

# PEOPLE'S MARCH

*Voice of the Indian Revolution*

**Dandakaranya:**

**Qualitative Leap in  
Peoples' War!**

**Maharashtra:**

**Dalit Wrath Engulfs State!**



**3**

**Gruesome Massacre of Dalits**



**14 Salwa Judum  
Falters!  
Retaliation takes a  
real People's War  
Character**



**21**

**Remembering  
1857**

**International**

In commemoration of Martyr Comrade Kamul Islam 28  
Latin America – a volcano about to explode 25  
Global trends, challenges and opportunities after 9/11 11

**Political**

Memorandum 18  
Demand unconditional release of Maoist leader Com Narendra (alias Chintan) 27

**Press Release**

Khairlanjhi dalit killings 9  
Farmers death are not suicide

People's March Articles may be reprinted and translated in various Indian & Foreign Languages without permission, provided the source ( <http://peoplesmarch.googlepages.com> ) is credited

**EDITOR: P. Govindan Kutty**  
Mobile No. : 99472 76692

**E-mail: peoplesmarch@gmail.com**  
**peoplesmarch@indiatimes.com**  
**peoplesmarch2000@rediffmail.com**  
**peoplesmarch2006@rediffmail.com**

Owned, Edited, Printed & Published by P. Govindan Kutty, Peroor house, Tripunithura, N.F. Ernakulam, Kerala — 682 301,  
Printed at Chithira Printers, 63/321, Poruvelil, Kannanchanthodu Road, Kochi — 18

## Gruesome Massacre of Dalits Dalit Fury Scorches Maharashtra

**M**ARX'S famous phrase, "people make history" was witness this past one month in Maharashtra when the Dalits rose as one to protest against the gruesome killings of four Dalits in Khairlanjhi village. It is a fact that people develop the tactics and revolutionaries must learn from them. The manner in which the protests in Maharashtra spread, the determination and fury of the masses as the movement built itself up over the period, the focus in the targets of their attacks were not planned, but they point to how the people have devised their own methods to express their protests.. Surekha Bhotmange, her teenaged daughter Priyanka, and sons Roshan and Sudhir were killed on September 29, but the protests began in the first week of November as the realization came that the entire case was being suppressed by the police and political authorities to protect the perpetrators of the crime. As the casteist nature of the police and Government revealed itself over the days the masses pressed their protests forward sparing none, not their opportunist, compromising leaders, nor the corrupt Dalit officials who were also party to the cover-up. It was as if the protests rose from the depths of their beings, their frustrations at the casteist oppression they continue to face in daily life, the lack of economic opportunities in "globalizing India" in spite of their struggle to educate themselves and their children. Young school educated youth and women were in the forefront of the protests. Neither the large forces of the police nor the rapid action force could stop them. They faced arrest only to be back on the streets the next day. The Maharashtra Government was just unable to stop these protests though they tried strong repression and disinformation. The appeals of the established Dalit leaders and the Buddhist clergy to use peaceful means fell on deaf ears. Though only 10 per cent of the population of the State, the Dalit masses proved their strength and capacity to paralyse the entire economic life of the State.

The Maharashtra Government has unleashed repression on the masses.

*Avanti* Hundreds have been arrested, the police have resorted to firings and lathi-charges at innumerable places, combing operations have been conducted in various bastis in the different cities in the state, hundreds of youth have been detained. They have even imposed sedition cases on some of them, as if protesting against casteist violence is equal to overthrow of the State. Indeed the brahminical Indian State really is fearful of the militancy of the Dalit masses. They have prevented all marches planned by the people if there is a whiff of militancy. The Long March from Nagpur to Khairlanjhi was forcibly stopped.

But to prevent the march to the Vidhan Sabha in Nagpur on December 4 the State Government pulled all the forces in its arsenal. Nagpur was converted into a police camp with ten thousand special police including the Rapid Action Force deployed all over the city to ensure that the march would not take place. All the Dalit leaders were detained. Trucks from villages were turned back and people not allowed to leave their villages. The dalit masses in the bastis in Nagpur were imprisoned in their homes and were not allowed out of their houses. Repeatedly the Government has been saying that all the demands of the masses have been met and now there should be no agitation. The Government's crass undemocratic approach is exposed before all. So the Government now decides when the people should agitate and when they should not. They decide whether the demands of the masses have been met or not.

The assertion of the masses was so strong that even Sonia Gandhi cut short her trip and the Maharashtra CM flew back from Singapore and rushed back to do damage control.

Four members of the Bhotmange family – A Mahar Buddhist family residing in the village Khairlanjhi were killed in full view of the entire village on September 29, 2006. Mother Surekha, daughter Priyanka (19 yrs), son Sudhir (17 yrs) working in a town nearby and blind son Roshan (18 yrs). The two women were dragged out of their house by some women from the peasant OBC families of the village and taken to the centre of the village near the panchayat

office. On the way they were, beaten and their clothes torn in the process. There they were tied to a bullock cart stripped and beaten and their private parts injured with blunt weapons. The two sons rushed to their defence but they too were caught and thrashed and plummeted around like a football. The women were molested and gang-raped and the boys asked to rape their mother and sister in full view of the village. When they refused their private parts were crushed. In this gruesome drama that was enacted for almost two hours all the four died on the spot. Their mutilated bodies were thrown more than 2 kms outside the village near a canal. The father Bhaiyyalal Bhotmange who was in the fields when this attack began came back to the village and saw the entire horrifying event by hiding himself. He crawled away to the neighbouring village to inform their people about this incident. Two other Dalit families in the village also realized what was happening but hid themselves in their houses out of fear.

What caused this gruesome mass killing ?

The incident is a reflection of the horrifying conditions in rural Maharashtra where semi-feudal relations still prevail, caste prejudices, lack of development, concentration of land and land hunger have led to severe contradictions that simmer under the surface and burst out in this and other ways occasionally. It is a reflection of what dalits face when they assert themselves through acquiring education and a burning desire for equality. The Bhotmange family migrated to this village in 1988 because they got about five acres land to cultivate. They struggled on the land and dreamt of educating their children. Son Sudhir managed to become a graduate, Priyanka was studying in the 12<sup>th</sup> standard, son Roshan was blind but he was studying. Priyanka had been a merit student in the 10<sup>th</sup> Std, was an NCC cadet and was studying political science and sociology. Surekha Bhotmange was the driving force in the family. They got into a conflict with another family, neighbours Shivshankar Tilkar's family over access through their land to his land. He wanted to drive his tractor through their

land which they refused. This led to a dispute and police complaints in 2002. Through the mediation of Siddharth Gajbhiye, a relative of Surekha and police patil of nearby village Dhusala, they agreed to allow 15 feet of land for a road. Gajbhiye, also a Dalit was a better off farmer who also sometimes employed women from the OBC castes to work in his fields. He was the police patil of the village. The other peasant families, most of them from the OBC Kalar, Powar, Kunbi castes could not stomach the struggle of these two dalit families to come up economically, and their confidence and self assertion. Caste prejudices were manifest openly in many other ways in the village. Bhaiyyalal Bhotmange has said that they faced caste oppression all through their stay in this village. Priyanka was the only girl in the village to study beyond school level. In the village of about 800 with 125 families there were only three Dalit families.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September Siddharth was beaten by some villagers in Khairlanjhi over dispute over agricultural wage payment they say. He was openly abused in his caste name. When he went to lodge a complaint in the Andhgaon police station he was chased away. He admitted himself into a hospital in Kamptee town where the doctors insisted he register a police complaint. The case was registered days later and Surekha gave evidence in this and named several villagers. They were released on bail immediately on 29<sup>th</sup> September. As soon as they were released they took their tractors etc and headed straight for Siddharth Gajbhiye's house. Not finding him at home they returned to their village, held a meeting in the village square and then the crowd proceeded to the Bhotmange's house to punish them for standing witness. Thus Surekha and her children became the targets of the attack.

All attempts to bring the police initially came to naught. Though they were informed they deliberately delayed coming. Only when the first body was found on 1<sup>st</sup> October that the police started moving. Even then they claimed that the bodies were unrecognized. Various lower level policemen and police officials have now been suspended. Even the doctors who conducted the post-mortem were suspended after the pressure of the agitation built up. Among those

suspended (including the asst police prosecutor Leela Gajbhiye) some are Dalits themselves. Money played a big role in slowing down the police investigations and weakening the charges. But now investigations have brought the whole matter into the open. As revealed in the report filed by the Government institute Yashada, there was a conspiracy from the beginning to suppress the facts, wipe out the evidence and downplay the crime. The local BJP MLA is very much involved in this conspiracy, the IG Police, Pankaj Gupta (he is special IG in charge of anti-Naxalite operations) is also involved in this conspiracy. All of them, with a blatantly casteist approach tried to spread disinformation and fudge the evidence. The Maharashtra Government and Home Minister R.R.Patil (NCP) also tried hard to protect the real culprits and hide this conspiracy. Even the Sarpanch and Up-Sarpanch of the village who were personally present through the entire attack have been arrested only at the end of November.

They spread the rumour that Surekha had an extra-marital affair with Gajbhiye and the village women objected to this and thus attacked them. This rumour is still being kept alive, inspite of all the facts having come to light as is evident in the article in Hindustan Times by their correspondent Sarita Kaushik on November 27, 2006. Then they said that the Bhotmange's sold liquor and this was objected to by the villagers. Thus in true patriarchal fashion they maligned a bold and unbending woman like Surekha. They tried to justify the murders by maligning her character. But in the beginning of November the incident became an issue and protests began. Then as the protests picked up momentum all the disinformation and conspiracies came to be exposed one by one. Only the determined struggle of the Dalit masses could bring out a part of the truth behind the incident and killings. The main culprits, the instigators and manipulators, the BJP and NCP politicians are still at large.

