

PEOPLE'S MARCH

Voice of the Indian Revolution

“Such policies would ultimately force the marginalized to take up arms”.

Aruntati Roy in front of CPI Marxist Head Quarters in New Delhi.

“Unnecessarily do not push the non-violent to be violent”.

Medha Patkar's maneuvers in Kolkata after her 25 years of peaceful struggles.

Abhishek Mukerjee, General Secretary of Revolutionary Students Front (RSF), a constituent of RDF, West Bengal was arrested on December 8th and has been charged under sections 120-B, 147, 148, 149, 452 and 427 Cr.P.C.

In other states CITU protests against acquisition of farmlands for SEZ (for its survival)

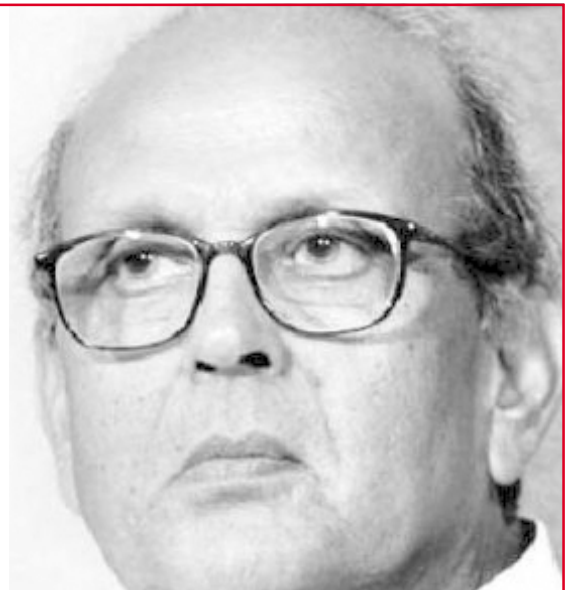
“I have no hesitation in saying that many of them are highly motivated. They are convinced that they are fighting for a cause. They are far better than the criminals who have managed to infiltrate assemblies and parliament and even become ministers”. -Prakash Singh I.P.S. (former director-general of BSF.)

I want to become a Maoist – V.P. Singh

The former prime minister of our country has himself gone on record to say that given today's circumstances and developments he would have become a Maoist and the only thing stopping him from joining them is his failing health.

I want to ask today's youth, one question.

What is stopping you from joining the Maoists ?



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Foreign Enclaves In India Colonisation in a New Form



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Logic of Class Struggle

Society, like nature, functions on the basis of certain laws. These laws act independent of the intervention of man. Natural scientists seek to understand the laws governing nature in order to harness it for the benefit of {in capitalism — “exploitation of”} mankind. Social scientists or Marxists seek to understand the laws that govern society in order to change it in the interests of the bulk of society — the oppressed. No scientist, however great, can bend these laws, whether in nature or society.

The greatness of any scientist — whether of nature or society — lies in their ability to discover the detailed intricacies of these laws, and apply these discoveries to nature and society for the benefit of mankind. Their greatness or not is tested in the results they produce; not in abstract postulations or empty rhetoric. Einstein, Newton, and others would not have been the great natural scientists had they not proved their discoveries in practice. Neither would Marx or Mao or any other have been the great social scientists through mere postulation, but by the results their discoveries showed in the crucible of concrete practice.

So, in society class struggle too has its laws as discovered by Marx and Engels and then further enriched by Lenin, Stalin and Mao. These laws find their varied forms and manifestations in different countries depending on the level of development of these societies and their specific characteristics. But the laws themselves do not change from country to country. No doubt these laws continue to be enriched and developed through increased knowledge gained through class struggle, struggle for production and scientific experimentation. The logic of class struggle, class contradictions and class antagonisms operate everywhere; and it is in grasping these in their concrete manifestation that the Marxist revolutionary brings about change. The problem with the liberal (or revisionist), however well intentioned, is his inability to understand the inherent antagonistic nature of class contradictions and the fierceness of the struggle between the opposing classes. So they come forward

with patchwork solutions that change little in society.

Take our country. India is a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country. Here, the logic of class struggle demands an intensive anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle to overthrow the existing order and establish a new democratic order moving towards socialism. This entails a fierce class struggle against any and every manifestation of imperialism (and their CBB agents) and feudalism and not against just one or two aspects of it.

So, for example the RSS, Maharajas, monarchy, etc have been important pillars of the semi-feudal structure in Indian society. But they cannot be equated to being equal to the semi-feudal order itself whose core aspect lies in the production relations (around land ownership). No doubt the fascist RSS must be smashed; but mere one-point opposition to the “communal forces” in CPM-style results in landing in the lap of the Congress. The logic of the class struggle demands that semi-feudalism cannot be destroyed merely by attacks on its super structural manifestation but by also attacking its base. So, the RSS, Rajas, monarchy, etc may be ousted but semi-feudalism continues in new forms. In India have not we seen this? Indira Gandhi abolished the privy purses of the Maharajas but semi-feudalism continued in the country. In West Bengal the CPM Operation Barga brought certain changes, but semi-feudalism continued in new forms. So, the logic of class struggle shows us that no change in the backward relation of production is possible without a radical democratic transformation in both the base and also the superstructure.

So also certain last govern imperialism discovered by Lenin. Its manifestations today may have changed but the basic laws of imperialist exploitation and control remain the same. The logic of class struggle in the imperialist era requires that not only imperialist capital be kicked out of the country but also that their agents are divested of both their economic and political power. No half-way measures are possible. So, for all the ant-imperialist rhetoric of the CPM they most faithfully

implement all imperialist policies in the states that they run. Of course, that is inevitable, for ANYONE who attempts to share power within the existing structure in any country of the world. Class logic demands that either you are with imperialist policies or you are fighting it; the imperialists will not allow ‘peaceful’ co-existence of any independent system within it. This is most glaringly seen in West Bengal where the CPM has introduced crudely the most blatant imperialist-dictated policies. This was also shown by history where many a national liberation movement of the 1960s & 1970s compromised with imperialism (or then social imperialism). We saw this in Indo-China, many a country of Africa, in Nicaragua, in El Salvador..... the list is endless.

But we do not have to go that far; the state of West Bengal is a ideal example of this. In the nearly three decades of CPM rule the level of poverty is as bad as in any other State. But not merely poverty indicators — the Sachar Committee Reports says that the status of Muslims in WB is even worse than most other States, and a recent NSSO survey says the status of dalits and tribes in the sphere of education is also worse than most other States. The government of WB has been most aggressively implementing all the imperialist-dictated policies including even the most anti-national ones like that of the SEZs. Best agricultural land is being seized for big business, like for Tata at Singur and on the outskirts of Kolkota for the mafia Salim Group of Indonesia. Huge amounts of Japanese capital are coming into WB with all types of concessions. Not only this, the CPM is as (or even more) ruthless against the Maoist revolutionaries as any other reactionary Party. But of course, this is inevitable as either the entire economy needs to be re-organised (creating a local home market through radical land reforms and generation of capital by preventing imperialist/CBB drain) to be sustainable, or it is bound to get sucked into the imperialist/CBB vortex.

Besides, there can be no all-pervading democracy in the abstract — it is so-called

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Free Mohammed Afzal; Free Kashmiri People from the Indian Prison House

The hanging of Mohammed Afzal is yet another bullet aimed at the heart of the beautiful Kashmir valley and its peoples' right to self-determination. The story of Afzal is like the story of Kashmir — humiliated, brutalized, tortured, and finally set to be hanged/destroyed by the Indian rulers. A people who once lived a peaceful existence in their idyllic surroundings so brutalized by the Chankyas of India; a people utilized for imperialist intrigues; a people who have been used as pawns in a game of treachery between the brahminical Indian rulers and the fundamentalist Pakistani rulers. Afzal is just one more victim; one more Kashmiri sacrificed at the altar of Indian big nation chauvinism; a scape-goat to whip up anti-Kashmiri and anti-Muslim sentiments in the country.

Mohammed Afzal must not merely not be hanged; he must be freed unconditionally to return to his earlier simple life with his wife and 7-year old child. Facts show that there is neither a legal nor a moral case against Afzal. His was a trial by media lies and a megalomaniacal Supreme Court that not only sends Afzal to the gallows, but also destroys lakhs of families of traders in Delhi, gives derogatory judgments against dalits and OBCs with their elitist/casteist bias, destroys lakhs of lives of slum-dwellers to protect their luxurious lives, etc etc. Of late, more than ever before, these's judges in their demonic wigs act as vampires of the establishment drawing blood of the masses.

Take the legal aspects in the Afzal case.

The Legal Case

On Dec 13th 2001 at 11.30 am there was a clumsy attack on the Parliament. All the attackers were killed. Afzal, Geelani, etc were supposed to be accomplices and for this they were sentenced to death. The attack was in the wake of the US 9/11 incident and was used by the Indian rulers to break relations with Pakistan and waste Rs.10,000 crores in the biggest ever military mobilization to the border. In a special fast-track court under POTA, the trial court sentenced Geelani, Shaukat and Afzal to death. The High Court subsequently acquitted Geelani and the Supreme Court reduced Shaukat's death sentence to 10 year's imprisonment. In its

August 4, 2005 judgment the Supreme Court clearly said that there was no evidence that Afzal belonged to any terrorist organisation. Yet while sentencing him to death the judgment is more political than judicial. It says "*the incident which ...had shaken the conscience of society, will only be satisfied if capital punishment is awarded to the offender.... The appellant, who is a surrendered militant and who was bent upon repeating the acts of treason against the nation, is a menace to the society and his life should become extinct*".

So, Afzal's "*life should become extinct*"!! But, on what evidence? For 5 months, from the time he was arrested to the day the charge-sheet was filed, Afzal, lodged in a high security prison, had no legal defence, no legal advice. On Dec 10th 2001 the police, after brutal torture extracted a confession from Afzal before the media which got widely propagated. This fake 'confession' was even set aside by the High Court and the Supreme Court. So, Afzal's confession was dismissed; his links with the Kashmiri organisations were never proved; a number of the 'evidences' manufactured by the police were proved to be false in the courts, only his links with the 'terrorists' who attacked Parliament were supposedly proved. But till today no one knows who they are!!! Why have their names never been disclosed? Yet Afzal's *life should become extinct*. This, inspite of the fact that he had no lawyer to defend him. The court-appointed lawyer acted against him and the 80 prosecution 'witnesses' went undefended. Yet the case was full of loopholes with no clinching evidence.

The Afzal Saga

In 1989, like many Kashmiri youth, Afzal crossed the border to be trained as a militant, when he was barely 20. He returned with no training disillusioned. He put down his gun and enrolled in Delhi University. In 1993, without ever having been a practicing militant, he surrendered to the BSF. For this surrender he was boycotted by all his relatives who were well known JKLF members. It was after his surrender that his nightmares began. He began a business, but since 2000 the army

harassed him daily to become an informer. In 2001 the STF picked him up and continuously tortured him until he paid one lakh for his release and he was made an SPO (Special Police Officer) by the STF. One of those killed in the Parliament attack, Mohammed, was also in the STF camp. It was the STF who told Afzal to accompany Mohammad to Delhi giving threats if he did not he would again be arrested and tortured. Later Mohammad was killed in the Parliament attack and Afzal was arrested in Kashmir for collaboration. He was not only brutally tortured but also threatened that his family would be killed if he did not cooperate.

Mass Movement for release of Afzal

Such then is the conspiracy behind the Afzal hanging.

Huge angry protests have been rocking Kashmir against the hanging of Afzal. The Kashmiri people do not expect justice from Indian courts. They see Mohammed Afzal as a sort of prisoner-of-war being tried in the courts of an occupying power. In India too a large number of intellectuals, lawyers, writers etc have been demanding that Afzal should not be hanged. While the likes of Advani are braying for his blood. And it was the CPI(Maoist) that issued the strongest statement against the hanging.

In a statement issued on October 7th the CPI(Maoist) said:

The Supreme Court had convicted Mohammad Afzal Guru to death sentence for the attack on the Parliament in December 2001 and the date for the execution is set for October 20. This is not only unjustified and inhuman but also betrays the anti-Muslim bias and hatred harboured by the Indian rulers. There was no fair trial and no direct evidence. The sentence was given basing on sheer circumstantial evidence. Death sentence against Afzal is not just a punishment given to an individual but a reaffirmation of the ongoing war by the fascist Indian state against the Kashmiri national liberation fighters and the entire Muslim community in India. The so-called of 'rule of law' cannot obfuscate this obvious fact.

One would not, of course, have expected anything less from the pro-Hindu, anti-Muslim fascist rulers of India. Whether they are in the guise of the BJP

or Congress or any other parliamentary party, or in the form of the legislative, judiciary, executive, the police and other security forces, the bias against the Muslim community is crystal-clear. That is why, in the past several decades, not a single Hindu chauvinist terrorist has been awarded such a stringent punishment, no matter if he had burnt alive scores of Muslims, dalits, adivasis and women. No single police official had gone to the gallows for having massacred people going against every law and fundamental right incorporated in the Constitution of India. Mass murderers of the Muslims like Narendra Modi of the BJP or butchers of Sikhs like HKL Bhagath of the Congress are even adorned with titles of honour. Vajapayees and Advanis, who should have been hanged for their crimes of inflaming communal passions by overseeing the demolition of Babari Masjid and causing death and destruction on an unprecedented scale in the country. The real terrorists, whether communal-fascist, or state-sponsored, roam scot-free as liberation fighters, revolutionaries and Muslim youth are killed every day by the state and state-sponsored gangs. Such is the real face of democracy in our country.

It is, in fact, the Parliament that has the greatest number of the top terrorists, gangsters, criminals and scamsters of our

country. These criminal gangsters are in leading positions in every parliamentary party and they enter the Parliament and Assemblies, and this has now become a granted thing. There are scamsters who occupy the highest seats of power despite swindling hundreds of crores of people's hard-earned money through kickbacks and commissions. These traitors have no compunction in selling the motherland to the videshi masters for a few crumbs. Yet all these anti-national, anti-people continue to hold the lifelines of the country, posing a grave threat to the security of the country. The BJP, whose hands are stained with the blood of thousands of Muslim people, and whose bestiality and sadism was displayed in full colours during the Gujarat genocide, has been shamelessly clamouring loudly for the death sentence to be carried out without any leniency.

The state's security forces had committed indescribable atrocities in Kashmir since 1989. They had massacred over 80,000 Kashmiri people, tortured several thousand people, raped hundreds of Kashmiri muslim women, and destroyed property of the Kashmiris and had not even spared muslim masjids. Hundreds of people had just 'disappeared' without any trace. As Kashmir bleeds in agony, the state has decided to add salt to the

festering wound by conspiring to send Afzal to the gallows. Not seeking clemency by Afzal shows the pride and the passion for freedom of the Kashmiri people. As long as the brutal oppression of the Kashmiris goes on, as long as youth are killed are abducted, women are raped, and muslim community is discriminated against leading to further alienation, attacks on parliament or assassination of the political leaders and cruel police officers and bureaucrats will continue unabated. Death sentences will only strengthen the resolve of the freedom fighters. More and more Kashmiri youth will be inspired to step into the shoes of Afzal who will be identified as a martyr for the cause of Kashmir.

