

## **Maoists fuel villager anger –**

### **Roads dug up to protest Thursday's police firing [shooting]**

[Published: Dec. 12, 2009]

Dec. 11: Maoists mobilised people in thousands who surrounded police camps in Salboni and protested a day after security forces killed a villager, firing on a mob that had besieged them. The guerrillas, who instigated last evening's attack and then joined the villagers with guns, seized the opportunity today to cash in on popular anger over the police firing.

The police said the more the rebels were getting cornered in Lalgarh, the more they were trying to build up "Lalgarh-type" resistance in other areas. "Their might in Lalgarh is not what it used to be because the joint forces have been able to take control of the area to a large extent. So, the Maoists are now looking for fresh hunting grounds. That's why they are killing CPM workers and attacking the forces in Salboni and parts of Jhargram," an officer said.

The Maoist-backed People's Committee Against Police Atrocities has called a 24-hour bandh tomorrow in West Midnapore, Purulia and Bankura. Yesterday's death has given a new lease of life to the committee, "giving it the opportunity to fuel people's anger", the officer added. One of those injured last evening, Tamal Shaw, 34, a quack, was brought to Calcutta today with three bullet wounds.

CPM workers Tilak Tudu and Panchanan Mahato were branded police informers and killed in Parulia and Paluiboni villages of Salboni late last night. State police chief Bhupinder Singh said on the sidelines of a programme in Burdwan the police were helpless as far as preventing Maoist murders was concerned. "If their policy is to kill people, we are helpless. It is impossible provide security to one and all."

In Calcutta, home secretary Ardhendu Sen said: "No matter how many villagers are at the front of a demonstration, armed Maoists are always behind them."

The walls of the Satpati police camp in Salboni were found riddled with bullet marks this morning. "It shows how the Maoists had made the joint forces their target," said West Midnapore superintendent of police Manoj Verma. Led by committee leaders, villagers today felled trees and blocked roads between Lalgarh and Bhimpur. Efforts to do so failed in Salboni because of the heavy deployment of forces at the Satpati and Pirakata camps after last evening's incident.

"The joint forces are torturing innocent villagers and firing at them. So, trees were felled in some areas to hamper their movement. We will build up our struggle against the joint forces by spreading out to places where their camps are located. Trees will be felled and roads will be dug up. We won't tolerate their torture," committee leader Asit Mahato said.

The district police chief said they had not attacked the villagers last evening. "We retaliated when fired at by the Maoists in the mob."