

Abducted teacher's family condemns joint forces' operation

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The family of a school teacher abducted by Maoists Monday condemned operations by security forces in western districts of West Bengal and demanded the immediate release of 37 villagers detained during the manhunt.

"We condemn the joint forces' anti-Maoist operations in which two members of Sidhu-Kanhu Gana Militia were allegedly killed. We also want immediate release of villagers detained during the joint forces operation," school teacher Rajat Dule's son Raunak said.

Dule, a former Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) supporter, was abducted Friday by a group of suspected Maoists in Bankura district's Sarenga village, 160 km west of here. The family condemned the security forces after Sidhu-Kanhu Gana Militia -- the armed wing of Maoist-backed People's Committee against Police Atrocities (PCAPA) -- leader Sidhu Soren asked it to raise voice against the search operation.

"I also appeal to the Maoists to set my father free as he was completely innocent and not involved in any kinds of political activities," Raunak said.

Hundreds of tribal women also staged a protest at Goaltore police station in West Midnapore district Sunday evening, demanding release of 37 villagers detained during the security forces' search for the abducted teacher.

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