#### **The Protests:**

The first major protest was a 1000 strong morcha in Bhandara on the first of November 2006. It was organized by the Dalit women's front the Samrudha Baudha Mahila Sangathana. Many democratic

forces including women from other sections also participated in this protest. Then, on November 6, the protests spread to Nagpur where the dalit Buddhists constitute a sizeable section of the poor and even the middle class. Spontaneously the youth and women came out into the streets, attacking police stations, police vehicles, burning tyres, and the house of Congress MLA Nitin Raut. They attacked all symbols of the Government and the police. The protests began in the Indora area and then spread to all other areas where Dalit Buddhists are concentrated. For several days Nagpur was aflame. The police started picking up activists indiscriminately. Youth went around holding corner meetings, staging plays, putting up posters, distributing handbills. The mood of the masses was to reject the established dalit leadership and press their protests forward. There was no organized force behind this protest but the masses revealed their creativity, fearlessness and capacity to struggle. Then the call for the Long March to Khairlanjhi starting on November 12 was given. People rallied around this call but the State's repressive administration swung into action to prevent the march. Women in large numbers courted arrest when they were not allowed to start the march.

All efforts by the people to reach Khairlanjhi have been forcibly stopped by the police. The village itself is under siege. Now there are three police barricades to pass in order to reach the village.

As news of these protests spread the agitation picked up other towns and cities. The entire month of November Maharashtra resounded with the sound of protest. On 8th November the morcha to the Mantralaya gave a rude shock to the Chief Minister and the Home Minister sending their precious security into a frenzy. As the Chief Minister was addressing a Cabinet meeting a group of about 50 women belonging to Dalit women's organizations including Urmila Pawar (a dalit woman intellectual) managed to sneak into the Mantralaya and stormed into the office of the Chief Minister shouting slogans. Bandhs were observed in various towns and big villages in Bhandara and Gondia districts. Pandharkwada, Yavatmal were also rocked by protests. Over 15, 000 people

participated in a protest march in Chandrapur on November 13. Then the protest spread to Amravati. On 14<sup>th</sup> November a morcha spontaneously planned turned into a mammoth march of 20,000 as the Dalits responded to the call in large numbers. It was the first major protest in the town and became the means to release their pent up anger. The police resorted to lathi-charge and firing and one dalit youth Dinesh Wankhede was martyred by the police bullets, while several others were seriously injured. The people targeted police vehicles and some private cars to register their anger and several police were injured in this agitation. The police firing and death of one youth in Amravati sparked off further protests and led to an intensification of the agitation in other districts. People have been demanding the resignation of the Home Minister and the Chief Minister. The Home Minister had the gall to state in a function of the police in Pune that the agitation was being conducted in "Hitlerite fashion". As reports of this speech spread the Home Minister became a target of the people's protest. Sholapur exploded with protests and the police clamped curfew to stop the agitations. For over four days the curfew was on. Aurangabad went aflame and there too lathi charges, firing in the air could not control the people. Aurangabad was under curfew for several days. So also Pune.

After the firing in Amravati the capital city Mumbai came under the wave of protests. It started with a huge protest morcha in Chembur. The protests spread to the outlying suburbs like Ambarnath, Ulhasnagar, Karjat, Kalyan, Bhiwandi, Badlapur, Navi Mumbai. These towns have witnessed repeated protest demonstrations and bandhs on this issue. The bandh call was being given in atleast one suburb or the other every day for over a fortnight. In every locality and suburb in major cities like Pune, Mumbai and Navi Mumbai local organizations have got together and protested in whatever form they could. Those with less strength organized dharnas while others organized morchas and still others bandhs. It was a good lesson in how sprawling metropolises can be made to feel the impact of the people's voice. Protests engulfed cities like Nanded, Parbhani and other towns in the interior of the State.

Sensing the mood of the people, and their leadership slipping away the ever squabbling dalit leaders of the Republican party of India's various factions came together to salvage their leadership. Mahamorchas were organized in Kolhapur, Satara and Sangli. They started plans for a morcha to the Vidhan sabha on December 4<sup>th</sup>, the first day of the assembly.

This being the fiftieth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism big functions have been organized in Dalit localities. Ambedkar's rejection of Hinduism and his conversion to Buddhism led to a wave to conversions in the State and all the Buddhists in the State are dalits. The deep sentiment and faith the people have in this symbolic rejection of the caste based Hindu religion makes them mark this event widely. The Buddhist clergy and leadership of Buddhist organizations (some funded from Japan and Thailand) too have been active this year to commemorate this occasion. This leadership tried their very best but could not make the masses stay within the bounds of the law and restrict their protests to peaceful marches and dharnas.

In some areas this Buddhist clergy itself came under repression. In Nanded they were brutally lathi-charged.

The efforts of the police top brass to malign the movement by claiming that it is a result of naxalite conspiracy and to justify their repression came to nought. They attempted to frighten the people into silence in this way. But masses gave them a good slap. From November 8<sup>th</sup> itself after violent protests began in Nagpur the Home Minister and IG Pnakaj Gupta had begun this disinformation campaign.

The incident of the desecration of the Ambedkar statue in Kanpur on November 30 again proved to be a spark that led to a fresh round of protests. The suburbs of Pune exploded. Pimpri, Chinchwad, Dapodi, Khadki erupted and the fury of the masses had no bounds. All vehicular traffic came to a halt, train traffic came to a halt. The nerve centre of industry and IT – the Pune-Mumbai belt was affected. Mumbai and Thane came to a halt. More than 200 buses of the public transport were damaged and the prestigious Deccan Queen train from Pune to Mumbai was halted near Ulhasnagar and set on fire. The protesters, though, took the trouble to

empty the entire train and escort the engine driver to safety before setting fire to the train. Stone pelting and rasta/rail rokos were reported from every nook and corner of the city and about 90 busses were damaged. Police firing also took place in Bandra. Curfew was imposed in parts of Nanded, Osmanabad and Pune. In Aurangabad clashes took place between the dalit crowd and police resulting in police firing in the air (a sub-inspector was injured). In Nasik 100 buses were damaged and one dalit was killed by casteist upper-caste mobs for stone-pelting. In Pune the dalit fury was intense and here too 100 buses were damaged. Intense agitations also took place in most towns of Maharashtra including far-away Sholapur.

The struggle was anti-state and every symbol of the State has come under attack whether public transport or police vehicles. The agitation spread to districts that had been relatively silent. Osmanabad, Latur also witnessed widespread agitations.

#### **Response of the Parties**

The BJP/Shiv Sena and Congress-combine together with the entire state machinery was entirely against the dalits and outright casteist in their approach. The state was so corrupted with its casteist bias that though many of the police and doctors involved in the case were themselves dalits they sided with the powerful and acted at their behest. Ironically many of whom action (suspension) has now been taken are dalits themselves. All the other ruling class parties only lent lip-support to the dalits. The dalit leaders have long been discredited amongst the dalits and the agitations were totally spontaneous with no leaders to be seen. In fact the rulers were wailing that there were no leaders around to pacify the situation. In a bid to rebuild their credibility on the eve of the Nagpur assembly some of them were arrested.

In fact it was only the Maoists who lent full and open support to the dalits and called a Vidarbha bandh on this and farmer's suicide issue on December 8<sup>th</sup>. The press reported that the bandh was particularly successful in Nagpur and Yavatmal districts as also in Gadchiroli, Chandrapur and Bhandara.

In a press release on Nov.10<sup>th</sup> itself the Maharashtra State Committee of the

.....continued on page 8

## Repression — Extracts from the Civil Liberties Fact Finding Report

### Amravati

**A**FTER the rally of women's organizations at Bhandara on 1<sup>st</sup> November, a Kharlanji Hatyakand Virodhi Kruti Samiti was formed at Amravati where a number of Dalit activists and intellectuals came together. These activists do not belong to any Political party but felt that they ought to express their protest against the atrocities. They invited various Micro credit groups (Bachat Gat) of the bastis to participate. A meeting to plan this rally was held on 5<sup>th</sup> November. The Convenors of the Action Committee was Prof. Satishwar More, Nisha Shende, a lecturer and Women's movement activist and Nanda Taywade, a social activist. Shri Sonule of Samata Sainik Dal was also active in this endeavour and SSD had already visited Kharlanji and brought out a Fact-Finding report of the incident. The organizers had many meetings with the police and even the CP in the process of obtaining permission for the rally. The CP indicated that the rally would draw thousands of participants which the organizers would not be able to handle. The organizers told the police that handling the public and maintaining law and order was the work of the police department and that they had every intention to conduct a peaceful protest. After a lot of discussion permission for the rally was eventually given on 14<sup>th</sup> Nov.

On 13<sup>th</sup> November, The Republican Party of India (RPI) (Gavai Group) took out a rally in which, according to observers, about a thousand people participated. However, on the 14<sup>th</sup>, when the Kruti Samiti began their rally, people just started pouring in endlessly. Some journalists who spoke to the team said that about 20,000 must have come. One of the organizers said that it was about 3 kms long, that people were coming even after the morcha had ended.