Let us wage a massive people's movement not only to repeal the death sentence against Afzal, but also to withdraw all the security forces who are creating insecurity in Kashmir, punish all the officials responsible for the atrocities on the Kashmiri people and Muslims, repeal of all draconian laws, releasing all political detainees and those 'missing' persons who are in the illegal custody of the police, para-military and the armed forces. And, most important of all, we must build a powerful people's movement demanding self-determination to the Kashmiri nation



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democracy under the capitalist/imperialist system often turning to open fascism in periods of crisis; or it is proletarian democracy (with all its limitations) under the new-democratic/socialist system. 'Democracy' too has its class logic. In the era of imperialism even the trappings of bourgeois democracy get reduced as the laws of imperialism demand domination, not freedom. In the realm of proletarian democracy there has been much experimentation and great advance, particularly with the Great Proletarian

Cultural Revolution in China and the experiments of Tachai and Taching. Here, there were gigantic experiments with democracy, but always maintaining class struggle as the key link. No doubt even this has to be developed further (as the reversal in China would show) but this would entail greater democratization at the very level of production and increased proletarian (class) consciousness amongst the masses and maybe certain other factors. But certainly it would not entail any hotchpotch utilization of the bourgeois voting machine.

The logic of class struggle and class contradictions shows that there cannot be any third form of social structure — either it must come within the capitalist/imperialist framework or it must go under the new-democratic/socialist framework. Whatever our good intentions may be, class reality will not allow any third alternative. While creatively and effectively advancing revolution it is important to learn lessons from history. In addition, it is important not to forget the logic of class struggle.



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Delhi Traders on the War Path! SC Acts as Tool of Big Business!!

Arvind

Six companies of the BSF; 44 of the CRPF; thousands of local police — it was like a war zone. This was not Kashmir or the North East or any Naxalite Guerrilla Zone, but the heart of Delhi; the capital of the country. The massive force was to back up the demolition drive of 'illegal' traders after the violent 3-day bandh in the beginning of November. The gigantic use of force was to ensure that the will of the moneybags (sorry Supreme Court) will be obeyed. Overnight lakhs of people have been turned into illegal traders in their own city.

First, many Muslims in the name of being Bangladeshis were branded 'illegal'; then all slum-dwellers were branded as being 'illegal' residents and now even the traders are being thus branded. In the eyes of the Supreme Court (SC) and their elite judgehood, only the moneyed are legal citizens; the rest are to be treated like scum to be kicked around or out of the city, or maintained only to service them.

During the Emergency about 7 lakh slum-dwellers were bulldozed out of the city by the Congress gangs; a few years back thousands of small units were closed down and over a lakh rendered unemployed on the SC's order against so-called polluting industries; a little earlier a large number of slums were demolished; and now it is the turn of the traders and shop-keepers. It is estimated that in Delhi there are roughly 5 lakh large, medium, small and tiny business families that are affected by the threat of sealing. That is, in the present round of attacks over 1 crore people could get affected. Due to the lack of unity amongst all these section (and even within them) the government and its courts have been able to systematically attack one section after another.

The first battle took place on Sept 20th during the one-day bandh when police mowed down four people in cold blood. On that day Delhi was rocked by violent clashes between the traders and the police. Almost all major markets across the city were closed, with traders blocking the main roads and hurling stones at government vehicles. Around Seelampur, a Muslim re-settlement colony, pitched battles took place between the local residents and the

police/para-military. In the clash about 30 police were injured and 40 residents. In the police firing of the four killed two were young men and a child. In the rest of the city protesters damaged 20 city buses and most of the main roads were blocked. The bandh was called by the Confederation of All-India Traders (CAIT) and was supported by nearly 500 small and big market associations. Due to the militancy of the traders the MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi) was forced to slow down its sealing drive.

But the Supreme Court was adamant. All the political parties lent lip support to the traders but did nothing. The SC directed the MCD to begin a full scale offensive in November after the Divali holidays. It was before this that the traders then called a 3-day bandh from Oct.31st to Nov.2nd. Coincidentally it was during these very same days that Reliance launched the first of its retail chain in Hyderabad, announcing plans to open 1,500 all over the country. The November bandh turned even more violent than the September one. Buses were burnt and many more damaged, roads were blockaded, windowpanes were smashed and stones were thrown at the police. Even trains were stopped. 350 people were arrested. Seeing the anger of the traders the police declared they did not have sufficient force to back the MCD drive. At a marathon meeting between the SC appointed Monitoring Committee, the MCD and the Delhi Police it was decided to put off the sealing drive by a couple of days. It is then that they moved in the huge contingents of the para-military and systematically began their destruction campaign. Since then in area after area the para-military, in menacing riot gear, is being moved in followed by the MCD bulldozers. With such a massive force the media gleefully reports that the demolitions are taking place 'peacefully'.

And as this goes on, all the political parties only make a pretense of support to the traders. The Congress, which is in power at both the Centre and Delhi, could easily pass a law regularizing the shops but is playing cat-and-mouse with the traders. The BJP, which has traditionally a big base amongst the traders, is supposed

to be leading the agitation, but their main task is to divert attention from the issue. In fact on the first day of the winter session of Parliament they took out a massive morcha demanding the hanging of Afzal and made 'internal security' the main issue in the Lok Sabha. Not a word was said on the trader's issue. Most other parties are silent, including the so-called left as this anyhow is not their vote-bank.

Why then such a massive campaign in Delhi? There are basically two reasons.

First, Delhi and other such metropolitan centres are at the heart of big business and the TNCs. The ruling elite and their imperialist masters are based here. For long the imperialists have been ailing about the poor infrastructure of the country and have demanded that this be given top priority if they want greater foreign investment. Top class roads, malls, clubs, five star services, is what they demand in these enclaves. If thousands of lives have to be displaced in order to cater to them, so be it. And so the bulldozers move ruthlessly.

The second reason is the planned influx of huge retail chains into the city. To make way for these giants the smaller (and even medium sized) kirana and other shops must be forcibly pushed out. Since the last two years the major big business houses have made gigantic plans to move into retailing; and the giants of international retailing like Wal Mart have also been making regular trips to the country. These vultures are eagerly eyeing the gigantic \$300 billion (Rs.14 lakh crores) retail market in India which is expected to rise to \$ 637 billion by 2015 — of which only 3% is in the organised sector at present. This market is already growing at 30% per year and they plan to grab 10% of the retail market or \$ 30 billion (over Rs.1 lakh crores) by 2010.

On Nov.3rd Reliance (Mukesh Ambani) launched its first retail outlet at Hyderabad under the brand names 'Fresh' and 'Select' to market vegetables and fruit. They plan a massive investment of Rs.25,000 crores in this retail sector, which would purchase directly from the farmers, set up 68 processing centres all over the country and retail direct to the consumer. As a result they would wipe out not only lakhs of small

retailers but also a number of wholesalers, traders, middlemen and a host of businesses associated with the marketing of these agro-products.

But Reliance is not alone in this line. ITC's Choupal Fresh plans a major entry, ironically entering through the good services of the CPM West Bengal government. It has put before the state government a plan for a Rs.1,250 crores investment. Others joining the retail bandwagon are Pantaloon Retail, Anil Ambani, Tatas, Aditya Birla Group (with a planned initial investment of Rs.6,000 crores), Bharati Group (Mittals), etc, and all the major international retailers are lobbying hard to enter the country. They plan to increase the organised retail market from the present \$ 7 billion (3% of the total) to a massive \$ 80 billion in the next five years. They plan a massive \$ 20 billion in new investment (excluding the real estate purchase of land). In fact nearly a year back the head of the biggest company in the world, Wal Mart (the largest US retail outlet which has just signed up in a joint venture with the Bharati Group for a massive entry into the retail sector) was himself present in India meeting up with not only a host of ministers but the very Prime Minister himself. Not only that, the four major TNC Fruit companies in the world — Chiquita, Fresh Del Monte, Dole Foods and

Capescan — are planning to put up chains of small neighbourhood stores (particularly in southern India) in direct competition with the small sabziwallah. All are planning joint ventures with local compradors. Quite naturally with such a planned offensive on the country the small retailers must be crushed so that these big fish can thrive. The Supreme Court is merely acting as the whipping stick for these big moneybags entering the retail sector.

India has about 1.2 crore retail outlets throughout the country. More than 80% of these are run by small family businesses, which only use household labour. The big retail chains are aiming to capture the main middle and upper class retail purchases targeting a 3 crore population with an estimated purchasing capacity of \$230 billion (a gigantic market of about Rs.9 lakh crores). In China and Brazil these big retail chains have already raised the organised retail market from 5% to 20% and 38% respectively in the last decade. Once these chains come in one can expect to what extent the small and medium shopkeeper will be thrown out.

It was the elite from the Green park area of Delhi, which first filed the case in 1994 for the removal of 'eye soars' from their posh locality. Riding on the back of this case and utilising the good services of the Supreme Court, Reliance and gang

will march into the city wiping out the small shop-keepers and forcing even the middle class to pay high prices for their vegetables, fruit and other purchases from the malls. It is well known that most shops at the Malls (except eateries and multiplexes) are selling poorly. The present drive will no doubt also be a boon for them.

This attack is basically targeting the small traders and the middle classes, the elite are to be accommodated. The government has put forward a scheme for the regularization of 1,500 posh colonies like the Sainik Farms, Anant Ram Dairy and Mahendroo Enclaves, etc.

The people of Delhi and other urban metropolitan centers need to unite against this huge conspiracy against them and act unitedly and not just for their narrow interests. They need to unite in a common fight against this very model of urban development, which is being built for the elite. The slum-dwellers the traders, the small industrialists, and their employees need to unite to fight against this displacement. There are two choices before the people — 5 star elite enclaves where the bulk of the population are marginalized; or all-round development with emphasis on poverty eradication. The former will also entail a brutal police force to protect these rich enclaves and state terror on a scale unimaginable even today.



Letter to the Editor,

People's March,

I appreciate the article on child revolutionaries which was printed in the June-July 06 issue of the magazine for trying to highlight the role of children in the revolutionary movement and how the dismal conditions in their villages and the country have drawn them to the revolutionary movement. But there were some shortcomings in the article which will give a chance to the ruling class baiters of the movement to malign it. If the article was meant as a reply to the propaganda being done through TV channels and the rest of the media then it needed to be written with more care. All around the world the imperialists have tried to malign

people's movements while claiming that children are recruited as fighters. For one the article should have mentioned the way the imperialists and the big bourgeoisie are targeting children's minds, and distorting their self-images and aspirations through their advertisements. There is a hidden war going on for winning the minds of children, and for moulding their values and it is the task of revolution to give a constructive approach to children, to arouse in them the desire for and value for justice, equality and cooperation. Further the article mentions that "children are moving in uniform". This was unnecessary because they are not fighters of the PLGA in actual war, but young soldiers of the entire revolutionary movement. The article further states, in general terms, "*These children are not*

educated through books, they are educated through life....they are not pure mental beings, they are physical labourers". These kind of simplistic general statements instead of communicating the real situation distorts it. Children are educated through books, but not through books alone. This is the fact, and in the 21st century if we make claims that children are not educated through books the movement will be maligned. Also children should not be physical labourers. Marx has very succinctly brought out the importance of making children participate in labour and arousing in them value for labour. But that does not mean we consider them labourers. Much care needs to be taken when presenting these aspects of the movement in the magazine.

Avanti



Special Economic Zones — Colonization in a new form

Rashmi

“We will commit hatya, not atmahatya, like the Vidharbha farmers”, says Jaywant Madhvi of Vashi village in Pen taluk in Raigad district, just outside Mumbai. The context is land acquisition notices being served to farmers for the 35,000 acre (14,000 ha) SEZ being developed by Mukesh Ambani’s Reliance Industries Limited (RIL). On 15th August, a gram sabha was held in the Kalabusre village of the Uran taluka of the same district. This sabha was attended by over a 100 people and passed a resolution against the proposed MSEZ (Mumbai SEZ). This SEZ would be one of the largest in the country and one-third the size of the metropolis. The company and the local officials claim it is all ‘unproductive’ land whereas according to the villagers, they are twice blessed with very rich soil for rice and the sea for fishing. Says a farmer in one of the villages, *“we don’t want jobs in any factory. We have our land, our trees and the sea to keep our stomachs full.”* The question posed by the 1200 farmers, facing take over of their lands and displacement is that why does’nt the government develop SAZ (Special Agricultural Zones) instead of SEZs? According to informed sources, Reliance plans to convert these fields into expensive real estate, **and the government seems to be acting as its broker, forcibly acquiring land at a pittance and handing it over to RIL to sell to businesses in the SEZ.** It will be a satellite city in prime location close to the major highways, ports and site for the new international airport. Besides the 45 villages that are to be acquired, Reliance has been buying up agricultural land at cheap rates anticipating an increase in the land value in the area once the SEZ comes through. The records of the government estimate the value of the land at around 1.7 lakhs to 2.5 lakhs an acre. Reliance has been trying to buy the land at 3 to 4 lakh rupees an acre. And the market rate, depending on the quality and the location is anywhere between 20 and 40 lakhs rupees an acre now! A bridge connecting Navi Mumbai and Central Mumbai is also proposed and Reliance is one of the bidders to build up the bridge! Across Maharashtra, farmers have

organized huge protests against the forcible acquisitions for this SEZ.

Anil Ambani’s Reliance has also sparked a similar controversy. The acquisition of 2,500 acres of agricultural land by the UP government for the Reliance power project at Dadri (near Delhi) for Reliance Power led to massive protests by the farmers. V.P.Singh himself has chosen to spearhead the protests. The Mulayam Singh government is accused of giving a subsidy of 60% on the land prices i.e. 60% of the land price will be paid by the state government and the rest by the Reliance group. Of the total land being acquired for this SEZ, 400 acres belong to the Gram Sabha for playground, school, community purposes etc. This 400 acres has been doled away to Reliance at Rs 100 per square yard for a lease of 99 years while the remaining 21,000 acres has been taken at the rate of Rs 150 per square yard. Interestingly, the Mulayam Singh government had offered 25,000 acres of land to Reliance and even acquired some for it, even though this project had not even come up for approval before the Board of Approvals.

It is reported in the National Capital Region (NCR) around Delhi, over 4.2 lakh hectares have been acquired by government agencies which plan to sell the land to property developers and corporate houses. The Delhi Devedlopment Authority (DDA) has recently acquired one lakh acres for transfer to builders. The Greater Noida Authority has acquired 80,000 acres around Delhi, and Hudco 40,000 acres in Faridabad in Haryana. Similarly, thousands of acres are being bought around Gaziabad from farmers at rates as low as Rs.50 a square foot when prevalent market rates are 20 to 100 times higher.

The Orissa government, already facing opposition to the South Korean’s Steel giant Posco having been given land and concessions, has now, in principle, cleared the proposal of the multi-product SEZ to be set up by the same company in Jagatsinghpur district on 1,601 hectares. Even before the sanction, the state government has handed over more than 1100 acres of agricultural land to the firm at the rate of Rs 25,000 an acre.

Not to be left behind, both the Left-ruled states, Kerala and West Bengal have joined the SEZ bandwagon. In fact, it has no problems in handing over farmland to the SEZ developers even though the same has been declared “no go” zones in some other states.

Eight mega projects have already received in-principle SEZ recognition from the Board of Approvals in West Bengal. The biggest of them is that of Indonesia’s Salim group proposing to set up two SEZs in Haldia district requiring a total of 22,500 acres of land. Many of the remaining 6 SEZs are to be located in land-scarce North 24-Parganas and Howrah. Videocon which received the go ahead for 3 SEZs will need 2,700 acres for one of its projects in North 24-Parganas and another 310 acres for another of its projects in the same district.

