



COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MAOIST)

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Press Release

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Immediately withdraw the death sentences on Adivasi and dalit cultural artistes and leaders Comrades Jeeten Marandi, Anil Ram, Manoj Rajwar and Chhatrapati Mandal !

On June 23, the Giridih district (Jharkhand) sessions court judge Indradeo Mishra pronounced death sentences to Jeeten Marandi, Anil Ram, Manoj Rajwar and Chhatrapati Mandal in the Chilkari case where 19 people were killed in 2007 and thus the state bared its fascist fangs one more time. Jeeten Marandi and others have always worked openly and the organizations they are working for are not banned organizations. Pronouncing death sentences in a case with which they had no connection whatsoever is a clear is nothing but an act of revenge on them as they are standing firmly with the people using song and dance in all their anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles, particularly against displacement. As part of Operation Green Hunt launched to suppress the Maoist movement in the country, particularly in Central and Eastern India, the central and state governments have been resorting to the most brutal and heinous atrocities one could imagine on the poorest of the poor – the Adivasis of this country and these latest death sentences are one more proof of this. The cruelest face of OGH could be seen in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha and that too in the Adivasi areas of these states where the Maoist movement is stronger.

Jeeten Marandi is a well-known Adivasi cultural artiste and leader of Jharkhand Abhen, a cultural organization of Jharkhand. He is a leader of the All India League for revolutionary Culture and has toured the length and breadth of India propagating revolutionary songs and culture. Anil Ram, Manoj Rajwar and Chhatrapati Mandal are also Adivasi and Dalit cultural artistes. Jeeten displayed his cultural talents since he was a child and gradually developed himself into one of the finest artistes this country has ever produced. It was only natural that as a conscious child he could not ignore the plight of the Adivasi society of which he himself was a part. His social investigation of the root causes for the poverty, exploitation and oppression of Adivasis naturally led him to revolutionary politics and he and his cultural organization propagated revolutionary politics to awaken political consciousness among the people.

Propagating one's ideas openly is not a crime and nobody can be punished for that. The ruling classes of India are not ready to tolerate any kind of dissent and have been resorting to all kinds of ploys to stifle the voices of dissent to its pro-imperialist and anti-people policies aiming to loot the natural resources and rich mineral wealth of the people. As true people's artistes they have been in the forefront in the anti-displacement movement in Jharkhand which is giving one of the toughest resistances in this matter. It is very clear that the state is punishing them for these political activities and not for some Chilkari case which everybody knows is just one of the dozens of false cases foisted on them. In the bitter class struggle fought against feudalism in Bihar and Jharkhand massacres were perpetrated by the land lords through their private armies on the peasantry, particularly on the dalits. The peasantry had to resort to counter-violence in self-defence and incidents like Chilkari are a part of it. The state instead of looking into the root causes for such incidents and addressing them, is trying to use them to foist false cases on mass organization activists to stifle their voices of dissent. Firstly they slapped a case of sedition on Jeeten Marandi in 2007 with the allegation that he made inflammatory speeches in front of Raj Bhavan in Ranchi on

the issue of release of political prisoners and have been harassing him ever since with incarceration and false cases. Even before that he has been arrested many times and sometimes beaten brutally. This death sentence comes as a culmination of all these conspiracies to stifle his voice forever. The state is so shameless in its callousness that it has foisted some cases of Pirtand and Teesri P.S. which happened when Jeeten was in jail!

This country has a 200 year long history of colonial rule under the British which was consequently witness to countless Adivasi rebellions. British imperialism sought to suppress these rebellions by using brute force with the advantage of modern weapons they had and hanging of the rebel leaders was one consistent tactic it had used. The comprador Indian ruling classes which inherited this mantle of brute suppression from them are following in their footsteps. Comrades Bhumaih and Kista Goud were the first revolutionary peasant activists to be hanged in 'independent India' and later death sentences were pronounced on many revolutionary activists, particularly on the revolutionary peasant activists in Bihar (which included the present Jharkhand) implicating them in false cases. People's lawyers and civil rights leaders like comrades KG Kannabiran and Pattipati Venkateswarlu as part of their civil rights organizations have vehemently fought against the death sentences pronounced on the revolutionaries both in the courts and outside and built broad movements not only with the immediate demands of annulling the death sentences in particular cases but also for ending capital punishment. It is the necessary to continue this fight on a broader scale as it is obvious that the state would resort to more such fascist acts apart from the massacres, false encounters and atrocities perpetrated on the Adivasi hamlets on a daily basis. Singanna of Narayanapatna was killed point blank in police firings, Lalmohan Tudu of Lalgarh was killed in a 'fake encounter' and now comes this death sentence on Jeeten Marandi of Jharkhand. This is all part of the conspiracy to kill the people's leaders who emerged from the people's movements waged against feudalism, comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie and imperialism. By rendering the movements leaderless they want to remove all hurdles to their loot of natural resources in the Adivasi areas.

As Jeeten and other people present in the court sang in the court immediately after the death sentences were pronounced – 'that day would definitely come' when people would put an end to all these fascist acts of the state with powerful mass upsurges. Neither death sentences nor false encounters can kill the spirit of true leaders of the people and they would fight to the end.

CPI (Maoist) demands that the death sentences of Jeeten Marandi, Anil Ram, Manoj Rajwar and Chhatrapati Mandal be annulled immediately. It appeals to all democratic organizations, civil rights organizations, organizations for the rights of political prisoners and particularly to all cultural and literary organizations and Adivasi cultural associations to build a vast movement demanding the annulment of these death sentences and the unconditional release of these people's artistes. Let us broaden this movement for ending capital punishment altogether.



(Abhay)

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