The rally started around 1 p.m. and reached the District Collectorate within an hour. Some of the leading activists gave speeches and handed a memorandum to the Collector, while the others were shouting slogans outside. When the organizers came back, Nisha Shende addressed the gathering and announced that the protest action had been concluded and asked everybody to go home. It was after the people had dispersed and were going home that some stone pelting took place. A lot of slogan shouting against the police inefficiency in handling the

Khairlanji case took place and the youth, between 18-20 years were in a militant mood. It was then that the lathi-charge suddenly began and indiscriminate arrests took place. The policemen themselves picked up stones and hurled them at the people. The cops chased men, women and children with batons, beating them mercilessly. People rushed into gullies to save themselves. Many women rushed into the compound of the Treasury Office to hide. Perhaps, seeing the police brutally beat women and children angered the mob and some two-wheelers were set on fire near the Treasury. A water-tanker was also burnt. Some rounds of teargas were fired, the teargas being of the kind whose expiry date was over and could have caused greater harm to the people.

Suddenly, ACP Rahane gave the order to fire. 26 rounds were fired. Four people were initially injured and one of them, Dinesh Wankhede succumbed to the injuries. Two of the others are teenage boys whose veins in the ankles have been shattered and it is doubtful whether they will be able to walk. The fourth is about 16 years old and three bullets hit him on the upper back, but not too deep. Dinesh was hit straight in the head and the bullet lodged in his brain. He was picked up by his arms and legs, with his bleeding head almost touching the ground and dragged to hospital by the police. He was kept in the IG Medical Hospital at Nagpur, in a coma for 8 days till he died. Many of the others injured by the lathi-charge are still at the Civil Hospital Amravati while many were treated and discharged. There was large-scale beating and arrests of activists.

### **The Firing**

The exact moment of the firing was 14 hours 12 minutes. The spot was before the District Collectorate where in fact, there were no major incidents of violence. The sporadic burning of two-wheelers etc took place in gulleys far away.

At first the CP did not even concede that a police firing had taken place to the journalists. An excuse for the firing is being cooked up; viz. the mob was going to loot the Treasury. However the Dist Treasury Officer, R. V. Yewale says that the women had entered the Treasury premises to take shelter and respite from the police lathi-charge. They have however filed a report with the police about the vehicles being burnt near the premises.

Adv. P.S. Khadse, Adv. Siddharth Gaikwad, who helped save Dinesh, and some others feel that the firing was totally unjustified since the rally was over and people had dispersed. Many feel that the rally could have been handled better. For instance instead of firing, a water-canon could have been used. When asked about this, the Commissioner of Police said that there is no water-canon and it cannot be helped that smaller places do not have these facilities.

### **The Injured**

The Fact-Finding Team visited Civil Hospital Amravati (Irwin) and spoke to all the injured who were there. The team met Nishikant Harne, aged about 16 and his mother. Three bullets had grazed his upper back. He works in a hotel. He says that he did not know what the rally was for and that he had just gone there to have a look. The other two with bullet injuries are students. One of them, a tall well built youth is in the Class XII. The veins and arteries in their shins and ankles are shattered and one cannot say if they will be able to walk. There were many with fractured limbs due to the severe lathi-charge, including a 70 year old man who was trying to prevent the police from beating women.

A large number of other women with injuries were interviewed by the team.

In the Civil Hospital all the victims' statements have been recorded and they have received a compensation of Rs. 5000 each... a paltry sum for those whose future is lost.

### **Arrests, Detention and State Terror**

While some participants were picked up from the spot itself, many arrests continued for days on end. In fact, the police announced that 12,000 unknown persons had been named as accused in the violent incidents, which had made it possible for anybody at random to be arrested and many others were in hiding and could not carry on with their day to day activities. Nanda Taywade told the team that large numbers of women had participated in the rally. On that day itself, 24 women who had not even reached the rally, but were nearing it were arrested by the police. Later, Nanda herself was arrested and she was in jail with them. Nanda was arrested when the day after the rally and the firing, the leading activists were on their way to meet the Home Minister. At first they had gone to Irwin Hospital to see

the injured, but since R.R. Patil was coming, they were told to go away. They thought that they should go to meet the Minister too. On their way they were stopped by a journalist who started interviewing them for Star News. As they were speaking, they were encircled by the police and soon arrested. Prof Satishwar More and others were also arrested with her. They were produced in court the same evening and taken to jail. A girl student, studying in Class XII, who was arrested with them, was crying inconsolably, indicating that most of the women arrested were neither activists nor miscreants. Some of the women from the group of 24 (who had not even reached the rally) were yet to be released on bail when the team met Nanda. They were in jail from 15<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> November. In all, 52 people had been arrested, 10 of them who were juvenile were released and 22 men and 20 women had been kept in jail.

Most of those arrested have been charged with Sec. 307, 148, 149 etc. The activists and citizens who met the team felt that since no policemen were seriously injured, why was Sec 307 (attempt to murder) slapped on them? In fact some alleged that cops who had tiny wounds, on a finger for example had been hospitalized to create the impression of grievous hurt. On the other hand, hundreds of ordinary people had been grievously hurt in the lathi-charge, remarked some of the activists, police have been even shown on the news on TV pelting stones back at people, yet there are no charges on the police.

Even days after the rally, some fresh arrests have taken place. A school teacher of the Navodaya Vidyalaya, Bhaurao Sarkate, was arrested because he had in his possession some posters and "inflammatory" literature. The poster was one that has been up on the walls in Nagpur and other places on the Khairlanji issue, while the literature was nothing but the Fact-Finding report of the SSD on Khairlanji.

Sarkate was so shocked that the middle aged man suffered a stroke. His letter of suspension from his job was handed to him on his hospital bed! Others are arrests under preventive detention. In spite of this, when the body of Dinesh Wankhede, deceased in Nagpur, after being injured in the police firing, was brought, about 7000 people turned up for his funeral.

#### **The Commissioner of Police**

Basically the CP of Amravati, Commissioner Dhar, refused to comment on



**One of the Sons of Bhiyyalal Bhotmange**

the firing because it is pending a magisterial inquiry. He felt that charging the huge number of people under Sec 307 was justified because the people had upturned one of vehicles and set it on fire and a number of cops have been hurt. Regarding the arrest of the school teacher, he felt it was justified since he was going house to house telling people to rise up against injustice. (Were the cops following him? And is the right to organize not a fundamental right?) As for who is likely to be

yet arrested and why, were all a matter of inquiry which the concerned members of the department knew about, he said. Basically he was satisfied by the way the police had handled the situation, or the violence could have been much worse, he said.

#### **The media**

The team met the editor and publisher of a local daily, Dainik Matdar, Mr. Dilip Edatkar. He belongs to the OBC community and is strongly a secular person. He severely criticized the mainstream media for misrepresenting the news about Khairlanji and blacking out much of the state repression after the protest agitations.

#### **Responses of intellectuals**

Going into the reasons why the massacre at Khairlanji took place, and why Dalits have spontaneously come out into the streets in such large numbers, Mr. Edatkar felt that certain sections of society resent the upwardly mobile trend among dalits and other backward castes. Most felt that it was definitely due to growing casteism. Nisha Shende said that it was an attempt to crush a section of the people on whom society is so much dependent. Mr. Prabhakar Gambhir said that this was a process of the dalit revolt, which had begun in the 60s with the Panthers and become co-opted. Most people felt that the masses are disillusioned with the leadership and this rally saw the Buddhijeevi and Shramjeevi come together without the usual leaders. The dalit masses were coming forward to occupy negative space, said Mr. Gambhir.

#### **"Long March Chowk" South Nagpur**

The area where the poorer sections of dalits live has a blue column with the Panchsheel wheel, This is not a Chinese Long March, but built in memory of the Long March to Marathwada during the Namantar agitation, for the renaming of the Marathwada University after Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, an agitation which had martyrs in its time. We entered the basti with Raju and visited innumerable houses where people had been badly beaten, bones fractured, ligaments torn. People held out bandaged legs, bruised shoulders, and arms in slings. A woman who was beaten all over and had a broken arm

abused the police strongly saying that she was a daily wages labourer and who would earn for the family now. Two women who bought and sold waste-paper asked cynically what was going to happen to their injured boys. Nanda Meshram has broken limbs and was beaten by three male police personnel together till she fell unconscious. A ten year old boy had a fractured hand with the government hospital papers saying, "broken by lathi"...without even a mention of who was behind that lathi.

#### **Extreme Cruelty**

The way in which the police action took place shows extreme cruelty. At first tear gas was discharged all over, suffocating and confusing the people. Then the police rushed into the houses, even into the minutest gully, the most ramshackle hut and thrashed people. The police are using a new kind of baton made of fibre that splits open the skin and also causes deep injuries.

#### **Anti-Caste and Sexual Abuse**

Women were abused in filthy language. Women who were bathing were even pulled out of bathrooms. People, especially women were threatened by the commandos and other policemen that if they don't submit, "Tumhara bhi Khairlanji kar dengey." Khairlanji has, in such a short while become a metonym for Caste-Gender backlash.