Ever since the passing of the SEZ Act in 2005, there has been a flood of proposals for developing SEZs all over the country. While the entire world has only 400 SEZs and China only six, India has already crossed 200 approvals within a year, 48 of them in Maharashtra alone. Till early October, 2006, the Board of Approvals had given ‘formal approval’ to 181 SEZ projects across the country and ‘in principle’ approval to another 128. According to informal estimates based on the proposals for the SEZs, the total land already acquired or to be acquired for the 181 projects is to the tune of 30,000 hectares. Including the requirement for in-principle approvals and those that are ‘under consideration’, the total would come to 1,25,000 ha - almost equal to the size of Delhi! Further approvals were given on the 10th and the 29th of October. On 10th October, 2006, 26 formal approvals were granted requiring a total land of over 510 hectares. The 25 formal and 21 in principle approvals given on 29th of October include that by Ansals in Haryana.

Apart from the widespread opposition to the SEZs by the people, there are also debates within the government, especially the Ministry of Commerce and the Finance Ministry about the costs and benefits of the SEZs. Despite this chaotic situation, the Commerce Ministry and the Board of Approvals for SEZs, which functions

under it, are going ahead with the process of clearing the proposals in a big hurry.

SEZ : What does it mean?

The SEZ (Special Economic Zone) idea was first mooted in the year 2000 by the then Commerce Minister, Murasoli Maran under the NDA government's regime. The objectives of the SEZs include making available goods and services free of taxes and duties, integrated infrastructure for export production, quick approval mechanisms, and a package of incentives to attract foreign and domestic investments for promoting exports. While the policy relating to SEZs is contained in the Foreign Trade Policy, incentives and other facilities offered to SEZ developers and units were being implemented through various notifications and circulars issued by the Ministries and the departments concerned. The guidelines for SEZs were incorporated into the 1997-2002 EXIM Policy framework.

The UPA government after coming to power in 2004, felt that the existing system did not inspire enough confidence in investors for them to commit a substantial amount of money for the development of infrastructure. That became the basis for bringing a Central Act for SEZs. The SEZ Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on May 10, 2005 and was passed by both the houses of the Parliament on May 12, 2005 and it secured the President's assent on June 23, 2005. The Board of Approvals in its first meeting, in March 2006, cleared 148 of the 166 proposals before it.

The Commerce and Industries Ministries state that "*SEZs are about infrastructure creation*" and that "*infrastructure is not only roads, ports and airports but also workplaces like industrial parks and IT parks*". The process of an approval requires receipt of an application by a state government from a private enterprise. This is routed to the Union Commerce Ministry after an initial clearance at the state level. It is then placed "*under consideration*"; this leads to "*in principle approval*" and "*formal approval*". The final stage is the notification of the project.

There are two actors in the SEZs—Developer and the Entrepreneur. The former is the company that develops infrastructure and other facilities on the land earmarked for SEZs. The Developer then invites the Entrepreneur or the

company(ies) that sets up units taking advantage of the tax waivers and other incentives. Both of them are given huge concessions as can be seen from the table below.

Incentives for the Developers

Concessions for the Units in SEZs

- Duty-free import/procurement of goods for development, operation of SEZs
- A duty-free enclave that is treated as a foreign territory for trade and tariffs
- Income tax exemption for a block of any 10 years in 15 years
- Licence-free imports
- Freedom to allot developed plots to approved units on commercial basis
- Customs duty exemption on imports
- Foreign funds to develop township
- No excise on capital goods, raw materials procured in the domestic market
- Suppliers to SEZs from domestic tariff area (DTA) deemed exports
- 100% income tax exemption for a block of five years, 50% for two years, and up to 50% of the profits ploughed back for the next three years
- For offshore banking units, 100% income tax exemption for three years and 50% for two years
- Freedom to subcontract even abroad
- In manufacturing, barring a few sectors, 100% FDI through automatic route
- No cap on foreign investment for SSI reserved items
- No industrial licensing for SSI items
- In order to acquire the land needed by a SEZ, The government uses the notorious Land Acquisition Act whereby the government is allowed to acquire land for 'public purpose'. The state's power of eminent domain to acquire land, usually at below market rates, or to force unwilling sellers to alienate their land, which is being used extensively to acquire land for the big mining and industrial projects and dams will also acquire land for the SEZs. The fact of the matter is that everything about these special zones is special—the way of taxes, enjoy access to state subsidies of various sorts, will be immune from the rules that normally govern the running of businesses, especially from all labour laws. **And the particularly special aspect is that they are 'foreign' enclaves within the territory of India!**

It is not surprising that the SEZ Act and the flood of proposals have raised a lot of controversy and opposition. Let us look at some of the contentious issues.

Myth of export promotion & development of industry

The government claims that one of the main objectives of the SEZs is promotion of exports. The SEZ policy is an extension of the earlier policies with respect to free trade zones (FTZs that have now been converted into SEZs) and 100 per cent export-oriented units (EOUs). The logic of the 100 per cent EOU policy was that units unwilling to locate in FTZs but achieving the export targets should not be deprived of the benefits offered to the latter. Now in a turn of policy, the SEZ policy seems to once again favour the clustering of exporting units providing special benefits in an earmarked space. Why should the exporting units be expected to move to the SEZs? The answer lies in the fact that under the new policy, the government has relaxed the conditions required for a unit to be considered an exporter needing special concessions. Unlike the requirement for EOUs there is no limit on the ratio of the sales in the DTA (Domestic Tariff Area) to the value of exports. The only requirement for qualifying as an exporter is to ensure positive net foreign exchange earnings. This means that the unit does not have to produce for the explicit purpose of exports, it only needs to ensure that it is not a drain on foreign exchange reserves of India. The SEZs have become more attractive as an instrument of privileged access to the huge domestic market of India rather than as a base for exports. According to a study, during 2003-04, eight SEZs exports were Rs 13,853.58 crores or .047% of the total exports and during 2004-05, eleven SEZs export earnings were Rs. 18,309 crores or mere .05% of the total export earnings. These SEZs provided employment to about one lakh people. On the other hand, the Small Scale Industry sector accounts for 35% of the total direct exports giving employment to about 200 lakh people (Ministry of SSI, Annual Report 2002-03).

The SEZ Act clearly provides for non-industrial use of 75% of the land in possession of an SEZ developer. The

government tries to justify this by the argument it would required for the social infrastructure, which would constitute things like housing facilities and entertainment. This argument is extremely dubious. Even the CPM talks of recommending an amendment only to the extent that SEZs should use at least 50% of the land for industrial use.

In reality, this is nothing but an open license for real-estate racketeering. Interestingly, there is also no ceiling on the private holding of land for the SEZs. Section 5(2) of the SEZ Act, which addresses the issue of land acquisition, talks only about the minimum (but not maximum) land area requirements for different classes of SEZs. It is not surprising that a large number of SEZ proposals have come up in areas adjoining the major urban centers. It is hardly surprising that the real estate firm Ansal is considering a foray into construction of SEZ property.

Large acquisitions of land, supposedly for the development of industry and exports, will actually serve as instruments of land scam with the government playing the role of a broker to facilitate the procurement of land for big capitalists. The supposed impetus to economic growth is nothing but an impetus for acquiring land at dirt-cheap prices, availing of the benefits and concessions and make whopping profits.

Displacement and Food Security

Eminent historian, Sumit Sarkar, describes the SEZs as *“the biggest land grab movement in the history of modern India”*. Huge tracts of rich agricultural land are being acquired for the SEZs. In the face of a massive uproar, Sonia Gandhi expressed concern over the shrinking agricultural land. But this concern is mere lip service as is obvious by the letter written by the Union Commerce and industry Minister Kamal Nath in September, this year to all the state chief ministers. The letter says, *“agricultural land may be acquired only if necessary to meet the minimum area requirements”*, *“...if necessary single crop agricultural land alone should be acquired...”*, *“if perforce a portion of double cropped agricultural land has to be acquired...the same should not exceed 10 % of the total land required for the SEZ”*. Quite clearly,

there is no intention of moratorium on the use of agricultural land for the use of SEZs. The State Industries Minister of West Bengal, Nirupam Sen says quite clearly that given the huge areas involved and the huge population density of the state, it may not always be possible to avoid acquisition of multi-cropped land.

In a country where already agriculture has suffered gross neglect by the state, this would only further the decline in this sector. This would also spell doom for our foodgrain production and food security. As a case study look at the case of a SEZ coming up on 10,000 ha in Jhajjar in Haryana. As of now the land taken up by the SEZ produces enough to feed 2.4 lakh people –in perpetuity. A hundred such SEZs will impact 2.4 crore people or over 2% of the population. This population would be completely starved and a much larger section of the populace will be partially starved. As it is foodgrain availability per person in India is 200 kg as against the world average of 309 kg. This means that the SEZ phenomenon could tip India from a state of endemic famine to full blown famine. The future will see us importing food on a regular basis and in view of the fact that the top exporter of wheat is the U.S., India would be even more at its mercy!

Forget about export promotion, SEZs could make us even more vulnerable even in respect of our foodgrain requirements.

The very quantum of lands being acquired point to the large scale displacement of both the owners of the land and those dependent on these lands for their livelihoods. It is not surprising that the farmers all over the country are opposing the SEZs tooth and nail. As a farmer of Raigad district of Maharashtra says, *“we have our land, we can't live in a jhoppadpatti, the government will throw us out from there too.”* *“Already we have sacrificed our land for so many projects- 13 dams, the Pune expressway, a petrol pipeline; now they want to take everything. We don't want money”*. As V.P. Singh says, *“a farmer as the owner of his land does not have the choice to decide the terms at which he will part with his property”*. Also anecdotal evidence suggests that land prices have fallen sharply in the country's suicide belts. Even if the farmers are paid a 'market price', this

would become a good time to buy land cheap from the peasants and divert it for corporate purposes. Once again the so called development of the country would mean development of profits of the big capital at the cost of the farmers and the vast majority.

Financial Drain

The SEZ phenomenon also gave rise to a controversy between the Union Minister of Commerce Kamal Nath and Finance Minister P. Chidambaram. According to the Finance Minister, SEZs would give rise to revenue losses to the tune of Rs. 1,75,487 crores between now and 2009-10. Of this Rs. 57,000 crores would be lost on account of direct taxes and the remainder would be on account of customs and excise concessions offered to units operating within these enclaves. The Commerce Ministry's response was that buoyant revenues, resulting from greater economic activity in these enclaves would more than compensate the losses. According to its estimates, tax collections would increase by Rs. 137,000 crores.

Besides while the rulers keep wailing about the big subsidies to food and agriculture they are silent about the massive subsidy given to export promotion, to which will be added a further gigantic sum to the SEZs. According to the Economic Times (Nov. 20 2006) *“the plethora of Export Promotion Schemes, excluding SEZs, cost the exchequer a whopping Rs.34,430 crores in 2005/06”*. It added that the expected drain due to SEZs would be a massive Rs.26,000 crores in 2007/08.

The problem in the Commerce Ministry's calculations are that it is assuming that there would be fresh investments in the SEZs which would not have taken place otherwise. But the fact is that a substantial number of the new SEZs are devoted to the IT (Information Technology) and ITES (Information Technology Enabling Services) sectors which have been growing at the rate of 30 per cent per annum and where fresh investments would have come in the normal course. According to a recent report, SEZs meant for software and pharmaceutical industries account for more than 50 per cent of all SEZs approved. The most glaring example of this miscalculation is Posco's SEZ in Orissa. The company had already

been given a shamelessly good deal in terms of land and captive mines, and now its SEZ has been approved. It is not as though Posco would not have been interested in looting Orissa's iron-ore wealth, were it not for the SEZ status.

In reality the existing industries would migrate to the SEZs to take advantage of the huge concessions. Thereby not only would the tax revenues be lost but the SEZs would become locations to produce (including retail, housing and entertainment) for the domestic market with adverse implications for the units located outside the SEZs.

Attack on Labour

By far the most serious criticism of the SEZs comes from the fact that no labour legislation will be applicable there. SEZs enjoy the status of "public utility services" making it illegal for the workers to go on strikes for their demands. The functions of the Labour Commissioner, who have traditionally taken the first step in the conciliation process between labour and the managements, are now to be vested with the Development Commissioner whose main function, incidentally, is to woo investment and keep the entrepreneurs happy! In the SEZ in Greater Noida, there have been many instances of workers being fined as they have gone to the toilets without the tokens which are too few as compared to the number of workers. There is also large scale use of contract labour in these SEZs. Andhra Pradesh, regarded as a frontrunner in SEZ promotion, has laid down rules which prohibit outsiders in unions,

thereby significantly reducing the scope of collective bargaining.

The most worrisome fact is that sooner or later, these SEZs would become the 'models' to be emulated on a countrywide scale. In other words, these islands would soon pave the way for scrapping of all the protective labour legislations all over the country.

Conclusion

To sum up, SEZs are the latest and the most blatant example of the Indian state prostrating before the imperialist and domestic big comprador capital. In the name of development, the most important resource i.e. the land itself is being handed over to big capital. Not only does it threaten the land and livelihoods of a vast majority of our population, like all other 'development' projects, the fruits of the project (SEZ in this case) cannot be bought by the people who are to bear the burden of this 'development'. In a country where more than 65% of the population survives on agriculture, there can be no development without the development of agriculture. And the SEZs would actually mean encroaching on the already shrinking farmland without providing them any job. It is unlikely to even promote exports which is the professed aim of the SEZ policy. In the name of development of the infrastructure, it would give rise to apartments, shopping malls and entertainment complexes. With so many people being rendered without land and livelihood, talk of employment generation is a bitter joke. And the labour employed in the SEZs will not enjoy any protection. Even the small capitalists who do not have

the wherewithal to locate themselves in the SEZ would be discriminated against.

The creation of islands within the country which are 'deemed foreign territory' (mentioned as such in the very SEZ Act itself) is nothing but colonisation through the back door. Our land, our resources, our labour are all being offered on a platter to the imperialists and big capital. Says the ex Prime Minister, V.P. Singh, "by brazenly operating in favour of private companies and by openly bulldozing peaceful public dissent...the establishment is pushing the people to a precipice of no-return". He further asks, "in such unjust circumstances, why shouldn't the armed struggle of the Maoists spread in the deep hinterland?" He added, in an interview to the magazine *Hard News*, "I would like to be a Maoist, only I am too old".

The SEZs are nothing but carving enclaves within India where most Indian laws will not apply and tax revenues drastically reduced. It will allow the Comprador big business houses and imperialist TNCs to multiply their profits ten-fold — at the cost of the country; its land and its people. Rural agricultural land will be seized displacing lakhs from their land and sources of livelihood; and with no labour laws applying cheap Indian labour will be used to extract super-profits. And all these profits will be tax-free, draining even further the country's wealth. With such massive incentives the bulk of India's big business (run by compradors and TNCs) will move into defacto foreign enclaves resulting in colonization in a new form.



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party have vowed that there won't be any hesitation in exchanging life with death for the sake of all nationals, nation and the oppressed classes. All the representatives have vowed, repeatedly that they will shed blood to fight against the autocratic feudal monarch and its supporters in all the forms to fulfill their obligation for the cause of all down-trodden and exploited people.

Lastly, it is to be noted that a day-long orientation was given to all

the party cadres and representatives and the conference was formally ended by the party General Secretary, on the fourth day, shouting the understated slogans:

Long-live Communist Party of Bhutan (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)

Do away with Feudal and autocratic monarchy

Down with World imperialism.

Down with Indian expansionism

New height to Bhutanese revolution

Long-live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

Long-New Democratic Revolution.

(VIKALPA)

General Secretary
Communist Party of Bhutan (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)



We print below the open letter written to the CPI(Maoist) by the Independent Citizens Initiative and the reply by the General Secretary of the CPI(Maoist) received at our office in early November.

