

Kishanji: only unconditional talks

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KOLKATA: Kishanji, leader of Maoists, has rejected the Trinamool Congress chief's offer to facilitate peace talks with the Centre if they lay down arms, and said only unconditional talks are acceptable to them.

In an open letter to Mamata Benerjee, he listed a host of demands concerning development in tribal areas, special economic zones, violence perpetrated by political parties and corruption in disbursal of government funds.

At a rally in West Bengal's Jhargram town on January 15, Ms. Banerjee urged the Maoists to shun violence to pave the way for dialogue within seven days.

Replying, Kishanji said: "The Communist Party of India (Maoist) will never consent to dialogue after laying down arms at the behest of the Centre or any State government or any political party. The Maoists do not trust the current parliamentary system and laying down arms is not on our agenda."

Accusing the Trinamool of perpetrating violence like the CPI(M) throughout the State, he said the Maoists "do not commit even a minuscule proportion of that violence."

Reacting to Ms. Banerjee's announcement that she would hold processions in Maoist-affected areas if the ultras failed to meet the deadline, Mr. Kishanji said: "If she can come to Jangalmahal [forested southwestern parts of the State] without police cover, she is welcome."

He criticised Ms. Banerjee for slamming the Maoists one day and trying to pacify them the next day. "The manner and language in which Mamata didi attacked us at a press conference make us doubt her call for peace."

Meanwhile, a CPI (M) activist was killed by suspected Maoists in the Lalgurh area late on Sunday. Guhiram Singh, member of the party local committee at Chandabila, was abducted from his home at Kadukata village by a group of armed men, taken to a nearby forest and shot dead. Maoist posters found at the spot claimed that the Singh was killed for corruption.

<http://www.hindu.com/2010/01/26/stories/2010012654841000.htm>