#### **Loss of Property and Livelihood**

Some of the residents showed us their auto-rickshaws, with smashed windscreen, motorcycles with smashed petrol tank, making us wonder what gives the police the right to take the law into their own hands and punish people in this revengeful way. For the poor, every bit of items acquired are the result of hard-earned struggle and

sacrifice and what right does the state have to snatch even that away?

a) Most of the people attacked inside and outside their homes in the above mentioned planned operations had not participated in the protests or in the burning of public vehicles etc. They were targeted simply because they were Dalits living in Dalit localities.

b) Male policemen openly dragged women out of their homes and viciously beat up women. Women breast feeding their babies and bathing inside bathrooms were not spared either. Likewise children and the elderly were similarly attacked. Two Policewomen for namesake accompanied an entire contingent of male police and SRP.

c) In the course of this attack the SRP and Police called people out of their homes saying that the 'Jai Bhimwallas' should come out of their homes

d) The SRP personnel were guided by the local SP Yadav and a few other officials who were directing the attack

e) Severely injured people were dumped into police vans, taken to the police station, charged and sent to Central Jail without any medical attention being administered except when Grameen Rugnalaya doctors were called to the police station. In most instances the victims were not given any medical case papers so no evidence of the brutal and widespread attack would be available. Out of the six localities visited by the team in Kamptee and South Nagpur, only at one locality in South Nagpur people were in possession of medical papers. For example the case paper of 12-year old Pawan Ingle, son of a 'hathmajur', who has missed school for a month due to his broken hand, reads: "History of being hit by a lathi"

f) During the severe beatings and attack the victims were invariably showered with castiest abuse

g) Two wheelers and three wheelers parked outside homes were systematically destroyed as were household belongings

h) After the Police and attacked the Dalits in their homes and localities many were taken to the Police Station and the Central Jail where they were charged with serious offences like attempt to murder, sedition. This is to ensure long term harassment of the victims in an attempt to quell future protest. The team saw as many as 164 case papers in one locality alone; one among these had the following sections applied: 305, 384, 306, 986, 985, 941, 826, 343, 332, 336, 214, 406, 901, 129A!

When those victims who were charged were presented before the magistrate, he made a mockery of their serious injuries by asking them whether they were beaten in police custody without asking them whether they were beaten by the police within their own homes or how they had sustained such obviously grievous injuries like broken limbs and swellings all over the body which fact finding team members witnessed first hand even 3 weeks after the attacks

2) Team members met several victims who drew attention to a very disturbing factor. During curfew hours on the nights of November 6-10, groups of lathi and talwar wielding people numbering around 100 in each group, moved around freely shouting slogans like, "Hare Hare Mahadev" and "Jai Bhavani". SP Yadav openly declared that these groups were for "his protection".

**P.M**

.....continued from page 5

CPI(Maoist) issued a statement saying : *The CPI (Maoist) Maharashtra State Committee strongly condemns the casteist attack on and massacre of the members of the Bhotmange family in Khairlanji village of Bhandara district on September 29, 2006. We also condemn the stand of the State Government which has done its best to shield the perpetrators of this massacre for the past one month and is instead launching a campaign of repression against the dalit masses who have protested strongly against this*

*massacre and the inaction of the Government.*

The Khairlanji carnage throws up to what extent of casteism exists still amongst all the major political parties and also the entire State machinery. This too in a state that boasts of a powerful dalit movement against caste oppression and untouchability. But the fierceness of the dalit response is also an indication of the enormous revolutionary potential of the dalit masses. They are not willing to take attacks on them meekly and are prepared to fight back. At least in Maharashtra they have long since thrown off the yoke of their

corrupt leaders and are searching for an alternative. This alternative lies with the Maoist who alone are able to fight not only all the manifestations of casteism and its horrifying form in untouchability but also eradicate it from its roots by destroying the very basis from which it emerges — the semi-feudal base and the feudal culture. It is they who are in the forefront fighting both class and caste exploitation and oppression and it is only a matter of time before the dalits realize where their true emancipation lies. **P.M**



**Press Statement Of CPI(Maoist):**

**OBSERVE VIDARBHA BANDH ON 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER  
CONDEMN THE KHAIRLANJI DALIT KILLINGS AND POLICE  
BRUTALITY ON PROTESTING MASSES!**

**FARMERS DEATHS ARE NOT SUCIDES! IT IS GENOCIDE BY THE  
DALAL INDIAN RULERS AND THEIR IMPERIALIST MASTERS!!**

**T**HE Maharashtra State Committee and the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) of the CPI(Maoist) calls upon the oppressed and exploited masses of Vidarbha to enforce a general Bandh on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2006. This Bandh is to express our outright condemnation of the Maharashtra government and the ruling classes on the following two issues-

a) The killing of dalits in Kairlanji village, the utter failure of the government to promptly take action on the main culprits, the attempt to cover up the casteist killings and protect the real culprits, and the *brutal and violent suppression of the heroic dalit masses who protested against the casteist killings.*

b) The implementation imperialist globalisation which is compelling the farmers to commit suicide. In reality these farmers deaths are not suicides but cold blooded mass murders by the lackey Indian ruling classes.

The killing of dalits in Khairlanji and the daily 'suicides' of farmers in Vidarbha, more clearly than any other events in the recent past, bring out the true character of the Indian ruling classes – that not only are they casteist and feudal but also utter lackeys to the imperialist. These events also clearly point out to the utterly anti people and reactionary character of the Indian state apparatus.

That events like Khairlanji continue to occur even 59 years of Indian 'democracy' – speaks volumes about the character of this so called 'democracy'. Immediately after the casteist killings in Khairlanji we saw how this 'democracy' moved into action to deliver 'justice'. The entire police department was active to protect the culprits. The hospital administration, doctors and everybody in authority tried their best to conceal the real facts, throw blame elsewhere, or dilute the extreme seriousness of the event. The 'democratically' elected government of the day exerted every effort to ensure that

the incident was forgotten and buried. The so called dalit 'leaders' living off the tit bits and left overs from the dining tables of those presiding over this 'democracy' thought it prudent to keep quite and not rock this 'democratic' boat lest their masters get annoyed.

But then the dalit masses upset their calculations and came on the streets. The dalit masses throughout Vidarbha followed by the dalit masses in rest of the state came out in their hundreds and thousands to demand justice, to question this *democracy*. The government greeted the masses with the lathis and bullets. The chief minister and home minister issued threats to the dalit masses – "be tame and quite or else we will treat you like we treat the Naxalites". But the dalit masses continued to come out in larger numbers braving the arrests, lathis and bullets. The ruling classes had to pretend to do something about the killings and therefore after shedding some *crocodile tears*, some token arrests were made and the token transfers of officials was done. Token amounts and jobs were offered to the surviving member of the Bothmange family. The '*brave and daring dalit leaders*' now came out to shout some empty slogans and pretend to be at the forefront of the dalit masses. But the dalit masses had gone far ahead by then and no amount of tricks by these leaders to pacify and tame them could succeed. The dalit masses had decided that they had enough of these sham leaders.

The Congress/NCP government in connivance with the BJP and Shiv Sena have tried to mobilise the non dalit castes against the dalits in order to crush their struggle. But they have not so far been able to have significant success in these efforts. We call upon the oppressed and exploited among the Kunbi, Maratha, OBC and higher castes to see through these tricks and come forward to support the democratic and just struggle of the dalit masses. We call on them to join the

struggle to eradicate caste oppression and exploitation.

The police have been dealing with the dalit masses in an extremely casteist manner. The lathi charges have been extremely brutal inspired by anti dalit sentiment; they have fired on the masses with the intention of killing. In order to prevent any propaganda of the Kairlanji killings or of the police brutalities on the protesters, the police have been arresting anyone circulating pamphlets or booklets condemning these atrocities. Printing presses have been threatened not to publish any material in favour of the agitating masses. In this way Indian 'democracy' implements the fundamental right to freedom of speech and assembly.

*Now the Chief Minister and home minister are making hectic plans to crush and prevent any display of dissent or protest in Nagpur at the time of the winter state assembly session. Thousands of additional police and para-military forces have been brought there to prevent the protest which are due to take place at the time of the assembly winter session. They are also going to raise the bogey of some "naxal" or "terrorist" attack to justify their repressive measures.*

It is clearly evident how the ruling class parties and the state apparatus are defending and preserving the authority of the feudal and caste elite.

Not a single day goes by without news of farmers' suicides. While the largest number is in Vidarbha the incidence of severely indebted farmers being driven to suicide are taking place in all other parts of the state. Recently there have been incidents in Nasik, Thane and Nanded

The fact that thousands of farmers have been driven to suicide not only in Maharashtra but also in other parts of the country indicate that the reasons for this act of desperation is social and not individual. The pro imperialist policies of the Indian ruling classes and their governments are at the root of this. At

imperialist dictates the subsidies to farmers have been gradually withdrawn, the costs of agricultural inputs has kept on increasing, the farmers have not been given even the cost of production for their produce, all protection for the farmers have been removed and they have been left open to face the ill effects of the changes in the international market. It is these policies which have driven the farmers to deep indebtedness from which they are never able to come out. *It is these policies which are killing the farmers as surely as if someone was holding a gun to their foreheads and pulling the trigger.*

Each day as the numbers of farmers dying from these policies increases the government refuses to do anything to either reverse these policies or even to provide any immediate relief. The various 'relief' measures announced by the central and state governments are nothing but a joke.

The 'relief' announced by Manmohan Singh a few months back made no dent in the deaths of the farmers. The 'relief' package announced a few days ago is likewise a laughing matter. The amounts promised to the farmers will not be enough even to feed the cows that they are being gifted with. The government is totally unwilling to cancel all the debts of the farmers to the financial institutions as well as to private money lenders who are fleecing the peasants. Immediately first aid and relief can only really be in the form of canceling all debts of the entire peasantry and making it illegal for anyone to recover the debts of the peasant masses. *The government is willing to give tax relief to the imperialists and big capitalists who invest in the new SEZ to the tune of over 1,00,000 crore rupees. But is unwilling*

*to give such relief (which will only cost a fraction of the above amount) to the farmers who are on the brink of death. It is clear whom the government and the ruling class parties represent.*

To add insult to injury, the jokers like Sri Sri Ravi Shankar have taken time off from servicing their ruling class patrons and have taken it upon themselves to teach the farmers the "art of living". As if the farmers are dying because they don't know how to live or are suffering from some psychological imbalance. Ravi Shankar and his type should restrict themselves their elite class clientel whose corrupt, lazy, empty and vacuous lives may require such services.