First the letter by the Independent Citizens Initiative:

Appeal to the CPI(Maoist)

To
General Secretary
CPI (Maoist)

As members of an Independent Citizens Initiative, we visited different parts of Dantewada District in Chhattisgarh from 17th to 22nd of May, 2006, and met with a cross-section of people with different perspectives on the ongoing conflict in the district. We met a large number of adivasis, in the villages, in relief camps and in jails. We feel deeply distressed at the plight of the adivasis in Dantewada and, in that context, we make this earnest appeal to you.

We believe that the well-being and all-round development of the adivasis in Dantewada and elsewhere should be the central theme of any discussion or effort that impacts their lives, either directly or indirectly. We also believe that the defence of the rights of the adivasis can be ensured more effectively through political, non-violent and open means, rather than through armed struggle.

What is happening today in Dantewada is truly traumatic for the adivasis. The majority stand deprived of their basic entitlements in terms of land and other natural resources, education, health, food security etc, either due to the apathy and insensitivity of the State, exploitation by outsiders, or because of the restrictions imposed by you. Due to the violence unleashed by the government and government-supported Salwa Judum movement and the atmosphere of fear and uncertainty created by your violent response, the situation in Dantewada is near civil war. We condemn both kinds of violence. Adivasi society is deeply divided. This is a situation that cannot and should not be allowed to go on. We hold all concerned, namely, the government, the government-sponsored Salwa Judum movement and the Maoists responsible for this unfortunate situation. Every one of you should own up to this and come forward to resolve the crisis through discussion and dialogue.

Based on our visit, we have a number of questions we would like to pose to you:

1. Several organisations – An All India Fact Finding team (PUCL, PUDR, APDR, IAPL), Human Rights Forum, Asian Centre for Human Rights and, the Independent Citizens Initiative - have called upon you to declare a ceasefire with the government in Chhattisgarh and engage in dialogue. You have not responded to this call. On the contrary, you have escalated violence, and killed Salwa Judum members in retaliation, often very brutally. Are you prepared to engage in dialogue?

2. We are worried at your casual attitude towards taking away life. Deaths, like that of the marriage party returning from Gadchiroli or of the traders in Kanker are treated as ‘mistakes’. Unfortunately, armed struggle leads to too many ‘mistakes’. Should this not lead to a reconsideration of strategy? In any case, what does a ‘mistake’ really mean? We do not condone the killing of policemen either on moral or political grounds, especially given that many people join the police or forces only as a means of employment.

3. Regarding the “jan adalat” held in Manikonta in which 13 villagers were brutally killed – what gives the villagers or the party the right to impose death sentences? Is a death penalty the only penalty possible? Where is the evidence that due process was followed in these so-called jan adalats?

4. Why have you laid mines all over, a weapon which people throughout the world have condemned as indiscriminate and actually want banned? Mines will not prevent Salwa Judum, but will only endanger the lives of ordinary people.

5. Why do you train minors (under 18) in the use of arms? Why do you have to destroy schools, even if the CRPF uses them? Will this not affect education in the long term to the detriment of the adivasis?

6. Not all the lack of development can be blamed on the government. People have a right to vote, to work on road construction schemes, to access

panchayat money, all of which your party has opposed. Even if your party builds a thousand irrigation ponds and runs schools, can you ever replace the resources that the government has, and to which people have a right?

7. While your armed squads may be ready to face military operations and death, why put people at such risk? You claim that if it were not for repression by the State, people would be fully with you. By taking up armed struggle, are you not inviting greater repression?

8. Are you not subordinating the interests of the people of Bastar and Dantewada to your wider goal of violent state capture, a goal that they may not fully share? While there may be a great deal of support for your party, how does one measure this in any independently verifiable fashion? Are you prepared to demonstrate that through impartially conducted polls?

9. All those who claim to struggle for the people must struggle responsibly and with full accountability. There must be a distinction between civilians and combatants. Today, due to both the Salwa Judum and due to your response, such a distinction does not exist.

We appeal to you to respond to our call for a national dialogue, announce a cease-fire and agree to be party to any approach that benefits the adivasis and enhances their well being.

We have appealed to the Central and the State Governments through a similar open letter to disband Salwa Judum, announce an unconditional cease-fire, come up with confidence building measures for the benefit of the adivasis and initiate a national dialogue with you.

Yours sincerely,

Ramachandra Guha (historian and columnist, Bangalore)

Harivansh (editor, *Prabhat Khabar*, Ranchi),

Farah Naqvi (writer and social activist, New Delhi),

EAS Sarma (former Secretary, Government of India, Visakhapatnam),

Nandini Sundar (Professor of Sociology, Delhi University),

B. G. Verghese (former editor, *Hindustan Times*, *Indian Express*, New Delhi).

Reply by the CPI(Maoist):

To
The members,
Independent Citizens' Initiative
Dear Friends,

I received the letter sent by six prominent personalities of the Independent Citizens Initiative who had visited Dantewara district of Chattisgarh on a fact finding mission in last May. I could not ascertain when the letter was actually sent as it did not bear any date and I could get hold of it only recently. On behalf of our Party I thank you all for your letter and the responsible attitude and genuine desire shown by you to put an end to the armed conflict in Dantewara between the oppressed adivasis on the one hand and the state-sponsored *salwa judum*, state police and central para-military forces on the other. I convey my apologies to you for the long delay in sending a reply, whatever are the reasons on our side.

Our Party appreciates the serious efforts made by you in your genuine quest for finding a resolution to the tragic conflict that had suddenly flared up in Dantewara since June 2005 and has taken over 400 lives until now. It is indeed heartening to all of us waging a just war for the liberation of the most oppressed sections of the Indian society to see democratic intellectuals like you seeking to explore the truth and place it before the world. There are some good articles written by some of you such as the one in *The Hindu* by Sri EAS Sharma, which made attempts to present the truth in a more objective manner. He had correctly analysed the origin and nature of *salwa judum* in sharp contrast to the barrage of false propaganda that it is a spontaneous movement and an uprising against the Maoists: "*It is certainly not a 'peoples' movement' as it has been made out to be. It is a State-sponsored campaign in which unsuspecting Adivasis are used as*

ammunition in a war that will serve the private interests of a few." He had also traced the exploitation of the adivasis by the non-tribal trader-contractor nexus: "*For decades, unethical land-grabbers, wily traders, and exploitative contractors, all non-tribals, have dominated the lives of the Adivasis in this area, undeterred.*"

I would also make it crystal-clear at the outset that just as you do, our Party too believes "*that the well-being and all-round development of the adivasis in Dantewada and elsewhere should be the central theme of any discussion or effort that impacts their lives, either directly or indirectly.*" However, what we do not believe, unlike you, is "*that the defence of the rights of the adivasis can be ensured more effectively through political, non-violent and open means, rather than through armed struggle.*" And it is precisely these diametrically opposite ideological-political beliefs by our respective sides regarding the means to be adopted to defend the rights of the adivasis that has led to two differing viewpoints in grasping the reality of the class war in Dantewara. And it is these differing perceptions, outlooks and class biases that are coming in the way of arriving at a correct solution to the ongoing conflict, or what could be more correctly described as a war between the revolutionary forces versus counter-revolutionary forces, that is going on not only in Dantewara but in various parts of the country. Can you show us one instance from the pages of Indian history where the rights of the adivasis were ensured through non-violent and open means? And not just in India but anywhere in the world for that matter? What have the tribals of Kalinganagar received for their peaceful protest against Tata Steel?

You have placed nine questions before our Party. In brief, these are: lack of response from our Party to your call for a dialogue with the government and declaration of cease-fire; our "*casual attitude towards taking life*"; the legitimacy of *jan adalats* like the one held in Manikonta; that our Party is placing mines "all over"; that we are training minors under 18 in the use of arms and destroying schools used by the CRPF, our Party's

opposition to the right to vote, road construction and access to government funds for development; putting people to risk and inviting greater repression by resorting to armed struggle; subordinating the interests of the people of Bastar and Dantewara to our wider goal of capture of state power; and showing no distinction between civilians and combatants and so on.

Before answering these questions, the tenor and tone of which unmistakably betray the mind and attitude of the liberal democratic intelligentsia, I wish to ask you one straight question: How does one get to know the truth from a plethora of facts? Can you say with full confidence that your perception of the reality in Dantewara is not tainted by your ideological biases against the Maoist movement and violent revolution? Is it possible for anyone, even if one claims to be a neutral or impartial intellectual, to analyse facts and arrive at conclusions correctly if he/she has an inherent aversion for armed struggle?

We know that our answers will not satisfy you. How is it possible when we both have different ideological and political perceptions towards the means to be adopted to bring the oppressed out of their miserable conditions of existence? There is no level playing field in the merciless class war between the cruelly exploited, brutally oppressed majority on the one hand, and the fatty upper five per cent of our society bulging at the expense of the hundreds of millions of poor on the other. In a class-divided society there cannot be any absolute truth. The truth of the oppressed is different from the truth of the oppressor. This has been true right from the time of Spartacus and the unsung slave heroes who waged struggle against slavery. Either you were with the slaves, in which case Spartacus and the rebels represented a just cause and truth, or you were with the slave owners for whom the revolts were merely the unjust acts of the slaves who had strayed from their duty of serving their masters. Likewise if Bhagat Singh was a hero for the Indian people he was the greatest terrorist and villain for the British colonialists.

In class conflicts, unlike in ordinary sport, it is impossible to have an impartial

referee who cries foul whenever there is a violation of the rules by either side. For class war is no game played out between equals based on rules that apply to both sides equally. It is an unequal war between the mighty militarised state that stands in defence of the propertied classes and their “right” to exploit the majority at will, and the vast majority of the wretched of the earth—hungry, homeless, emaciated, docile, helpless masses—who, in the eyes of the ruling elites, are not much distinct from the slaves of bygone millennia. These very same exploiters through their constitution preset rules with enough provisions for violating the same. Those who imagine themselves to be impartial referees in class war and try to set the rules equally for both sides will ultimately end up as apologists for the oppressors, in spite of their good intentions and sincere attitude. Anyone who thinks that he/she is being impartial in a class-divided society is only a victim of his/her fanciful imagination.

You have condemned both types of violence, i.e., violence unleashed by the state and salwa judum goons at the behest of the imperialist MNCs, big corporate houses like Essar and Tata, unscrupulous traders, contractors, as well as collaborationist adivasi leaders who had become part of the ruling elites, on awakened adivasi masses who are struggling for their just rights and liberation under the leadership of our Party on one hand, and the legitimate revolutionary violence resorted to by the oppressed adivasis on the other. You held both sides responsible for the unfortunate situation. How can you equate the violence of the oppressor with the legitimate violent response of the voiceless oppressed? Whom would such a stand help ultimately? Would it not provide added strength to the oppressors and help perpetuate their domination? All these have to be pondered over by democratic-minded intellectuals. We sincerely appeal to you to stand more firmly on the side of the oppressed and then it will not be much difficult to find answers to most of the seemingly perplexing questions.

Now we shall try to answer your points very briefly:

1. You had called on us to declare a cease-fire and enter into a dialogue with the government. You were dismayed that we had not responded to your call and had even escalated the violence. You also queried whether we are prepared for a dialogue? When the enemies of the people have a single agenda of suppressing the struggling masses through ever-increasing brute force, where does dialogue come in? In fact, ever since 1998 we had always been responding positively for a dialogue on the issues of the people provided the government cried a halt to its repression and oppression of adivasis and created a conducive atmosphere for dialogue by withdrawing the police and para-military camps from the countryside, punish the guilty officers responsible for murders and rapes, and so on.

Today, along with the above demands, other demands such as: immediate disbanding of salwa judum, punishment to the perpetrators of atrocities on the people, suspension of the Public Security Act, 2006, removing obstructions on adivasis who want to go back to their villages from the so-called relief camps have also come to the fore. Is there any justness in asking us to one-sidedly declare a cease-fire and go for dialogue without the government first creating a conducive atmosphere? The talks in AP in 2004 had exposed the hypocrisy and heinous game plans of the Indian ruling classes when the government refused to extend the cease-fire, commenced brutal attacks and created conditions which made second round of talks impossible under YSR's Congress regime. These bitter lessons have naturally become a deterrent for talks anywhere in the country. To ask us to declare cease-fire even as the exploiting classes continue their cruel barbaric campaign against the people means asking us to commit suicide. It is like the poor lamb believing the butcher. We appeal to you to think over the dangerous implications of your call for a cease-fire from our side in today's conditions.

2. You conveyed your worry at our “casual attitude towards taking away life”. Deaths of members of the marriage party returning from Gadchiroli or of the traders in Kanker were unfortunate

incidents that occurred due to mistaken identity. No revolutionary would ever think of committing such attacks on innocent people. * Social scientists and investigative journalists do not stop at mere facts that happen. They would go into the causes behind these incidents, the history and ideology of those who committed such acts, and the overall prevalent atmosphere that triggered such incidents. Such incidents are exceptions in our long-drawn revolutionary struggle spanning over 25 years in Dandakaranya. Our ideology and politics teach us to protect the people as the pupil of our eyes. We value life and peace as no other party or even a humanist does. It is our love and commitment to the people that had drawn us away from our homes and families and goads us on to sacrifice our lives so as the vast majority can live in peace. To accuse us of having a casual attitude towards taking away life is a myth fabricated by the bourgeois media. Our society including the sharpest critics of the ruling classes are bound to be influenced at least to some extent by this subtle propaganda. With greater care and more meticulous planning we assure you that we shall strive to avoid such unfortunate incidents in future.

We are as much grieved as you when policemen are killed in our ambushes and raids. We made several appeals to the policemen and their families not to kill innocent people or launch attacks on our cadre. We had issued leaflets appealing the Naga battalion jawans, CRPF jawans to defy orders from their superiors and to desist from attacks. We have composed a number of songs describing the plight of poor and unemployed youth who are forced to join police force due to lack of alternative employment. Whenever we attack the police we try to minimise bloodshed. We had never killed any policeman who surrendered. We do not harbour any anger towards ordinary policemen but would anyone expect us to remain silent when people are tortured, killed, women are raped, houses and property destroyed by the police-paramilitary-salwa judum goondas? We stand for the defence of the people's rights and it is for this reason we are compelled to attack those who are snatching away people's right to live. You would not have suggested

a reconsideration of the strategy of people's war itself just because a few mistakes were committed had you known why; in the first place, we had taken up arms.

3. Regarding the *jan adalat* in Manikonta village, the first point we would like to place before you is that those who were punished were not villagers as you describe them but were paid SPOs and SJ goons who had committed terrible atrocities on the people in the name of *salwa judum*. A retribution of that order is a necessity to control these goons. Common people, generally speaking, do not go to the extent of killing those who had committed crimes. The fact that hundreds of people who were present in the *jan adalat* resorted to this extreme measure shows the pent-up anger and righteous indignation of the people intimidated since June 2005 without a let up.

You had questioned for evidence that due process was followed in the *jan adalats*. Before such a question is placed we request you to examine the so-called justice system that is being implemented by the state in Dantewara-Bastar region or anywhere in our country for that matter. Does due process mean engaging professional lawyers (who turn out very often to be unethical professional liars) to prove one's crime (which is the rarest thing that can happen in our country if you see real-life criminals occupying highest positions of power while hundreds of thousands of innocent languish in jails without trial for years without end). When it is a universally known fact that nine out of ten cases do not get justice through the so-called courts of law why should you find fault with people when they themselves punish the culprits as in the *jan adalats* held under the leadership of our Party? The very fact that out of the 57 people taken away by the *jan militia* led by our PLGA from the concentration camp and 44 of them were let off after due investigation of their deeds speaks of the fairness of the *jan adalats* unlike the so-called courts of law that let off the real culprits and throw the innocents for long years into jails. Moreover, if we see our past history you will find that several times we had let off even police officers after detaining them for days when their crimes

were not proved in the investigation. Many anti-social elements were simply censured and let off. It is only the most notorious anti-people criminal-lumped elements and proven agents of the enemy who were given the highest punishment of death.

