds-mark murders the reactionary rulers want to demonstrate to the people of these regions who were associated with the revolutionary movement for a long period of time, and amongst whom these leaders had once worked, that they will ruthlessly crush any revival of the revolutionary movement in these one-time hot-beds of revolution. The decision to murder these comrades was taken by fascist Chidambaram himself in order to create a reign of terror, boost up the morale of his mercenary forces, and to boast how his fascist state offensive is yielding results. But the Andhra Pradesh police and Chidambaram, who had been claiming all the while that Nallamala forest has been cleared of the Maoists, had not even thought how the so-called encounter with such a big Maoist leader in the Nallamala region would mock at their own claims of the past three years. The entire people know that Maoists had retreated from Nallamala almost three years ago but in their hastiness to complete their ghastly murder before civil rights and other organizations get alerted, the lawless police goons chose Prakasham district which is nearer to Chennai.

Comrade Ravi had been to Chennai on some work on the 24th of February and was in touch with other comrades of the Party until two days prior to his murder. It is clear that he was abducted on March 10. Three more comrades are still illegally detained by the SIB and Grey Hounds. There is every danger that these would be murdered in cold blood. Comrade Ravi is one of the senior most leaders from Andhra Pradesh and hails from Khanapur area in Warangal district. He was elected as an alternate member of the AP State Committee of the Party in 1991. He was arrested in early 1993 and spent 7 1/2 years in prison where he displayed extraordinary revolutionary mettle and led many struggles of the prisoners along with comrade Patel Sudhakar. He commenced his work as a member of the AP State Committee after his release in late 2000. He became a member of the State Military Commission and carried on his work in Nallamala forest region until 2006. Later, he guided the Party's Intelligence department in AP and the Action Teams. He played a prominent role in planning and executing tactical counter-offensives against the police forces and attacks on political targets such as the one on the SP of Prakasham district in 2005 and on former chief minister of AP, Janardhan Reddy, in 2007.

Comrade Kondal Reddy hails from Medak district in South Telangana and has been working in the production department of the CPI (Maoist) in Andhra Pradesh for over a decade. He played an important role in the production and distribution of hand grenades and pressure mines. He never hesitated whenever any extremely risky work was allotted to him by the party leadership and was highly disciplined.

The cold-blooded murders of these Maoist leaders are an integral part of the unprecedented fascist offensive unleashed by the central and state governments against the CPI (Maoist) in the name of Operation Green Hunt. While the chief objective of this brutal armed offensive is to create genocide of the adivasis and steal their lands and the forest-mineral

Contd..... on Page 37