We call upon farmers to unite and fight against the pro imperialist policies being implemented by the government. This is only way to get out of the conditions which are driving them to suicide. Farmers should realise from this experience that the Indian ruling classes are only representing the interests of the big feudal landlords, the dalal capitalist of this country and the imperialists. Therefore they should join the fight to overthrow the rule of these exploiters and establish a worker-peasant rule.

Immediately the peasants should unilaterally cancel all their debts to either the financial institutions or money lenders. They should mobilise in large numbers and seize all debt related records with the financial institutions and the money lenders and burn them. In order to tide over the immediate crisis the farmers should raid the godowns of the landlords and the government and take the food grains and other materials that they need to farm the next season without taking loans. Suicide is no alternative. If life has to be taken it

should be that of those who have forced us into to such conditions.

We draw your attention to the fact that in all the areas where the peasantry is being led by the Maoists, the masses have never had to resort to suicide. They have attacked the enemies, punished them and seized what is necessary for their existence from the exploiters and government.

1) Make the Vidarbha bandh on 8<sup>th</sup> December a complete success.

2) Punish the Kairlanji killers! Arrest the NCP/BJP leaders behind the killings!

3) Red Salutes to the dalit masses who have uncompromisingly struggled. Carry on the militant struggle! Exploited and toiling Kunbis, Marathas, OBC support the struggle of the dalits!

4) Fight the imperialist policies which are killing the farmers!

5) Seize all debt records and burn them. Loot the big traders and government godowns for our needs.

6) Demand the resignation of the Chief Minister and the Home minister!

7) Without armed struggle we can neither achieve immediate needs or achieve political power of the exploited!

The two state committees – Maharashtra State Committee and the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee pledge to avenge the death of the struggling dalits and the farmers who have been forced to death by the ruling classes pro imperialist policies. The people will always pay back their blood debts. Chandrakant

Secretary, Maharashtra State Committee, Kosa,

Secretary, Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC)

December 2 2006

**P.M**

## **Read and Subscribe to PEOPLE'S MARCH (Monthly)** **Voice of the Indian Revolution**

### **Single copy**

India & South Asia

Rs.12/- India & South Asia

Rest of the 3rd World countries

\$2.00

Rest of the World

\$3.00

### **Annual subscription rates**

Rs.12/- India & South Asia

Rs.144/- Rs.6/- Postage for India

Rest of the 3rd World Countries

\$24.00

Rest of the World

\$36.00

Rs.24/-Postage for Bangladesh, Pakistan & Nepal

**For Copies and Subscriptions, Mobile: 99472 76692**

**Contract: P. Govindan Kutty, Peroor House, North Fort, Tripunithura,**

**P.O. Box 56, Ernakulam District, Kerala 682301, India.**

(Money orders,cheques,bank drafts to be made in the name of P.Govindam Kutty)

Foreign & Indian bulk subscribers can deposit payments in any ICICI bank in my name in SB A/c No. 629401125513 and inform the Editor by E-mail or Post stating that the amount deposited in bank is meant for **PEOPLE'S MARCH**

# GLOBAL TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES AFTER 9-11

*By Prof. Jose Maria Sison*

(Chairperson, International Coordinating Committee International League of Peoples' Struggle)

ON behalf of the International League of Peoples' Struggle which is co-sponsoring this conference, I wish to express warmest greetings of solidarity to all delegations from Nepal and other countries and congratulate the Nepali colleagues for organizing and hosting this conference and all related activities.

I am deeply pleased to be asked to speak on the subject of global trends, challenges and opportunities after 9/11. I shall make a general presentation of these, with the hope that you can relate these further to the struggle of the people of Nepal for national liberation and democracy.

I propose to give a brief background and discuss major socio-economic and political contradictions within the US and those in the relations of the US with other imperialist powers, with countries and governments that invoke national independence or express anti-imperialist positions and with the proletariat and peoples of the world.

I shall restate the three fundamental contradictions in the epochal struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and then point to the four major contradictions that I observe in the current world situation and arrange them according to their current order of strategic importance.

## **Brief Background**

The US has enjoyed the position of sole superpower since the disintegration of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War. It is the No. 1 imperialist power in economic and military terms. It still dictates the policies governing the world capitalist system through the Group of 8, OECD, the IMF, World Bank, WTO, NATO, the UN Security Council and numerous bilateral and regional treaties and agreements with other countries.

But while the US has apparently become the strongest imperialist power, it has become fundamentally weaker and more vulnerable in a number of definable aspects. It has undermined its own economic, commercial and financial position by expending huge amounts of

resources for the military aspect of its anti-communist crusade and promoting since the late 1940s the reconstruction and growth of the German and Japanese economies and the industrial development of some economies like South Korea and Taiwan since the 1970s.

By providing financial and trade accommodations to the manufactures of the aforesaid countries, the US has been able to maintain and head an all-round imperialist alliance. It has reaped huge benefits from the alliance but in certain important respects it has also paid a heavy price for containing socialist countries, encouraging revisionism to subvert these and coopting the newly-independent countries through neocolonialism. It has stunted its production of many types of exportable goods by providing economic and trade accommodations to its allies. It has long assumed the main burden of spending public resources heavily on military production, deployment of US military forces abroad and wars of aggression.

In countering stagflation in the 1970s, the US has blamed so-called wage inflation and social spending by government as the cause of the problem. It has obscured the stagflationary effect of big government spending for military purposes and that of the ever-increasing cost of import-dependent consumerism. Since the end of the 1970s, it has shifted its policy stress from Keynesianism to monetarism and neoliberalism. It has sought to keep up the rate of economic growth through sheer manipulation of interest rates and money flows.

The Reagan regime is known for its policy of providing the giant corporations with tax cuts and other favors, its highspeed high tech military production and a high level of consumerism financed by foreign debt. Reaganism eventually made the US the biggest debtor in the world and placed the succeeding regime of the elder Bush in a difficult economic situation that would require the raising of taxes. Basically, the problem of stagflation has remained unsolved and has been covered

up by heavy local and foreign borrowing and financial manipulation.

The Clinton regime is known for building a "new economy", supposedly characterized by inflation-free growth due to the US lead in high technology and due to the pressing down of the wage level, loss of regular jobs, erosion of workers' rights and reduction of social spending. Since 2000, the high tech bubble in the US has burst and a protracted financial meltdown has been going on, exposing the overproduction of high-tech goods in the US and the huge trade deficits due to the heavy importation of other types of goods priorly in overproduction in other countries (basic industrial goods, raw materials and low value-added consumer goods).

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US has become more rapacious and aggressive. Under the policy of "free market of globalization", it has accelerated the flow of foreign funds to the US, it has reaped superprofits on certain exports and investments and has imported cheap the products of other countries. Manifesting the brutal character of imperialism, it has waged wars of aggression against Iraq (twice) Yugoslavia and Afghanistan and engaged in military intervention elsewhere in order to tighten its grip on sources of oil and other natural resources, on markets and fields of investment. It has taken advantage of the weaknesses of the former Soviet bloc countries before Russia can offer any significant kind of economic competition to further cramp the world for imperialist profit-taking.

## **Contradictions within the US**

For a while, Bush has been benefited greatly by 9/11. This has given him the chance to stir up war hysteria in order to capture bipartisan support for his role as wartime commander-in-chief and thus to consolidate his political position against charges of cheating in the elections of 2000 and 2004. Relatedly, he has used the war hysteria and the fear of terrorism to justify bigger government spending for military production and for wars of aggression against Afghanistan and Iraq and to push state terrorism both within the US and on a global scale.

He has the Reaganite notion of reviving the US economy through heavy government spending for military purposes. He has thus combined military Keynesianism with “free market” globalization. Moreover, he is consciously carrying the “neoconservative” scheme of using a full spectrum of weapons to make the 21<sup>st</sup> a century of Pax Americana by undertaking preemptive actions against current adversaries and potential challengers to US hegemony and consequently spreading “democracy” and the “free market”.

It has seemed for a while that military Keynesianism could revive the US economy. But contracts with the military industrial complex for military production in the US and for other war requirements in the field employ only a few people and provide a limited amount of income for US workers and consumers. So, the US economic planners have encouraged the “housing bubble”. The rapid appreciation in value of private homes has allowed many people to use these as collateral for further borrowing for the purpose of consumption.

US imperialism has expected to benefit greatly from its invasion and occupation of Iraq by taking over its oil wealth and all kinds of enterprises. But the problem of the US is the resistance of the people of Iraq. The resistance keeps on blowing up the oil facilities and pipelines and cutting down oil production to a low level. The US budgetary deficit has been ballooning because of the war. And the American people observe that the US easily spends USD 250 billion for the war but appropriates only USD 3 billion for the victims of the Katrina disaster and even releases this in dribbles.

The “housing bubble” has begun to burst. This is expected to further harm the US economy in a big way. Those who have been encouraged to engage in high consumption will pay dearly. This is the second huge financial disaster for American families in less than a decade. The preceding disaster was the bursting of the “high-tech bubble” and the widescale loss of pension funds in stock market speculation. The extremely high levels of federal, state and household debts can have far-reaching adverse consequences to the US and global economy. Any sharp drop in US consumption can put China and other

countries dependent on exports to the US in an economic tailspin.

The American people in their millions have opposed the US war of aggression against Iraq before it even started. Their opposition is fast growing and is fast isolating the Bush regime. The American people denounce Bush for spouting lies to push the war. They cannot accept the heavy casualties suffered by both the American troops and Iraqi people as well as the huge amounts of resources expended. An increasing number of the American people are offended by the Bush misuse of 9/11 for further misdirecting US economy and politics, for pushing repressive laws and human rights violations and for promoting aggressive wars and fascism.