In principle, we are against death penalty and our new system that would evolve after the seizure of power will scrap death sentence. But now the oppressed people and the revolutionaries are compelled to resort to it for our defence as even our very survival is at stake if proven counter-revolutionaries are allowed to create havoc with people's lives and pass on information about our movements to the police. And as for evidence let me tell you that the excellent evidence collected by us—recorded cassettes of the entire investigation in the *jan adalat* which we had placed by the side of the dead bodies for the world to know—had been taken away by the police. We request you to bring pressure on the government and also ask the courts to direct the police to produce the cassettes. That would answer your question about evidence for due process. If you are ready to collect live evidence then thousands of people in Dantewara are prepared to place the facts before you whenever you come.

4. It is a baseless allegation that we had laid mines all over. People, to defend their very existence, are compelled to plant mines here and there in order to check the influx of hundreds of state forces and SJ goons who are creating a reign of terror in the villages. Neither is this indiscriminate or on an extensive scale. We also do not believe we can prevent *salwa judum* by using mines. We are with the world people in condemning the use of mines and all other weapons of mass destruction that create more "collateral damage" to borrow the phrase from the greatest terrorist of our time, George Bush Jr., and we stand for a total ban of these weapons. If the indiscriminate use of grenades, mortars and aerial bombing by the state's forces which are deployed in thousands in Dantewara-Bastar region killing or wounding hundreds of people is stopped then there is no need for us to use this weapon.

We believe that it is people, and people alone, who can smash *salwa judum*

through mass political movements and mass armed retaliation. Our PLGA and the peoples militia use weapons as they have to confront an enemy armed with the deadliest of weapons that are used for suppressing the just and peaceful movements of the people. In fact it is the *salwa judum* and the large-scale atrocities by the police and para-military forces that had led the people to arm them en-mass and build armed defence systems for their self-defence. They have every right to defend themselves with whatever kinds of weapons available.

5. As regards training minors under 18 years in the use of arms, we wish to make it clear that our policy and the PLGA constitution stipulate that no one should be taken into the army without attaining 16 years of age. And this age limit is strictly followed while recruiting. In the specific conditions prevailing in the war zone children attain mental and political maturity by the time they complete 16 because they are directly or indirectly involved in the revolutionary activity from their very childhood. They receive basic education and political training early in their lives and have organisational experience as members of *balala sangham* (children's associations).

But now the enemy has changed the entire situation in this region by pursuing a policy of "*kill all, burn all, destroy all*" not sparing even children and old people who are forced to flee the villages and stay in forests and have to arm themselves for their self-defence. When the enemy is erasing every norm of international law, the oppressed people have the full right to arm themselves and fight. Making a fuss over age makes no meaning in a situation where the enemies of the people are targeting children too without any mercy. If the boys and girls do not do resist with arms they will be eliminated completely. The intellectuals of the civil society should understand this most inhumane and cruel situation created by the enemy and take the side of the people instead of pushing them more into defensive by raising all sorts of idealistic objections.

As for destroying schools used by the CRPF as their camps, neither the people nor our Party think it is wrong. The schools, these forces occupy then, are

transformed into torture chambers and concentration camps and there is no hope that they will once again be used as schools in the near future. Moreover, in many villages that did not have a school for the past six decades after the so-called Independence, new RCC school buildings are now coming up on a war footing for providing the needed infrastructure for the 'carpet security system'. People living in the villages know for what purpose these buildings are being built. That is why they have decided to destroy them and our Party fully stands by the people.

Education of the adivasis is not affected by destruction of school buildings used by the security forces but by the destruction of entire villages (upto 900 villages had been uprooted since June 2005) by the state police, para-military forces and salwa judum goondas with active police support. In mid-July thousands of students whose education was disturbed by salwa judum goondas came into the streets demanding education and gave slogans against police-judum gangs for depriving them of education. We must all demand the immediate withdrawal of all police-CRPF camps from schools and colleges in villages and towns, stop the destruction of villages and killing of teachers and students by judum goons, allow people to go back to their villages from the so-called rehabilitation centres, and to provide all facilities for education. While destruction of school buildings had taken place in a few villages where people's very existence has become a question mark you still think that this is affecting the education of the children rather than seeing it in a larger perspective affecting the lives of the entire people. We are curious to hear what you would say of hundreds of other villages, which do not have schools although the "Maoist threat" does not exist in those villages? It is for you to ponder over whether we are in any way responsible for the lack of education to the children of Dantewara.

6. Another white lie doing the rounds ever since the Maoist movement began to be recognised by a significant section of the people as the only alternative to solve their basic problems is that we are against development and that we obstruct people from exercising their right to vote and to

participate in government-sponsored development works. Nothing can be farther from truth. We were surprised to see that you too had fallen prey to this vicious disinformation campaign unleashed by the government and the media controlled by the big moneybags. You wrote: "*Not all the lack of development can be blamed on the government People have a right to vote, to work on road construction schemes, to access panchayat money, all of which your party has opposed.*"

Is it true that we are in anyway responsible for lack of development? We had never, I repeat never, opposed any schemes of the government if those really helped in ameliorating the lives of the people. You can verify this assertion of ours through independent investigation and not based on complaints from those bigwigs like Mahendra Karma and his agents among the adivasis and the non-adivasi exploiters who feel deprived of the funds that would flow into their pockets if the Maoists were not present.

Our party spokesperson had already explained what model of development our Party stands for which has been published in the EPW and hence I will not elaborate much on this aspect. The main point is that we oppose any development that plays havoc with the lives of the people. You might have known how an Essar and a Tata managed to get the consent of the adivasis by holding fake gram sabhas at gun point (see *Down to Earth* October 31, 2006). There is immense wealth in the areas inhabited by adivasis from Jharkhand to AP and all the big guns have their greedy eyes fixed on this wealth. Hence they leave no stone upturned to grab this wealth even if it means massacring the indigenous people, razing entire villages to the ground and suspending all fundamental rights of the people. In just the three states Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa over three lakh crores of rupees are likely to be pumped in, to extract several times more wealth to fill the coffers of these steel and aluminium barons of India and the imperialist countries. And the so-called adivasi leaders like Karma expect fat commissions and bribes from their masters for clearing the areas of Maoists. This is the logic behind the *salwa judum*.

We haven't placed a blanket ban on all kinds of roads and railway lines. We oppose the laying of only those roads and railway lines that are meant for looting the wealth from the region and for enemy troop movement. It is an open secret that the railway line from Waltair to Kirandul was meant for looting the raw material from Bastar to the imperialist countries like Japan just as the British did during their colonial rule. The proposed line from Raoghat to Jagdalpur is meant for the same purpose. Would you, as enlightened intellectuals support these mega-development projects that result in underdevelopment and misery for the vast masses?

We support the just demand of the adivasis that the raw materials of the region belong to them, that they should not be displaced from their homes due to so-called development projects such as mines and steel plants, and that roads and railway lines should not be laid for looting the wealth from the region. We stand in the forefront of their struggle against these huge projects and the roads and railway lines meant for draining the wealth from the adivasi areas. We expect support from democratic intellectuals like you to prevent wealth from flowing out of the adivasi regions and from our country itself. We have our own model of development, which you can see, in the areas where we had established the real democratic rule of the masses. You know very well that most of the development funds do not reach the really needy. So much about the story of development.

Even more amusing is the charge against us that we prevent people from voting. The very same marauders who trample underfoot all the fundamental rights of the people guaranteed by our so-called Constitution, lament when the Maoists take up election boycott campaigns. Here we wish to make it clear that people have not only the right to vote but also the right to boycott. But this right is snatched away at gunpoint by the rulers who deploy huge contingents of central forces to intimidate and force people against their will to vote for their very oppressors. This has been most conspicuous in AP where people are threatened with dire consequences if they dared to boycott and, in several instances,

even pulled out of their houses on the polling day and brought to the booths. During the last elections in 2003 and 2004 in Chhathisgarh helicopters were used to create terror and huge para-military force was deployed in the name of preventing the Maoists from foiling the elections. Just as other political parties have the right to campaign for electing them to power the CPI(Maoist) too has the right to call upon the people to boycott the elections that are only meant to suppress them. Never was force used by our Party to prevent people from exercising their franchise. This is easily verifiable from the people in our areas of armed struggle.

Boycott of election is a political tactic of our party to mobilize, organize and rouse the oppressed masses against the rotten system and to make them realise the necessity to destroy it through people's war. It is only then that the election of a genuine people's democratic government becomes possible. With this aim, under our party leadership and with the protection of the PLGA, the oppressed masses of Dantewara-Bastar region are not only boycotting the election farce imposed by the oppressors, but are also electing their own organs of political power, *Janathana Sarkars*, with deep political conviction.

7. I shall deal with the 7th and 8th questions together as they are closely related. Both these questions and the very strategy of people's war, it is made out, try to set up an artificial wall between our Party and the masses. As one of the great founder-leaders of our Party, comrade Charu Majumdar, pointed out "*People's interests are Party's interests*". There cannot be any other interest for a genuine Communist Party than that of the vast masses. It is not our armed squads that are waging the actual war but the people themselves.

We believe that it is the people, and people alone, who make history. It is they who have to liberate themselves from all kinds of oppression. Tomorrow if the Communist Party itself changes colour and becomes a bureaucratic ruler after capturing power, as occurred in Russia and China, people will wage a bitter struggle against them also. Our Party and armed squads are mere catalysts that help the masses to achieve their liberation. It is the

people who are the real heroes and we awaken them and equip them with the scientific theory of Marxism Leninism Maoism. And theory becomes a material force once it is correctly grasped by the masses. Our Party and the PLGA are able to survive the severest repression of the enemy because we are protected by the masses that act as a fortress of steel. One must have a correct dialectical understanding of the interrelationship between the Party and the masses or else mistakes such as separating one from the other are bound to occur.

And when you ask us are we not "*inviting greater repression by taking up armed struggle*", I would say, "*Yes. But without armed struggle people will continue to live like slaves without self-respect or dignity and will perish like flies with hunger and destitution.*" That is why the slogan "*better to die in struggle rather than succumbing to hunger!*" has become so popular with the masses. You might be aware of the chilling fact that the number of people who died of hunger and disease in just the past one decade far exceeds (by five times according to an estimate) those who died in all the revolutionary wars that occurred in the last two centuries?

The ruling classes will not abandon political power or their exploitation, oppression and suppression of the people until they are forcefully overthrown. Whether to live a life of slavery and indignity and die of hunger by remaining docile or peaceful protests (we all know the fate of those displaced by Sardar Sarovar project even after two decades of non-violent struggle, just to take one instance), or take up arms to completely eradicate the grounds that give birth to all kinds of suppression and oppression in order to live as free and independent human beings. Our armed struggle is to draw the curtain on pre-history of humankind and herald the dawn of real history where people become the makers of their own destinies and not a handful of moneybags and corporate gangsters.

As for measuring the support our Party enjoys among the masses anyone can easily verify it. The police could not find a single informer in hundreds of villages, which made their task of suppression extremely difficult. In fact, it is the immense

support that we enjoy among the masses that made the ruling classes sit up and think of ways and means to suppress us besides deploying the security forces. That was how the heinous strategy of *salwa judum* evolved by mobilising non-tribal exploiters, lumped elements among the adivasis who were punished by the *jan adalats* for their anti-people deeds, and people from villages falling outside the areas of our struggle. It can also be seen in the turnout in the elections with several villages boycotting the polls completely or registering extremely low percentages of votes.

8. We totally agree with your last point that "*there must be a distinction between civilians and combatants*" and that "*those who claim to struggle for the people must struggle responsibly and with full accountability*". Our Party had always demarcated between civilians and combatants. But you say such a distinction does not exist today. We earnestly appeal to you to point out where we have not made the distinction and we shall certainly correct ourselves if it were true. We do not consider all those who joined the *salwa judum* or those who are forced to become SPOs as our enemies. Nor are the people who are herded into the so-called relief camps set up by the government to be treated as enemies. We only consider those who unleash brutal attacks against villages with the help of the state's forces as people's enemies and punish them. For outsiders the SPOs might appear as poor adivasis but to the masses of adivasis who had borne the brunt of their cruel attacks the hardcore among the SPOs are even more dangerous and brutal than the police. Any independent and impartial enquiry will bring this truth out. We assure you that we shall take even greater caution in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Ganapathi, General Secretary,
CPI(Maoist)

October 10, 2006



Due to unforeseen circumstances we were unable to bring out the Vol.7, No : 10&11 (Oct.&Nov. issues). We assure you that hereafter the issues will come out regularly. Editor

Press Release:

**Condemn the death sentence on Saddam Hussein by the US occupiers and their puppet regime in Iraq!
George Bush—the No 1 perpetrator of crimes against humanity—should be hanged, not Saddam!!**

On November 5th, the US occupiers and their puppet regime in Iraq had completed their farce of so-called judicial enquiry into Saddam Hussein's crimes when he was the head of state of Iraq and sentenced him to death on charges of his alleged role in the killing of 148 people in the Shia village of Dujail in 1982. Two others, a former military intelligence chief and a chief judge, too were sentenced to death while several others were given rigorous imprisonments. The timing of the judgment, coming as it is on the eve of the Congressional elections in the US, shows the deep-rooted conspiracy and the ulterior motives of the Bush administration. Having lost its credibility among the American people who had begun to question their government's continued occupation of Iraq and the debacles its occupation forces are facing, the Bush administration has used the death sentence as a bait to woo the voters.

The sentences have no validity under any count as the entire judicial process had taken place under the direction of the US occupiers, three lawyers defending Saddam were brutally assassinated, two judges were changed and puppet officials were appointed as judges of the fake Tribunal. It is only the people of a country who have the right to punish its rulers and this can happen only after the US occupiers quit Iraq. Through this verdict, the Bush administration had also aimed at furthering the divide between the Shias and Kurds on the one side and the Sunnis on the other.

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barrel gun. I was happy. Then onwards neither the police nor firing could make me afraid. My confidence in myself grew.

After sometime another platoon was formed in DK and both my partner and I were transferred there. I became a Party Area Committee member.

How the women are working in the military.....

There are a lot of women fighting courageously in the movement. Few hesitated. But they are doing well in

It is unfortunate that Shia muslims should hail the judgment that will benefit only the US occupiers. The Shia people have the right to punish Saddam but the first and foremost task before them is to throw out the US occupation forces from the soil of Iraq, build a sovereign Iraq and then to hold trial of all those responsible for killing innocent people.

If the killing of 148 people can be cited as an example for awarding death sentence, then how many times Bush should be hanged for killing over 6,50,000 civilians in Iraq since his invasion of that country in March 2003? And for his sadistic brutalities in Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay and elsewhere? Virtually every US President at least since WWII could be hanged to death for the countless crimes they had committed in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Dominican Republic, the Congo, Somalia and several other Third World countries. Killings in Dujail pale into insignificance before a My Lai massacre in Vietnam. And the daily bombardment of civilian localities by the Israeli Zionist forces in Gaza, West Bank and other Palestinian territories, usage of weapons of mass destruction on Lebanese territory and the genocide of the Palestinian people are the fittest case for sending Israeli dictators like Ariel Sharon to the gallows.