The US has overreached and overextended itself in the world in the vain hope of expanding the scope of its political hegemony and economic territory. The conditions of socio-economic and political crisis in the US are worsening and are pushing the American working class and the rest of the people to rise in resistance. They have risen up in great number against imperialist war. The millions of migrant workers have also risen up against the criminalization and harsh conditions that they suffer.

There is a high potential for the broad masses of American workers and people to rise up against exploitation and oppression, especially the loss of job tenure, the decrease of jobs, including part-time jobs, the inadequacy of incomes, the lack of pension, health insurance and other social benefits and the continuing erosion of workers’ rights. The US monopoly bourgeoisie and its state are increasingly hard put in devising new ways for deceiving and appeasing the public.

#### **Contradictions between the US and Other Countries**

Following the pattern set during the Cold War, the imperialist powers of the West and Japan have by and large continued to find common interest under the chieftainship of the US against the proletariat and people of the world and against countries that take the line of national independence and anti-imperialism.

In the wake of 9/11 the imperialist powers easily united behind the US to

wage a war of aggression against Afghanistan, because the Taliban government was held responsible for coddling al Qaeda. But France, Germany and Russia together with China objected to the war of aggression instigated by the US and United Kingdom against Iraq in 2003. There were clear contradictions between the US and UK on one side and the other imperialist powers on the other, based on differing interests in Iraq. But the US and UK had their way and ultimately the other imperialist powers compromised with them within the framework of the UN Security Council.

There are contradictions among the imperialist powers with regards to economic, trade, financial, political and security issues. But the imperialist powers can still make compromises among themselves so long as these can be made at the expense of the proletariat and people of the world and the semi-colonies and dependent countries. The various frameworks for imperialist compromise and agreement are still intact and operative. If for a time no agreement can be arrived at, the imperialist powers simply postpone the resolution of the problem, let the status quo remain and work around the problem.

But the crisis of the world capitalist system and the crisis in each imperialist country is worsening. The economic and financial crisis is relentlessly driving the imperialist powers to redivide the world and expand their respective sources of materials and cheap labor, markets, fields of investments and spheres of influence. What appear to be constant amicable relations among the imperialist powers can eventually break after a period of imperceptible changes in the balance of strength among the imperialist powers. If they become strong capitalist countries, Russia and China would cramp the world capitalist system and upset its balance. If they become countries of turmoil, they can generate big problems.

The US has overextended itself in outsourcing the production of goods, in over-borrowing from certain countries like Japan and China and in “staying the course” in the quagmires of Iraq and Afghanistan. In the process, it has aggravated its weaknesses and vulnerabilities in so many ways. Its own imperialist allies can become relatively

stronger than before and can move into areas where US attention and strength have thinned out. As a result of its preoccupation with Iraq, the US capability to deal with other regions of the world has lessened.

The European Union has a growing economic interest that is at odds with that of the US in the entire of Europe, Africa and elsewhere in the world. Russia and China have made border agreements with certain Central Asian countries to counter US incursions. China is steadily spreading its interest and influence, mainly in the whole of East Asia, even as Japan banks on its partnership with the US and maintains a prominent imperialist role in the region. North Korea asserts its national independence and continues to defy and oppose US imperialism.

In Latin America, Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia have anti-US governments and mass movements and are encouraging other countries to follow suit. Even in the Middle East, the US is far from being able to stop the initiatives of Syria and Iran in cooperation with Russia and China. It has penetrated South Asia in a big way but it has difficulties in gaining complete control over the region.

The imperialist powers can still dictate on most countries. They have been successful in undertaking neocolonialism. But there are countries and governments which are driven by bourgeois nationalist motivations or socialist aspirations and assert national independence in order to fend off the unacceptable impositions and threats of the US and other imperialist powers. We have seen how Iraq of Saddam, Yugoslavia of Milosevich and Afghanistan of the Taleban have come into cross purposes with the US and be at the receiving end of US aggression. We have seen the governments of China, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela, Iran and Syria invoke and assert national independence against the worst dictates of the US. But the US has so far refrained from attacking any of these countries for various reasons.

The sharpest and most dramatic contradictions resulting in war have arisen between the imperialist powers and certain countries whose governments refuse to accept imperialist dictates. It is also in this kind of contradiction, as in the run up to the 2003 US-UK invasion of Iraq, where

significant contradictions among the imperialist powers have surfaced. That is because imperialist powers have their own drive to compete for advantages offered by non-imperialist countries. The Saddam government attempted to counter the US-UK combine with concessions to the other imperialist powers.

Under pressure of the crisis of the world capitalist system, imperialist countries can engage in proxy wars among their client states or back different conflicting parties within a client state. Another major potential cause for hostility among imperialist powers would be the rise to power of fascist forces within any or some of them. The severe socio-economic and political crisis of imperialism and the currency of the so-called global war on terror have laid the ground for fascism and inter-imperialist wars. In fact, the making of so-called anti-terrorist laws in the wake of 9/11 has intensified repression and spawned state terrorism within the US and on a global scale.

#### **The Resistance of the Proletariat and the People**

Throughout the world, the broad masses of the people have engaged on varying scales in protest mass actions and strikes to resist imperialist plunder and aggression. The largest mass mobilizations on an international scale have involved tens of millions of people in hundreds of cities against the US war of aggression in Iraq. In various countries at different times, millions of people have risen up against the exploitative and oppressive policies and practices of their rulers.

In the US, Western Europe and elsewhere, strikes and protest marches have broken out against attacks on the rights of working people, deteriorating working conditions, racial and minority discrimination, the criminalization of migrant workers and discrimination against the youth in employment. In the former Soviet bloc countries, struggles between the exploiting and exploited classes and between the dominant nationality and the minorities are intensifying. In China, the workers, peasants and the lower petty bourgeoisie are frequently rising in large numbers against the ruling bourgeoisie and their accomplices in private business.

In the imperialist countries, certain factors check the continuous vigorous development of anti-imperialist mass movements. The monopoly bourgeoisie erodes the rights and social benefits of the workers and people but in a gradual or surreptitious way so as not to provoke revolt. The major bourgeois parties, mass media, trade union bureaucracy and schools cloak big bourgeois interests with petty bourgeois rhetoric. There are yet no Marxist-Leninist parties and revolutionary mass movements that are large and strong enough to challenge the monopoly bourgeoisie and its agents.

It will take sometime before the internal crisis of monopoly capitalism and the anti-imperialist resistance of the people in the non-imperialist countries can accelerate the sharpening of the class struggle between the proletariat and the monopoly bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries. In Russia and other former Soviet bloc countries, the proletariat and people should be more inclined - to wage armed revolution against the new bourgeoisie that privatized the social assets that they have created for decades. But the revisionists masquerading as communists did their work for decades to undermine and destroy socialism from within. That is also the case in China. However, imperialist plunder and aggression are generating the people's growing armed resistance to imperialism in a number of countries.

The peoples of Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Lebanon and other countries have waged armed resistance against US imperialism and its lackeys. The war of national liberation in Iraq is of great significance and has far reaching consequences in weakening US imperialism. The people's resistance in Afghanistan is growing and is delivering lethal blows to the US and NATO forces. The people of Palestine and Lebanon and other Arab peoples have successfully combated the US-directed and US-supplied Israeli Zionists.

There are many armed conflicts of different types in Asia, Africa and Latin America. There are those between the imperialists or the reactionary state on the one hand and the revolutionary movements for national liberation and democracy on the other hand, as in Iraq,

.....continued on page 26

## Salwa Judum Falters!

### Retaliation Takes a real People's War Character!!

*(In continuation of our articles against revisionism, which was unfortunately missed in the last issue, we now present an example of the concrete practice of advancing people's war. Many M-L organisations talk of protracted peoples war; but their practice is often at variance with their theoretical postulations.....Editor)*

THE revolutionary masses of Dandakarnya area (DK) moving as a massive wave under the guidance of the CPI (Maoist) and its armed wing the PLGA, dealt crippling blows on the state sponsored campaign of terror, the Salwa Judum, by launching a series of attacks on the marauding Salwa goon gangs, the Special Police Officers (SPO), and on the paramilitary and other special armed police forces. The force of the blows they delivered was such that the genocidal Salwa Judum campaign lost its wind. The states' desperate attempts to extend this campaign of mass murders from south Bastar to the entire DK region came to naught. The heroes of the much touted Naga Police Battalion are licking their wounds they received from the defiant masses. As the revolutionary masses started meeting out punishment to the most notorious of the Salwa goons, attacking them even inside heavily guarded police camps, many other such goons are surrendering before the people as they started realizing that police camps cannot save them from the wrath of the people. Raman Singh, the CM of the state, who was boasting earlier that he will wipe out the Naxalites by the end of 2005, is now clamoring for pressing hard for the deployment of additional paramilitary forces.

The adivasi masses of DK who have a very rich experience of 25 years of unrelenting revolutionary struggle, have in the past successfully repulsed each and every one of the state sponsored campaigns of suppression which preceded the latest one, the Salwa Judum campaign. So, with that valuable fighting experience they fought back against the present SJ campaign too, right from its inception. But due to the unprecedented scale, nature and barbarity of the latest fascist suppression onslaught of the state they faced many losses during the first six months. This time the suppression campaign assumed the

shape of a genocide. During the first six months itself these marauding gangs literally butchered around 200 adivasi peasant masses, hundreds of women were gang raped, thousands of houses and scores of village were burnt to ashes and crores worth valuable earnings of the people like grain, livestock, household utensils and money were looted. Not content with this murder and mayhem the state forcefully herded thousands of people into the so-called relief camps which were in fact nothing but concentration camps guarded by armed police and paramilitary forces. More over, the state, with an intention of making one adivasi kill another appointed thousand of youth drawn from the ranks of the most notorious murderers among the Salwa goons and some surrendered naxalites, as Special Police Officers (SPOs). The Salwa goons and the SPOs went on carrying out their heinous activities basing themselves in police camps or in the so-called relief camps heavily protected by armed police personnel and were using the people herded in the camps as human-shields.

#### **The Revolutionary Masses Strike Back With The Slogan "Resistance Is The Only Way - Not Surrender!"**

But, the above situation started to take a turn towards the better by the early days of 2006. The revolutionary masses quickly recovered from their initial losses, reorganized themselves and moving along with their own peoples' militia and other wings of the PLGA, launched a powerful campaign of counter attack — called Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign — on the murderous Salwa Judum expeditions attacking their villages, on the states' paramilitary and other armed police forces and on the ringleaders of the Salwa goon gangs and SPOs. With death defying courage and valor hundreds of adivasi masses attacked or raided the so called

relief camps heavily guarded by paramilitary forces, captured and punished the most notorious leaders of the Salwa goon gangs and SPOs. The Peoples' militia and the other wings of the PLGA fired on the oncoming Salwa Judum expeditions at many places, exploded land mines and booby traps and attacked police stations. The revolutionary masses raided dozens of villages capturing and punishing the most cruel ring leaders of the Salwa goon gangs. At some places, they even seized the properties of the Salwa goons and distributed them among the victims of the SJ campaign.

The revolutionary masses of DK, while taking up counter offensive operations, did not neglect either measures for self defense or production work. People of many villages have set up sentry posts along the four corners of their village to maintain a 24 hour vigil.

Some others constructed temporary shelters in deep forest pockets. People removed all their grain, livestock, money and all other valuables to safe dumps in the forest. They are continuing their agricultural activities under the protection of the peoples' militia and other wings of the PLGA. It will not be an exaggeration to say that almost each and every village from Kotrapal to Kunta have become bastions of mass resistance. The police forces which earlier were able to attack villages one after the other in one sweep have now to make 10 to 15 attempts lasting months. **In one word, with people coming forward in thousands to militantly defend their own revolutionary movement in all possible manner with all the strength they can muster, their armed resistance struggle is taking the shape of a genuine Peoples' War.**

We present below some of the reports we received about the year long campaign of revolutionary resistance — The Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign.

The adivasi masses and the PLGA forces launched series of daring attacks on police camps and on the so-called relief centers, mainly targeting the most notorious leaders of the Salwa goon gangs and SPOs.

**(i) Attack On Gangaloor 'Relief' Camp**  
A three hundred strong contingent of the PLGA forces inclusive of fighters of the local peoples' militia launched a daring multi-pronged attack on a so-called relief camp at Gangaloor in South Bastar, on the night of 29th January. While one batch tied down the paramilitary forces by attacking the police station inside the camp, other batches attacked the campsite shelters of the SPOs and ring leaders of the Salwa goon gangs. The peoples' fighters captured and killed four SPOs and five leaders of the Salwa goons. Five more goons and four SPOs were wounded in the attack.

**(ii) The Land Mine Blast That Put A Halt To The Rash Advance Of The Salwa Judum Campaign.**

The Salwa Judum campaign was extended to Dornapal and Kunta areas. There too those goons attacked many villages and burnt down hundreds of houses. An SJ meeting was held at Dornapal on 27th February. The worst lot of the SJ goons and some SPO went to that meeting by trucks. Coming to know of this, the guerillas waited in ambush and exploded a landmine under a truck full of home bound SJ goons and SPOs. 26 goons died on the spot, another three died in the hospital while many others were injured grievously. With this incident the Salwa judum campaign started losing its steam as the goons and the SPOs who earlier were raiding villages at will, were now not daring to come out of their camps.

**(iii) Surprise Attack On The Baasagudem Police Camp – Lulling The Police By Deceit**

Since the beginning of this year the state put strenuous efforts to extend the genocidal Salwa Judum campaign to Baasagudem and Kunta areas of South Bastar. A group of Salwa goons were chosen and they soon started their nefarious activities, basing themselves in the Baasagudem police camp. These goons accompanied by paramilitary forces created a reign of terror over scores of villages near Baasagudem, maiming and

murdering many innocent peasants. They attacked villages at will and burnt down hundreds of houses. They became such a big scourge that people decided that the only way to stop them is to attack and punish them in their secure shelter itself. So, on 4th March, just as the shadows of the night began spreading, a 400 member strong column of fighters, comprising of people around Baasagudem and PLGA guerillas easily gained entry in to the police camp by simply raising pro Salwa Judum slogans. The paramilitary forces guarding that camp took them to be one of their own flocks and allowed them in with smiles. As soon as they gained entry thus, a batch of the fighters surrounded the police station and engaged the police forces with rapid firing, while the rest of the peoples' column made a thorough search of the entire camp and arrested some ring leaders of the Salwa goon gangs. Then they isolated the most notorious criminals of that gang and killed them for their crimes against the people — five men. The people left the other goons with a dire warning that they too will have to face the same fate if they do not mend their ways and atone for their crimes before the people.

**(iv) Daylight Raid On Murkinar Police Camp**

The state as a part of its fascist Salwa Judum campaign of suppression has set up new police camps at many points, each covering a 5-10 km area, aiming to secure what it terms as carpet security. Ten such camps were set up in a small area extending from Kutru to Bairamgarh. Each such area was further divided into sectors and sub-sectors in a true military fashion, to facilitate pinpointed combing operations. All these additional police camps also serve as the operational headquarters of the Salwa goon gangs and the SPOs. One such camp was set up in Murkinar village, which is situated on the Bijapur-Aavapelli highway, at a distance of 14 kms from the police district headquarters, Bijapur.

A contingent of around 300 guerillas, inclusive of fighters of the local militia, launched a surprise raid on this camp on the morning of 16th April. Four jawans of the special armed forces including an assistant commandant and seven SPOs were killed in this attack and four others were grievously injured in this raid. The

victorious peoples forces seized 49 weapons of various calibers inclusive of AKs, SLRs, LMG and 2" mortars and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

The entire raid was planned and executed with high military precision. On the morning of that raid, a raiding party of fifty fighters seized a passenger bus which was on its way to Jagadalpur from Oosoor. They requested the passengers to get down and rode the bus towards the camp. As soon as the bus reached the camp site the fighters launched a lightning attack. They successfully completed the entire operation within an hour and retreated safely without any losses on their side.

At the same time while the main party was raiding the camp, the other guerillas waited in ambush as along the routes additional police forces were likely to come for the rescue of their colleagues in the camp. The guerillas spotted a batch of CRPF personnel on patrol near Duggaigudem village. They exploded landmines and booby traps as soon as the police came on to the ambush spot. Three policemen were grievously injured in that attack.

**(v) Attack On Vinjiram Relief Camp**

On 13th May, at about 4am a contingent of 500 people, led by PLGA forces mounted an attack on a camp of SPOs located within the Vinjiram relief camp and which is being protected by the Naga Police Battalion. While a batch of guerillas tied down the Naga police with concentrated firing, the rest of the fighters attacked the SPOs camp. They killed 4 SPOs and wounded another five.

On the night of February 24th, a batch of guerillas attacked a shelter of the SPOs located inside the Vellisnar camp. They killed two SPOs and injured 20 Salwa goons.

**(vi) The Much Hated Naga Police Forces Get A Good Drubbing**

Within a few days of launching its campaign of suppression, the Salwa Judum, the state rushed in and deployed a battalion of Naga Special Armed Police Forces, which was much loathed in its own state for its cruelty in exterminating its own people. Simultaneously a big word of mouth propaganda was launched about its ferocious and inhuman nature to create panic among the adivasi masses. The Naga police personnel lived up to this reputation

in Bastar too, through which they won their notoriety. In particular, they have been playing a most barbaric role in the SJ campaign. Raiding and attacking villages along with the Salwa goon gangs they butchered scores of adivasi peasants in most heinous ways, chopping off heads and limbs, breaking their skulls by repeatedly banging them against trees; cutting off genitals, piercing their chests with bayonets and gouging out their eye balls. Their cruelty was not confined to men alone. Horror lies in front for any woman who happen to come in their way. There are several ghastly incidents in which they gang raped and murdered women. They had no sense of shame when they paraded women nakedly; scores of innocent adivasi women became their victims in such a way. Equally loathsome,

they will eat them too if they continue to protest. Thus the Naga policemen, swelled by their initial successes went on terrorizing the people, committing one ghastly atrocity after the other, with out a bother for about six months. But their overweening egos started getting punctured through a series of heavy blows they received at the hands of the revolutionary masses and their PLGA forces since January of this year.

In the north Bastar area, a batch of Naga policemen accompanied by another posse of special armed forces went on the prowl, starting from Pakhanjur village raiding one village after the other, beating anyone they could lay their hands on and arresting members of revolutionary mass organizations. Proceeding in that manner they entered a village called Mendri. There

became panicky and all of them left that camp in a hurry as soon as the day light broke.

On 6th February, the PLGA forces blasted a landmine under a truck carrying 19 Naga policemen near a village called Kothachervu of South Bastar. 9 Naga policemen died on the spot while 9 others were grievously wounded, two of them died later in the hospital. Incidentally these Naga policemen were on their way to Injiram village — which is near the blast site — to set up a camp.