The war on Iraq is not for preventing Saddam from using the non-existent

other fields. Whenever there is an ambush or raid, there is a review. In the review we discuss everything. We discuss the faults and the correct methods, the positive and the negative. Thus we come to know about our mistakes. We try to overcome them as a process.

Personal experiences.....

I participated in many ambushes and raids. Each time I gained more confidence. I blasted mines. I was in the assault team in raids on police stations. I worked in the stop group. I

WMD but to grab its rich oil resources for satisfying the insatiable greed of the oil lobby and the military-industrial complex that Bush basically represents. People of Iraq—Sunnis, Shias, Kurds—should join ranks to throw out the foreign imperialist forces occupying their country. They should resolve their differences and reject the judgments delivered under colonial rulers. Acceptance of the US-dictated judgments would only mean legitimizing the colonial rule imposed by the US-British imperialists on the people of Iraq.

We call upon the people of India to condemn this fake verdict fabricated by the US imperialists led by George Bush and other imperialists. We call upon all sections of Indian people to condemn the ambiguous attitude of the UPA government, which, in essence, means tacit support for the death sentence and US occupation. Let us unequivocally declare that no foreign power has the right to interfere in the judicial process of any country and that the death sentence on Saddam and others imposed by the imperialists is null and void in the eyes of the world people. Let us demand and fight for the hanging of Bush, Blair and other imperialists for their indescribable crimes against humanity, not sparing even children and old people.

Azad,

Spokesperson, Central Committee,
CPI(Maoist)

Nov. 7.2006



feel very enthused with the work I am doing. I feel empowered with the fact that I am able to fight with a rifle in my hands. Once I blasted an anti land mine vehicle. This was a great achievement for us in the field of explosives and personally also it was an achievement.

I feel women must have the initiative to do all kinds of works. They must strive hard so that we can establish higher formations exclusively with women. They need special political and military education.



Interview with Com. Maase

Comrade Maase is the Commander of Platoon and District Committee Member in Dandakaranya. She spoke about her suffering in the society, how she came in touch with the movement, the process that brought her to this position. Maase is known for her military capabilities. Right from the beginning she was militant. She participated in many ambushes and raids. Her efforts in this field put her in the forefront of the military field. There are more than a dozen women comrades like her leading in the military field in Danadakaranya. Let us see how they were in life, how they came into the party and how they developed to the present position.....[This report was received at our e-mail account-Editor]

Maase, Recounts

About her life....

It was B who first came and held a meeting in our village. She told us all about women's lives and their struggle. She also told us about a woman in another country. This created new thoughts in me. I thought life should be something different from what it is now.

How she opposed her forced marriage.....

My parents drank liquor and fixed my marriage (the parents of the girl and the boy drink the native liquor together and this means the match is fixed). The boy was my cousin, the son of my uncle. But I did not like this match. I was not ready for marriage. My mother beat me. My grandmother beat me. They forced me to agree for the marriage.

Attending the meeting of the women's organization...

While this was going on in my home there was a meeting of the women's organization. At that time I did not even know that the name of the organization is the Kranthikari Adivasi Mahila Sanghatan (KAMS). I only knew that it was a women's meeting. One of my friends in the village too was facing the same situation. Both of us decided to tell our problem in the meeting.

But we did not have the courage to tell. We gradually gained confidence and then told one of the Range committee members. She asked us whether we want to accept the marriage or join the KAMS. She told us we have to think and take a firm decision. We thought and told her that we would first join KAMS and then gradually think about the movement.

Pressure continues at home.....

After some time my parents and uncle started pressurizing me again. My uncle came to our house and was talking to my mother. I told my uncle I would die the day he takes me to his house. But my

mother and uncle were talking and talking. I was vexed. I was irritated. I hit my mother and then my uncle and ran away from the house.

That day I slept in a friend's house. My uncle did not leave our village. He sent word to his village to come and take me. My younger sister gave me this information. My mother and uncle were searching for me. So I left for another village. I went to the weekly market and bought 'pitta davvayi', a medicine used to kill birds.

I took the medicine and went home. I showed it to my mother and told her that if they tried to send me by force I would eat the medicine and die. My stubborn stand made my mother rethink. They withdrew their decision. I was relieved.

Six months passed away. My friend married and left for another village. Then pressure started again.

By that time I was already working in the KAMS. The work gave me confidence in life. I decided to join the squad and informed the concerned comrades. It took six months for them to decide and recruit me in the squad.

I joined the squad...

But I did not know how to adjust, how to talk and so on. I started thinking. My mind was in turmoil. I left my home. I left the place where my family was staying for many generations. I contemplated whether my decision was correct or wrong. I could not sleep. I was thinking how the life in the squad would be.

The thoughts haunted me for one month. Comrades were laughing at my fear. I gradually got used to the situation.

As I was working with them they asked me whether I am prepared to shift to another place. I said yes. I continued with them for some time.

The squad took me to my village. They arranged a meeting. Many people

came for the meeting. My mother did not leave me. She was constantly sitting with me. I talked in the meeting. I told my village why I decided to join the squad.

While we were leaving my mother did not give me my clothes and slippers back. I left without them. I did not turn back.

The new area....

I was transferred to another area. The commander and the leaders took great care about me. Everyone used to call me 'Mummy'. The commander encouraged me in military affairs. He used to make me and the other comrades do all sorts of exercises.

A military training camp was conducted. I stood first in it. So comrades asked my squad commander to allot me to the platoon. Thus I was shifted to the first platoon in DK in another area.

During this time I married a comrade of my choice. He was the commander of the platoon at that time.

The first time I heard the sound of firing.....

I thought it was the sound of repairing the utensils. I practiced firing with a single barrel gun. But the first time I saw the police I got confused. I was on sentry and ran to the meeting place in the village and told my comrades. They retaliated the firing. Later they reviewed the incident. They told me I was unnecessarily afraid and that I had to fight on such occasions. My partner comrade encouraged me on how to fight.

That made me think a lot. I started thinking whether I had fear fundamentally or whether I was afraid only because of the suddenness of the incident. It was another turmoil for 6 months.

When I was with this platoon I faced the police again. This time I did not hesitate. I fired. It was with a double

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Major accused of killing Jalil Andrabi in Canada

The Kashmir Times, July 9, 2006.

The lawyers pleading the case of Syed Jalil Andrabi (a civil rights Lawyer) who was killed by an Army Major , Major Avtar Singh in March 1996, have alleged that the “judiciary in the state and the central government have been allowing a free run to the murderer, Major Avtar Singh”. These lawyers of Srinagar High Court have now been mobilizing international human rights organizations, for the arrest of Major Avtar Singh possible.

One of the lawyers, Advocate Arshad Andrabi, who is the brother of Jalil Andrabi said that despite the fact that 10 years have passed after the death of Jalil Andrabi, his murderer, Major Avtar Singh is yet to be arrested. Says Arshad Andrabi, “one wonders why the court, whether it is the High Court or the Chief Judicial Magistrate Budgum, neither of the two tried to get the results delivered. The High Court dismissed the petition of the Kashmir Bar Association while the Chief Judicial Magistrate Budgum could not secure the arrest of the accused” It is in place to mention here that Major Avtar Singh has reportedly escaped to Canada in order to avoid arrest . Right after taking cognizance, the High Court in 1997 had issued orders that all out efforts be made to arrest the culprit. The court had also ordered to display his photographs in the electronic and print media for facilitating his arrest.

A special investigation team (SIT) was formed by the zonal police Headquarter

under S.K. Mishra, the then SSP Srinagar, to carry out the investigation. Later the high court directed that it would monitor the investigation and directed further that reports about the progress of the investigation be submitted to it. The court had ordered that the investigation be completed and challan be produced against the accused in the court of CJM, Budgum.

On 26 December 2002, the SIT came to Budgam and produced the challan against the accused, but failed to produce him in the court. The lawyers of Jalil argue that his full address, Railway Regiment, Ludhiana Station, was known to the investigating team but it still failed to arrest him and present him in the court. They allege that surprisingly enough, the CJM Budgum, Hari Om, endorsed the challan without the accused.

Arshad alleges that it is the policy of the central government that has allowed Major Avtar to run away from the country. “The government of India rather provided him amnesty..... it is only due to pursuance of the family that the case is going on. It is strange to note that the police officer of the rank of DIG, Mr. Mishra, which is heading the SIT, said that the investigating team could not do anything more now”.

He goes on to say, “They only say that the accused is in CanadaThis is a ready-made excuse available with them. In a fresh document presented by the Zonal Police Headquarters Srinagar, in the court of CJM Budgum, it has been said

that they have come to know that Major Avtar Singh, who is involved in the murder of eight other people besides Andrabi, is in Canada at this time. So the court was impressed upon by the lawyers that some questions arise as to how he could travel abroad when as early as in April 1997, a division bench of the High Court headed by Justice Bilal Nazki had passed a detailed pre-emptive order directing the head of the SIT and all the functionaries of the union of India, wherever they may be, that they should provide all possible support for apprehending Major Avtar Singh.”

He further says, “It was directed that his photos might be circulated to the electronic media and no passports should be issued to him. In case he is in possession of a passport, it should be impounded so that he does not leave for any foreign country. So under section 6 of the Passport Act, it is an offence giving false information to the passport authorities. There are columns in the passport form about criminal cases pending against the person”.

Therefore we argue that in the present instance, if the accused has traveled to a foreign country, how were the documents issued to him? So it can be easily inferred that his travel has been facilitated by violating orders of the High Court and the Law applicable” .The lawyers pleading Andrabi’s case now, have been mobilizing the International human rights agencies afresh to facilitate making the arrest of Major Avtar’s possible.



TO THE PRESS AND DEMOCRATIC PUBLIC OPINION

Condemn the arrest of Erhan Aktürk, Yetis Yalniz, Timur Ates, Yaser Inancli, Aligül Polat in Paris!

On 27 June 2006, the French Police Special Forces raided the premises of the Association for Solidarity with People (ASEP) in Paris and confiscated some documents and papers. During the same hours, the homes of members of the association in Paris and the suburbs and in the Brittany area were raided and many people taken into custody.

We strongly condemn the Interior Ministry and French Special Forces who were disrespectful, rude and abusive

during these raids. Their intention was clearly to intimidate and frighten people.

We will continue in our efforts to defend democratic rights against the “security forces” that unjustifiably handcuffed children, pointed guns at the guests and insulted the members of the association.

On Saturday July 1, Erhan Aktürk, Yetis Yalniz, Timur Ates, Yaser Inancli, Aligül Polat were brought to court and are now held in custody pending trial. All are people

whose addresses and work places are known and have full residence and legal status in France. The charges brought against these individuals and the news leaked to the press against them are totally unfounded and untrue. The fact that the charges were leaked to the press illegally before a judicial process is completed exposes the true nature of the fairness of the “bourgeoisie justice”.

The attacks of the French police and Interior Ministry on revolutionary-
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Anti US Revolt in Kabul brutally Repressed

(Taken from Internet: Left Radical of Afghanistan (LRA)Kabul, Afghanistan Lr_afg@yahoo.com)

The shocking massacre by US and coalition forces in Kandahar last week is not yet forgotten and the blood of innocent people is not washed away, and the tormented people of Afghanistan are drowned in an ocean of blood by US forces in the north of Kabul once again.

On 29 May 8:00 AM, a military convoy of the US coalition forces on the way from Bagram military base to Kabul crushed and demolished more than 30 private vehicles and dozens of people along both sides of the jam-packed road in Khairkhana Kotal. It is worth mentioning that due to the concentration of more than three million people in Kabul and an outdated traffic system, narrow roads, etc on the one hand, and on the other hand about half the roads of the middle of the city are being blocked by the US embassy, US related departments, other embassies, foreign companies, NGOs (also usually when foreign forces, diplomats, high ranking government officials are on the streets, each and every time the roads are blocked, for 20–60 minutes daily), all this creates problems to the traffic system and problems for the citizens.

According to witnesses and injured in the Emergency Hospital, the US coalition convoy was driving fast and it looked as if the drivers were drunk. The road was packed with vehicles as usual. As the US coalition convoy was in hurry, they switched on their horns fully and were driving as madly as never can be imaged. They first crushed a taxi with four persons inside, then any vehicle and person that came in front of them. As a result of that incident, more than 30 private vehicles were crushed badly and 56 persons were crushed dead and injured within a few moments.

When the residents of the area saw the sadist killing, and the damage, they gathered immediately and threw stones at the US coalition convoy. The angry crowd chanted slogans such as “Death to the USA”, “Death to the

occupiers”, “Death to Karzai”, “They are plunderers”, “They are murderers”, “Go home”, “We want justice for our victims and the perpetrators must be punished and put to a public trial”. While the angry crowd were stoning and chanting in the area where the incident had taken place, the US-coalition forces opened fire and shot indiscriminately on the angry, but unarmed people. More than 87 people were shot dead and 256 injured. Finally, they succeeded to disperse the furious crowd and opened a way for the convoy to escape from the spot. But the suffering people once again filled the roads and stood for revenge. Local private TV stations 20–30 minutes later showed live scenes of the US forces who were running wild and shooting people. Among the 256 injured, there were two children aged six and eight, who were frightened to go home, they ran towards US forces, they were shot by US forces too.

All these shocking scenes were repeatedly broadcast in the morning, but when the riot spread and the number of demonstrators against the US-coalition forces increased, the terrible original scenes that reflected the barbarism and brutality of the US-led coalition were censored and were not broadcast again. Subsequently, to pretend that the disaster was a simple matter and business as usual, it was called a simple traffic incident due to technical problems of a US vehicle! At 11 A.M., while the demonstrators carrying some dead bodies and chanting slogans against the USA, the occupiers and the local puppet administration near Serena Hotel (the most expensive hotel in Kabul) and the offices of the World Bank, once again they were shot at, and several people have been killed by the claimants of democracy, human rights and civil society. The wide anti US-coalition demonstrations saw the participation of tens of thousands of people, such as school students, workers, youths, unemployed and other strata of the

society. The broad protest of the population has frightened both the US-led coalition and the local government; they are afraid that if they will answer to the legitimate demands of the people by the language of force, it would create irreparable damage. So all the authorities, from the US coalition, NATO, the US embassy, Karzai, the Defence Ministry, Interior Ministry, High Court, parliament, senate, provincial council to influential individuals on TV and radio requested the people to be patient and keep peace and stability. The Afghan authorities promised that they would investigate and punish the killers and creators of the incident which resulted in 87 dead and 256 injured. But the US-coalition authorities once again promised to pay just one thousand dollars to the families of each victim!

The parliament asked the demonstrators to come to parliament and discuss their demands, but it was a hoax, the police and security forces identified them and arrested all of them on the way to their homes. Three days have passed since the incident, the local administration instead of investigating and punishing the US soldiers who caused that big human disaster, began to arrest more and more demonstrators as “rebels” who did not observe the “regulations about demonstrations”! The stupid authorities expect people to be silent, peaceful, and polite when they demand justice for their victims! The authorities think that there are some hidden hands behind the riot of the tens of thousands of people on 29 May. Mr. Mujadidi, the senate chairperson, told the media that there are communists behind the scene. Now, more than 200 youths, students and workers have been detained and face dreadful investigations and brutal torture, humiliation and probably long-term prison sentences.

1 June 2006



Red Salutes to Comrade Ramulu

In another major incident on October 7, comrade Kadari Ramulu alias Ramana alias KDR, a member of the Divisional committee of East Division in Gurralagondi forest in Koyyur Mandal of Vishakhapatnam district which falls under the Andhra-Orissa Border Special Zonal Committee of the CPI((Maoist). Comrade Ramulu hails from Kantla Damera village in Elkaturti Mandal in Karimnagar district. He joined the Party in the mid-1980s and has a long revolutionary career of 22 years. He worked in the armed squads in Karimnagar and Warangal districts between 1983 and 1996. He worked as the secretary of Gurthedu area committee in East Division of AOB. He escaped several times from police dragnet in Karimnagar, Warangal and East Division.

Comrade KDR worked as a bonded labourer in his village and has an inherent class hatred for the class enemies. He realized the necessity of revolution in order to liberate the vast toiling masses who, like him, were oppressed under the weight of feudalism, imperialism and comprador bureaucrat capitalism. His class roots helped him in standing steadfast even in the midst of the severest repression and tremendous hardships. Most of the revolutionary life of KDR was spent in Warangal. He was a terror to the police and the class enemies in Warangal who booked 32 cases against him. He never spared injustice and stood firmly by the oppressed masses which earned him great respect and love from the people. He left his daughter when she was five months old and went underground with his wife Laxmi in 1985. He never saw his daughter again. His wife, Laxmi, became a martyr in a bomb blast during a raid on a police station. Reacting to her father's death KDR's daughter Suneetha, who never saw her father, said that he dedicated his entire life for the cause of the

oppressed and suppressed masses and finally sacrificed his life for the same. She expressed anguish that she had to at last see his father's dead body while she was anxiously waiting for years to see her father alive.

KDR's village, Damera, has a glorious revolutionary tradition with around 13 people from the village having become martyrs. People of the village and the surrounding villages pooled funds and constructed a martyrs' column in the village in memory of these martyrs. KDR's popularity among the masses became evident when thousands of people gathered in Damera for the funeral on October 9. They eagerly waited for hours for the arrival of their beloved leader's body. The police, as usual, sealed off the village to prevent the gathering of the people. They stopped people coming from Dharmasagar, Anantasagar, Peesara, Veledu, Kothakonda, Bodagutta, Bheemadevarapalli and other places in Warangal and Karimnagar districts and shot video film with a view to harass the people later on. However, all these threats did not deter the people who managed to circumvent police pickets through ingenious means and reached the village crossing the rice fields unnoticed on foot.

The funeral was attended by the revolutionary balladeer and Jana Natya Mandali founder leader Gadar, revolutionary poet Kalyana Rao, Madiga Resrvation porata Samiti leader Manda Krishna Madiga, president and co-convenor of Amaraveerula Bandhumitrula committee, Padma Kumari and Narsanna respectively, chairman of the people's land commission, Chikkudu Prabhakar, and several other leaders of democratic organisations along with thousands of people. Addressing the gathering, Gaddar, Kalyana Rao, Chikkudu Prabhakar and others called upon the people to

throw out the fascist rule of YSR whose brutal reign had seen the murder of several hundred revolutionaries and snatching of even the minimum rights of the people in the state. They said the people would teach a fitting lesson to the YSR government for having deceived them by promising that there would be no encounters in his regime but killing over 295 revolutionaries and their sympathizers during his 2 ½ year rule. 90 per cent of these were cold-blooded killings, they said. Narsayya, co-convenor of Amaraveerula Bandhumitrula committee said that the blood of these martyrs like KDR and Sathyam would not go waste and would give birth to thousands of such heroes. Manda Krishna Madiga accused the YSR government of carrying on dictatorship in the state and demanded immediate halt to fake encounter killings.

By 12 noon the village looked like a ocean of masses. Slogans of "Ramanna Amar Rahe!, We shall fulfill the dreams of KDR!" rent the air as thousands marched in the village streets carrying KDR's body. People who had never seen KDR during the 24 years since he left the village came enthusiastically to have their first and last glimpse of their hero. As JNM artistes led by Gaddar sang songs praising the life and deeds of KDR the entire masses sang in chorus surcharging the entire atmosphere.

Comrade KDR, the proud son of the oppressed masses of India, shall remain forever in the hearts and hearths of the people. YSR's police state cannot halt the onward march of people's war in AP notwithstanding huge losses suffered by the revolutionaries in the massive military offensive launched by the greyhounds-CRPF combine. They will overcome the present difficulties and utilize the severe crisis affecting the state to advance the revolution.



These reports were received at our office in end October before the fake encounters of other senior comrades of AP which will be covered in the next issue..... Editor

Comrade Sathyam's murder-YSR's fascist state successfully buries the truth once again

Nitin

The murder of comrade Sathyam, a member of the AP State Committee, on October 6th throws up many legitimate questions related to the norms followed by the country's rulers to the fore. Can the rulers pour out lies that are obvious even to a school child and yet get away unscathed? Will the society tolerate such hypocrites, double-dealers and outright liars who dupe the people through their unending lies? Does not such lying amount to a criminal act especially when the mutterers of these lies intend to protect khaki-clad murderers who violate every provision in the Constitution related to the fundamental rights of the people? Khaki-clad murderers who are illegally licensed by the state and central governments to kill people at will, to detain them illegally and inflict indescribable torture upon them, abduct them without leaving any trace, and prevent people from attending even funeral processions of the dead? The brutal acts of the police state in Andhra Pradesh bring these questions seriously before every thinking citizen in the country.

It is not just a coincidence that Sathyam in Telugu means Truth. Murder of comrade Sathyam is not just the murder of a revolutionary leader but also murder of Truth itself. Never before had the police in AP strived as much hard as in the aftermath of the murder of comrade Sathyam to prove that it was a real encounter. On the 6th afternoon the police officials declared that there was a fierce encounter in the forest in Anantapur and that the secretary of Nallamala Forest Division, comrade Sathyam, died in the exchange of fire while two others, including another state committee member, Obulesh, was severely injured. 20 Maoists escaped after the exchange of fire with the police and the death of Sathyam, they claimed. The encounter, they claimed, took place in the early hours of the 6th but did not permit the media personnel to visit the spot of the so-called encounter on the plea that the situation there was dangerous and that

Maoists might throw hand-grenades and cause harm to the media personnel. Until that evening none from the media could visit the site.

The reason why the police refused to allow media personnel to visit the encounter site is obvious to even the most naïve—they needed time to prepare the encounter site. They hurriedly erected five or six tents, placed two pistols, a revolver and a country-made weapon, solar lights, wireless sets, revolutionary literature, kitchen materials, and even cooked food (!) at the site. And, of course, the dead body of comrade Sathyam, which was brought all the way from Bangalore city where he was caught the previous day. It was only after “preparing” the site of the encounter that the media personnel were allowed to visit the site. The site was prepared under the guidance of the newly-posted SP of Anantapur, Stephen Ravindra. This SP has a notorious record of fake encounter killings of revolutionaries and sympathizers, and is directly involved in organising private vigilante gangs that go by the name of cobras, tigers etc. He had even organised a covert operation in Warangal during the period of talks between the Maoists and the Government of Andhra Pradesh in July 2004 along with another notorious police officer, Srinivasa Reddy, who is now enacting umpteen numbers of murders in Mahboobnagar district.

Even as he was busy “preparing” the encounter site, Stephen Ravindra fretted and fumed at the various mass organizations that were crying foul and were demanding a judicial enquiry into the murder of comrade Sathyam. The SP even issued a statement in the name of the state committee member of the CPI(Maoist), comrade Obulesh (now also martyred), claiming that there had, indeed, been an encounter with the special police forces and the Greyhounds near Mallammakondalu in Nallamada mandal in Anantapur district and that he had escaped along with others while comrade Sathyam died in the ensuing exchange of fire. By

issuing such statements in the name of the Maoist leader the manipulator thought that he would be able to mislead the people by showing it as a real encounter. His police brain could only think on a transient, adhoc basis to confuse the public for it was certain that the real Obulesh would one day anyway issue a statement, just as he did a few days later, disowning the earlier statement issued by the police in his name. Yet, this “brilliant” police brain, knowing that the Maoist leader in the forest would not be able to issue a denial immediately, thought a forged statement would save the police from a public outcry at least temporarily. No wonder, police officials like Stephen Ravindra, habituated as they are to amassing immense enormous wealth by duping the government through forged documents, should think of such forged statements in the name of Maoist leaders to dupe the masses.

Janardhan, the spokesperson of the three leading committees of CPI(Maoist) in AP—the AP State Committee, North Telangana Special Zonal Committee and the Andhra-Orissa Border Special Zonal Committee—issued a statement on the 7th, which appeared in the papers on the next day, shattering the encounter story put out by the police officials. He asserted that Sathyam was arrested in Bangalore on the afternoon of 5th October, was tortured the whole night, and bumped off in the early hours of 6th after taking him to the Chitravati squad area in the forest of Anantapur district. He also exposed how the Anantapur district SP had issued the statement in the name of the state committee member, Obulesh, to confuse the people and justify the murder of Sathyam.

The police state of AP had proved once again that it has no compunction in killing revolutionaries in cold blood and rubbing off such murders as encounters. Once in a while it would produce an arrested Naxalite in the Court, as it had done in the case of comrade Rajanna, leader of CPI(ML)-Janashakti, and claim that this very act was proof that the YSR government was against fake encounters. Such a rare case

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Comrade Sathyam hails from a poor family from K Samudram village in Warangal district. His father was a hamali and mother an agricultural labourer. He had become a Professional Revolutionary of CPI(Maoist) in the late 1980s. He began his revolutionary career as a squad member in Nalgonda district of South Telangana after completing electronics course in the ITI in Palvancha in Khammam district. He gradually grew to the position of squad commander by 1995, then became a member of the district committee in 1998, and the secretary of the district committee in 2002 after the martyrdom of comrade Diwakar. He lost his life-partner, comrade Sarita, in an encounter in 2001. He readily took up work as the secretary of Nallamala forest division in 2003 and played an active role in building the movement in Nallamala in the midst of the severest repression since 2003. He was promoted to the state committee in August 2005. Thus from the humble beginning as an ordinary squad member he grew to the status of state committee member through sheer hard work, deep commitment, self-sacrificing nature and organisational-military abilities. His organising abilities and military prowess was proved time and again in his practice. He fought back courageously in many armed encounters with the special police forces and the greyhounds and had escaped in over 20-25 instances after he was surrounded by the enemy forces. As an able military commander he led many military operations against the police forces. He led the daring day-light attack on the SP of Prakasham district, Mahesh Chandra Ladha, in 2005 in Ongole town. The notorious

SP's bullet-proof car was thrown into the air and though he had narrowly escaped, it created terror in the hearts of the cruel police officials and political leaders. It is said that the police filed a total of 107 cases against him. No other proof is required about comrade Sathyam's revolutionary sincerity and commitment than the vicious attack against Sathyam by the people's enemy and leader of the murder mafia in AP, DGP Swaranjit Sen, who described Sathyam as a "hardcore brutal man" and expressed great relief for the police with the death of comrade Sathyam.



Comrade Sathyam is known for his deep commitment to the people and commanded enormous respect among the Party cadres and all PLGA fighters. He was always an inspiration to them and his presence gave immense confidence to the people and the cadres. While he maintained close comradely relations with one and all, he was also known for his frankness in expressing his opinions regarding Party policies and placing criticism of every mistake and weakness in the Party leadership and cadres. The state committee meeting, which took place in the second half of September 2006, decided to relieve him from the secretaryship of NFD in

accordance with the decision of the Central Regional Bureau, and allot him to Dandakaranya to lead a Company of the PLGA. He was to leave for DK within a fortnight or so when the unfortunate incident took place. He went to Bangalore on some Party contact on October 5th and was arrested in the afternoon around 3pm. He was tortured until the next morning and then shot dead.

Comrade Sathyam did not reveal a single Party secret despite severest torture by the police. He remained steadfast till his last breath. Comrade Sathyam was just 35 years when he attained martyrdom. Sathyam's exemplary revolutionary career and his immense courage and determination exhibited when he was in the hands of the cruel SIB police officials, will remain an inspiration to the Party cadres, PLGA fighters and the revolutionary masses not only in AP but throughout the revolutionary camp in the country. He will remain a symbol of rebellion among the new young generation for having sacrificed his life for the communist values he had cherished all his life.

The popularity of Comrade Sathyam was seen at the massive rally during the funeral procession in his village on October 8. Apart from a huge gathering of the masses, leaders from virtually every party in the Mandal attended the funeral. The popularity of this young leader cut across Party lines. The attempts by the police to obstruct the people from attending the funeral bore little fruit as people defied the police restrictions and reached the place through ingenious method.



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of production in a court of law, perhaps one in a hundred fake encounters, cannot fool the people. Even such a rare thing occurs when the arrest is immediately publicized widely and the civil rights organisations react promptly within hours. Such publicity too, however, did not help in saving the revolutionaries in most cases. In the past 2 ½ years of YSR's fascist rule, over 250 Maoists and another 60-70 other revolutionaries were killed, mostly in fake encounters. And those produced in the courts during YSR's fascist rule do not cross the single digit.

What had taken place on October 6th was not just the murder of comrade Sathyam but the murder of Truth itself. And such murders had taken place several times in the past after arresting revolutionary leaders in the high-tech city of Bangalore right from comrade Puli Anjanna, the then state secretary of AP state committee in October 1993, comrade Reddappa, a member of the state committee in 1996, comrades Shyam, Mahesh and Murali, all CC members, in December 1999, comrades Sathyam, a member of the state committee, Gangaram, the secretary of Rayalaseema Divisional Committee and Shankar, a member of the Divisional committee, in January 2004, and again comrade Sathyam in October 2006. The AP SIB has well-knit illegal structures and torture chambers in most of the cities in India, ore so in the southern cities like Bangalore, Chennai and

Mumbai, not to speak of the cities and towns in Andhra Pradesh.

The media, especially the 24 hour news channels that pour out stories in the name of news every hour round the clock, had failed miserably in digging out the facts and establishing the truth. The English papers were the worst as they only published police versions of the so-called encounter. They claimed that three Maoists including the state committee member, Sathyam, were killed in the encounter. Later, they corrected themselves by saying that while Sathyam was killed, Obulesh and another PLGA fighter were seriously injured but manage to flee along with 15 other Maoists. Some Telugu dailies did better by expressing doubts regarding the encounter story. The hard labour put in by the police in preparing the encounter site and not allowing media personnel to visit the site for hours was cited as a proof of the hollowness of the police story. However, some papers put out fabricated stories that were even worse than those of the police. For instance one paper claimed that it had access to reliable sources which said that the encounter took place based on the information provided by a Maoist who had fled the camp on 5th night, became a covert agent and brought the police to the camping site by early morning the next day. Photographs of the "site of the encounter", the tents, weapons and other materials used by the Maoists were prominently published in the daily. Anyone seeing these photographs and inputs from

so-called reliable sources would have to invariably believe that an encounter had, indeed, taken place based on the information provided by a covert agent. The criminal hypocritical gangsters ruling the police state in AP thus bury truth and the so-called watchdog media had simply aided this burial even making it so much colourful and credible by adding its own creative *masala*.

The ruling class parties in AP, whether it is the Congress or the TDP, have the same notorious track record of cold-blooded murders when they are in power. Until date, not a single murder case has been registered against any police official although several thousand revolutionaries were killed in these so-called encounters—euphemism for cold-blooded murders. Outright lies continue to do the rounds, whoever might be in power. The rulers know well that the people know about their lies. Yet they continue to churn out the same lies about exchange of fire between the Naxalites and the police even when everyone knows that they have been arrested and shot dead. How long will this culture of lies, hypocrisy, and daylight murders go on? Does the judiciary, which interferes when the workers go on a strike saying that it has to protect the lives and ensure people of their basic rights ever think of interfering in these unending murders by the state and dare to punish the murderers clad in Khaki and Gandhi's khadi?



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democratic individuals and institutions have a long history. However, the latest incident highlights a new aspect of the policies of intimidation against progressive immigrants in general and more specifically against democratic institutions such as the People's Solidarity Club in Paris.

We, the undersigned associations, strongly condemn these draconian acts of the French State, its Interior Ministry and French Special Police Forces and demand the immediate release of all those arrested.

We strongly oppose and condemn the attacks against the rights of migrants from Turkey and their institutions and call on all progressive, democratic and freedom loving people to join us in protesting

against the French authorities and demand the immediate and unconditional release of all those arrested.

End the anti-democratic policies against progressive immigrants' institutions!

Free all those arrested, now!

Updated signatories (02/07/06):

- The Paris Association for Solidarity with People (ASEP)
- The Federation of Workers from Turkey in France (FITIF)
- The Confederation of Workers from Turkey in Europe (ATIK)
- New Democratic Youth (YDG)
- New Democratic Woman (ATIK)

- International League of Peoples Struggle – European Coordination Committee (ILPS –ECC)

- Strasbourg Tohum Youth Center

- St. Brieuc International Youth and Cultural Centre

- Group Siar

- Democrat Unity of Artists

- France Migrant Workers Federation

- France Democrat Rights Federation

- Anatolia Cultural and Solidarity Association- Paris

- Odak Magazine-Paris

- Alinteri Magazine-Paris



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Red Salutes to Comrade Vikas

Com Vikas was martyred on Sept 17 2006 after being arrested from the Kanker region of Chhathisgarh; martyred in a fake encounter. Hundreds of police from Gadchiroli (Maharashtra) and Bastar came to kill him. Com. Vikas was the architect of the Gadchiroli movement, particularly in the period of acute repression during the 1990s. It was he who led the Party {then CPI(ML)(PW)} to face the ruthless attacks of the state not only on the guerrilla forces but on the masses in general. In face of the worst form of mass terror the Party units led by him, somehow maintained their close links with the masses; gave them strength and encouragement, and rebuilt the party and army in the region. His loss is a serious blow to the revolutionary forces in Dandakarnaya and throughout the country. But it is a blow that will turn into a fire as thousands who loved him most dearly will be aroused to follow in his path.

Com. Vikas (alias Shivanna) has been active with the revolutionary movement for over two decades. At a very young age he joined the Revolutionary Students Union in 1985 at Hyderabad. But very soon he responded to the call of the Party and

shifted as an organiser to the backward tribal areas of southern Maharashtra of the Dandakaranya region. From 1985 to 1989 he worked with the squads of Sironcha, Aheri and Etapalli of this region. In 1989 he was arrested at Ballarshah. But in 1991,



in order to secure his release, the MLA Raja Dharmarao was kidnapped and his release was demanded in exchange. After coming out from jail in 1991 he worked as commander of the Aheri squad and a member of the Party Divisional sub-

committee till 1994. In 1995 he was elected to the Gadchiroli Divisional Committee of the Party. From 1996 to 1998 he was the Platoon commander of one of the first platoons formed in Dandakaranya. In 2000 he was elected as the secretary of the Gadchiroli Divisional Committee and an alternative member of the DK Special Zonal Committee (equivalent of a State Committee). In 2002 he was elected to the SZC.

Vikas was very much loved by the people and the cadres due to his simplicity, straightforwardness, courage, selflessness, dedication and total commitment to the cause of the oppressed. He was a model guerrilla and communist. He trained hundreds of young fighters into effective guerrillas and good communists. Though he originally hailed from AP he integrated so deeply with the local tribals — speaking their language fluently and considering them like his own family members. The revolutionaries of this country will always remember Vikas and his life-story will be a source of encouragement to all future generations of revolutionaries.



Press statement of Communist Party of Bhutan (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)

The first four day's National Conference of THE Communist Party of Bhutan (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) has ended in a remote village amongst its representatives from various places. The conference was held from 31st of January to 3rd February 2006. It was a historical day in the history of the party and has been proved to be a milestone in the path of struggle for the freedom loving people of Bhutan. Since its formation, our great and glorious party C.P.B. (MLM) has come across various ups and downs in its course of progress and has piled up much loss as well as achievements. The conference which commenced with the International song and paying one minute homage in the memory of immortal martyrs had added a new spirit amongst its cadres by felicitating one of its brave fighters, com. Chandra-Bindu, who had fallen prey in the hands of the enemy (Police), for the first time in the history of the party while performing his obligations. As a result, the first conference has taken the following

historical decisions that we want to make public through this statement.

The name of the party will remain as it is in Nepali but it will be Communist Party of Bhutan (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) in short, C.P.B.(MLM) in English. It is to remind one and all that its name was Bhutan Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) and in short, B.C.P.(MLM) before the conference. The conference has reached to this conclusion having had a long discussion and consultation to name the party according to its activities and party-line.

The conference has approved four important documents of the party, including the main documents, i.e. the programme and policy. It is also informed that the manifesto of the party was approved by the plenum in the fifth sitting of the party central organizing committee.

The party has adopted the two-line struggle as “party-life” and adopted it in a creative mode. Having realized the past

experience, this time, the conference has been successful in bringing out the revolutionary “Unified force” breaking all the large and bulky party committees into sophisticated ones. Henceforth, the conference has laid a great stress to make all the party cadres more practicable and more accountable in implementing the aforesaid policies and making the party military-oriented and military party-oriented.

The party has fully analyzed that the programme and policy formulated earlier won't be practicable due to the changing National and International political scenario. Hence, keeping in view the National and International political scenario, the conference has formulated new programmes and policies due to the dynamic situation so as to begin the struggle from the next height studying the situation of the country subjectively and objectively. All the representatives of the

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Demand the immediate and Unconditional Release of Comrades Sheila and Chintan, Central Committee Members of the CPI(Maoist)

Comrade Sheila was arrested on October 7th from Sundargadh district Orissa while comrade Chintan was arrested ten days later on Oct 18th from Champaran district, Bihar. Details of comrade Chintan's arrest are still awaited.

Comrade Sheila (Shobha) alias Budhni Munda, a member of the Central Committee of CPI(Maoist), was arrested from a bus stand at Ramjodi village on October 7th, illegally detained for two days and subjected to severe physical and mental torture at the CRPF camp at Lathikata Police Station.. Two other comrades, Sanjay alias Bijay Tudu and Rajan Rahul Munda, both members of PLGA, were also arrested along with comrade Sheila. All the three were arrested by the Orissa and Jharkhand police in a joint operation. At that time she had just returned from a tour of the Orissa-Jharkhand border region awakening the oppressed women of the region.

Initially the government tried to keep the arrest a secret, but due to the consistent pressure from human rights groups and other progressive intellectuals the police was forced to present her in court and even before the media. Here, defiantly she openly declared her great mission for the emancipation of women and for the freedom of all the oppressed masses of our country.

But soon after her presentation in court, on Oct 10th she was again given police remand. Though she was in bad health condition and on medical treatment she was taken from state to state and subjected to cruel physical and mental torture by the police, government officials and the intelligence. They also threatened to extend the remand and with even more horrifying torture.

But who then is Sheila Devi? She is that steadfast Maoist fighter who has been consistently, for the last two-and-a-half decades, been arousing the oppressed masses of Jharkhand-Orissa-Bihar, particularly the women, for the new democratic revolution. She was the founder president of the Nari Mukti Sangh which she built from scratch and extended to entire region of Jharkhand-Orissa-Bihar. Thereby she has played a notable role in establishing the revolutionary women's movement in India. She has also played a pioneering role in the Jharkhand movement on the call for the formation of a "Lalkhand". She has also been playing an active role in the ongoing movement against the loot of our mineral and forest wealth by the imperialists and their agents in the rich Jharkhand-Orissa belt. Through all these struggles com Sheila has won a place in the hearts of the masses and is well known as their friend, staunch warrior and able communist leader. Particularly her ties with the women and young girls being drawn to the movement are that of a friend, guide and revolutionary model.

In a statement issued by the Central Committee of the CPI(Maoist) on Oct.11th it said:

The CC, CPI(Maoist), demands the immediate release of these comrades as well as an enquiry into their illegal detention in the CRPF camp in violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

The illegal detention and the torture of comrades Shobha and others only shows how the so-called fundamental rights provided by the Indian Constitution only exist on paper. Comrade Shobha is a very senior member of our Party who has been in the forefront of the women's movement in Bihar and Jharkhand for several

years. She has been a great inspiration to the adivasi women of Jharkhand, Orissa and North Chattisgarh who have been oppressed and suppressed for centuries. It is due to this active role of comrade Shobhadi in awakening the adivasi women and galvanizing them into united militant struggle that the exploiting classes in Jharkhand, Orissa, Chattisgarh had become unnerved and their police and para-military goons acted in coordination to arrest her and thereby to weaken the revolutionary women's movement in the country. The arrest of comrade Shobhadi cannot stop the onward march of the revolutionary women's movement in the country.

We call upon all Party members, PLGA fighters, members of all revolutionary mass organizations, revolutionary people's committees and the entire masses of the country to organize protests and build a mass movement to secure the release of the CC member and leader of the revolutionary women's movement, comrade Shobhadi, and other two comrades immediately and unconditionally.

On Nov 14th a total bandh took place in the three states on a call given against the torture of comrade Sheila and for the unconditional release of all the 5 Central Committee members in Indian jails as also for the release of all other political prisoners.

Com Chintan (alias P.P. Singh), is also a senior comrade with over 20 years experience in the revolutionary field integrating deeply amongst first the working class and then the oppressed peasantry. He was arrested from the backward areas of Champaran district in North Bihar. More details are awaited.

We print below a press statement received from Com Azad Spokesperson of CPI (Maoist) on Nepal developments. Editor.

Communist Party of India (Maoist)

Central Committee



Press Release:

November 13, 2006

A New Nepal can emerge only by smashing the reactionary state! Depositing arms of the PLA under UN supervision would lead to the disarming of the masses!!

On 5th November the CPN (Maoist) had entered into an agreement with the government of Nepal which stipulated that the PLA would deposit its arms in seven designated cantonments while the government's armed forces too would deposit an equal number of arms. These would be placed under the supervision of a UN monitoring team while the keys of the lockers of PLA arms would be with the Maoist party. It was also agreed by both sides to dissolve the present Parliament and form a new interim Parliament with a share of the seats for the Maoists, to form an interim government with some portfolios for the Maoists, and to elect a Constituent Assembly by next summer which is supposed to decide the fate of the monarchy and the future of Nepal. The agreement received the final official stamp when prime minister Koirala and chairman of CPN(M) comrade Prachanda signed the agreement and declared it publicly. The CC, CPI(Maoist) has been perturbed by this agreement concluded by the fraternal Maoist party in Nepal with the government of the seven party alliance led by the Indian protégé Koirala.

The agreement to deposit the arms of the people's army in designated cantonments is fraught with dangerous implications. This act could lead to the disarming of the oppressed masses of Nepal and to a reversal of the gains made by the people of Nepal in the decade-long people's war at the cost of immense sacrifices. The clause in the agreement to deposit an equal number of arms by both sides will obviously work in favour of the Koirala-led government as the latter will have the option to use the huge stock of arms still at the disposal of the army anytime and to further strengthen the reactionary army of the government. The decision taken by CPN(Maoist) on arms management, even if it thinks it is a tactical step to achieve its immediate goal of setting up a constituent assembly, is harmful to the interests of the revolution.

Entire experiences of the world revolution had demonstrated time and again that without the people's army it is impossible for the people to exercise their power. Nothing is more dreadful to imperialism and the reactionaries than armed masses and hence they would gladly enter into any agreement to disarm them. In fact, disarming the masses has been the constant refrain of all the reactionary ruling classes ever since the emergence of class-divided society. Unarmed masses are easy prey for the reactionary classes and imperialists who even enact massacres as proved by history. The CC, CPI(Maoist), as one of the detachments of world proletariat, warns the CPN(Maoist) and the people of Nepal of the grave danger inherent in the agreement to deposit the arms and calls upon them to reconsider their tactics in the light of bitter historical experiences.

The agreement by the Maoists to become part of the interim government in Nepal cannot transform the reactionary character of the state machinery that serves the exploiting ruling classes and imperialists. The state can be the instrument in the hands of either the exploiting classes or the proletariat but it cannot serve the interests of both these bitterly-contending classes. It is the fundamental tenet of Marxism that no basic change in the social system can

be brought about without smashing the state machine. Reforms from above cannot bring any qualitative change in the exploitative social system however democratic the new Constitution might seem to be, and even if the Maoists become an important component of the government. It is sheer illusion to think that a new Nepal can be built without smashing the existing state.

Another illusion that the agreement creates is regarding the so-called impartial or neutral role of the UN. The UN is in reality an instrument in the hands of the imperialists, particularly US imperialists, to dominate, bully and interfere in the affairs of the Third World countries for the benefit of the imperialists. It is used as a guise to provide legitimacy to the brazen acts of the imperialists to oppress and suppress the people of the Third World. Afghanistan and Iraq are the most recent instances of UN's direct role in legitimizing imperialist aggression and occupation of these countries. It is the duty of the revolutionaries to expose, oppose and fight this imperialist role of the UN. Giving it any role in arms management, election supervision, and peace process in Nepal, would only mean inviting imperialist interference, in particular that of US imperialism.

Another disturbing factor is the illusion harboured by the Maoists in Nepal regarding the role of the Indian expansionists. Indian ruling classes are the biggest threat to the people of the entire sub-continent and it is the duty of the people of the various countries of South Asia to unitedly fight Indian expansionism. The Indian state, with the backing of US imperialism, has been continuously interfering in the internal affairs of Nepal; it had backed the monarchy while encouraging its stooges among the parliamentary forces in the name of two-pillar theory; trained and extended all forms of aid to the Royal Nepal Army in their military offensive against the Maoists; has secret deals with the Nepali Congress led by Koirala and with other reactionary parties; and is bent upon disarming the PLA and the masses of Nepal and isolating the Maoists. Its aim is to grab the natural wealth of Nepal particularly its huge hydel potential and to make it a safe haven for the imperialists and Indian comprador capitalists. Comrade Prachanda's repeated praise for India's role in bringing about the agreement between the Maoists and the SPA in Nepal creates illusions among the masses about India rather than preparing them for fighting the Indian expansionists who are keen on Skirmishing Nepal in future.

Even more surprising is the assertion by the CPN(Maoist) that their current "tactics" in Nepal would be an example to other Maoist parties in South Asia. Comrade Prachanda had also given a call to other Maoist parties to reconsider their revolutionary strategies and to practice multiparty democracy in the name of 21st century democracy. Our CC makes it crystal-clear to CPN(M) and the people at large that there can be no genuine democracy in any country without the capture of state power by the proletariat and that the so-called multiparty democracy cannot bring any basic change in the lives of the people. It calls upon the Maoist parties and people of South Asia to persist in the path of protracted people's war as shown by comrade Mao. We also appeal to the CPN(Maoist) once again to rethink about their current tactics which are actually changing the very strategic direction of the revolution in Nepal and to withdraw from their agreement with the government of Nepal on depositing arms of PLA as this would make the people defenseless in face of attacks by the reactionaries.



Azad,
Spokesperson,
Central Committee,
CPI(Maoist)