Hundreds of guerillas raided a police camp at Injiram village in the early hours of 13th May. This camp was under the protection of the Naga police. The guerillas killed four SPOs and injured another 5, right in front of the Naga police.

**(vii) Lightening Raid On An Explosive Magazine Of The NMDC**

The National Mineral Development Corporation maintains an explosive magazine at a site near Hiroli village in the Bailadilla hill range. A police outpost manned by 17 CISF jawans guards it.

On 9 th February 70 fighters of the PLGA accompanied by hundreds of members of the local militia launched a surprise raid on the above magazine. 8 CISF jawans including the thanedar died in the attack while 8 more jawans were wounded, The victorious guerillas seized 20 tons of Gelatin, thousands of detonators and rolls of cardex wire. They also seized 14 SLRs, 1 9mm pistol and thousands of rounds of ammunition. Astonishingly they accomplished all this within a short span of just 20 minutes. Hundreds of militia members then carried away the 20 tons of explosives and other seized articles to the four corners of South Bastar transporting the material on their carrying poles.

The guerillas knowing well that an intensive combing operation will be carried out by the police forces after the raid, made preparations accordingly, to launch attacks on the combing police parties. As anticipated, on 10th February, a police batch on combing mission, made a night halt in a village called Peddam. The guerillas who were shadowing that batch all throughout the day, attacked the policemen in the night. One policeman was injured in that attack. That police batch went back next morning carrying the wounded.

## **Guerrillas release Police Jawans unharmed!**

Earlier this year guerrillas were on patrol in search of Salwa Judum goons in the South Bastar region. In the process they stopped and searched a bus. In it were found six jawans in civil dress belonging to the Chintalnar police station. The guerrillas took them away and after keeping them in their custody for one day they released them without causing them any harm. They were warned not to harass the masses and not to identify with the Salwa Judum hoodlums. This indicates just one more example of how the Maoist do not resort to so-called mindless violence, much talked of by some liberals.

at least to the adivasi masses of DK of the habit of the Naga police of killing and eating their pet hunting dogs — each adivasi peasant rears at least two or three hunting dogs with as much love and care as he bestows on his children, in fact no peasant ever moves out of his house without his faithful dogs following him. Hundreds of such loved companions of the masses ended up in the stomachs of the Naga police personnel. The Naga policemen after eating dogs often threatened people that

they captured the area leader of the mass organization and murdered him in a brutal way, breaking his skull by repeatedly banging his head against a tree. Thus quenching their blood thirst for the day, they halted in that village making a camp in the local school. The local militia and the PLGA forces who were keeping a tab on their movements launched an attack on that camp. One Naga policeman died in that attack while some others were severely wounded. With this the Naga police



Another batch of the guerillas attacked a CRPF combing team as it was on its way from Gumpur to Hiroral. Two CRPF jawans were injured in this attack. Scared by these two attacks the police halted their combing operations. Later a batch of NSG commandos was rushed to carry out combing operations. They stayed for a month creating much noise, but ultimately went back without any success.

**(viii) Luring The Enemy In To A Trap**

A batch of PLGA guerillas launched a dummy raid on a police station in Podagatta village of Gadchiroli district on the night of 8th April, while another batch of the guerillas laid an ambush at a spot near Posatola village to attack the additional police forces that are likely to rush in to the rescue of their colleagues under attack. As anticipated, a sixty men batch of the Maharashtra Special Commando police forces rushed in, in a mine-proof vehicle. The waiting guerillas exploded land mines as soon as that vehicle came in to the ambush spot. One SI and a commando died on the spot while three others were severely injured. The guerillas of Gadchiroli killed another 3 commandos through an ambush attack at a site near Penolri police station on 14th March.

**(ix) Pressure Mine Kills A CRPF Jawan** Mahendra Karma, the main enemy of the adivasi masses of DK and architect of the Salwa Judum campaign, was desperate to extend that terror campaign to the areas north of the river Indravati by hook or by crook. As a part of that effort he planned to hold a meeting at Taklode village by mobilizing his trusted goons from villages south of the river. He himself planned to arrive there by a helicopter. Accordingly a helipad was built in that village on 9th January. The local guerillas fixed booby traps around the helipad sight. On the morning of 10th, sighting the approaching helicopter the heavy posse of CRPF jawans who came for protection duties started taking positions to offer three ringed protection to Karma. In the ensuing mêlée a jawan stepped on a pressure mine which exploded injuring him severely, he succumbed to the injuries later in the hospital.

**The Exemplory Role Played By The Peoples' Militia Forces**

A particular mention must be made of the exemplory role played by the Peoples'

militia forces all through out the Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign. The members of the militia moved in hundreds to courageously resist the forces of fascist suppression. 850 members of the militia participated in the raid on the NMDC magazine depot, two hundred participated in the attack on the Gangaloor relief camp, and three hundred of them participated in the attack on the Vinjiram relief camp. Apart from such massive actions, the militia participated in hundreds of major or minor offensive operations taken up by the PLGA forces. Not only that, taking the initiative and showing much ingenuity, they are launching attacks on their own, when ever opportunity arises, with what ever means that are available to them. In fact through such actions they are not allowing either the security forces or the Salwa goons any sense of security or peace of mind. For example, there is a school in Paded village of South Bastar which the police forces turned into a regular halting camp when ever they touch that village on their combing operations. Well aware of this the local militia set up land mines in the place where the police stay and when a batch of CRPF men came they exploded the mines injuring four jawans. We report below some more incidents of such actions of the militia.

On 7th April, at a place near Bairamgarh, a batch of the local militia captured and killed a notorious Salwa goon. Then they arranged a booby trap under the dead body. On learning about this incident a team of policemen accompanied by some SPOs came to that spot to take the body back. To their shock the booby trap exploded as soon as they over turned the body, killing two SPOs on the spot and severely injuring another three. From that day onwards the police are not daring to touch any dead body.

There is a police station in Chintalnar village of South Bastar. That village holds a weekly bazaar. The local militia members observed that the policemen get drunk on the bazaar day and move around the bazaar in a careless manner. So on 12<sup>th</sup> February, a batch of militia members went to that village when the bazaar was on, carrying swords and axes in their bags. They made rounds of the bazaar keeping a sharp eye on the drunken policemen. Soon they found two drunken policemen and

immediately attacked them injuring both of them. They seized one SLR from them and retreated safely.

Vexed with the looting spree of the Salwa goons the militia wanted to teach them a bitter lesson that would have lasting effect. A Salwa Judum meeting was scheduled to take place at Takilode village. The local militia fixed a bomb in a radio and kept it under a tree, on a path the Salwa goons will pass on their way to the meeting. On 9<sup>th</sup> January a batch of Salwa goons came that way. Two of them rushed to grab that radio which exploded as soon they switched it, injuring them.

Such has been the ingenuity of the militia forces in countering the government offensive that has created panic in the enemy camp, not knowing where they are likely to be attacked from. The entire offensive has led to the defeat of the enemy forces and even their camps lie bare with the masses having fled. Today there are less than 10,000 left in these camps, mostly filled with SPOs and their families. The massive enemy offensive has been defeated only because the proletarian party was able to turn the war into a real peoples' war, involving the entire masses themselves in the war. This was possible because of the high level of consciousness of the masses and the real fruits of the revolutionary movement that they have witnessed of the past two decades. They were not willing to lose the fruits of those victories and go back to the slave-like existence they had witnessed for generations.

No doubt the government will come with more brutal attacks. In such a condition it is imperative that the war is fought on many fronts all over the country and lakhs rally in support of the oppressed masses fighting for a new bright future. As the peoples' war is just and for a truly democratic system it is bound to win no matter what be the ruthlessness of the enemy. The heroic masses of Bastar, led by the Maoists, have shown the people that victory is possible against even the most sophisticated forces of the State if the correct polices of peoples' war are followed and if the entire masses are organised systematically for the war effort.

Hon'ble President of India  
Rashtrapati Bhawan  
New Delhi

## Memorandum

### Subject: State Terror against Tribal People in Bastar, Chhattisgarh, under the Garb of Salwa Judum

WE, the members of concerned organisations and citizens, wish to invite your kind attention to the horrendous situation that has developed in the hitherto one of the most peaceful area of South Bastar, inhabited by one of the most innocent tribal communities of our country. This region ironically has remained virtually isolated even after Independence but for the mining complex established in Bailadila, the richest iron ore deposit in the world. The roads and railways that were laid for this project dedicated to export of ore to Japan and later for Steel Plant at Vishakhapatnam in A.P. has had the worst form of backwash effect in the Region. Even the National Mineral Development Corporation, one of the *Nava Ratnas* of this nation, preferred to economise on establishment of washeries, put the untreated water in Dankini river that after skirting the most sacred shrine of the tribal people of Dandakaranya, Danteshwari temple at Dantewara meets Indravati, the lifeline of Bastar, 125 miles downstream. ***The flowing red water of Dankini, rendered unusable by humans or even denizens including cattle, symbolises the bloody-red terror that has been let loose in this region by the State in the name of development.*** The entire area around Bailadila (the hillock like the hump of a bullock) has been ravaged forcing the people to recede into the neighbouring forest where they continue to be haunted by the minions of the State. While the innocent tribal girls are allured, seduced, trapped or literally forced into servitude under different garbs, the male of the species has no use in the new urban/ industrial habitats except perhaps in their substratum as virtual slaves.

And this fabulous inheritance of the people has been leased out to private parties like Tatas, Esser who are determined to take the mineral out 'untouched by human hand' through pipelines out to the sea, dispensing with the need of slave-like participation of the people in the respective economic ventures not to speak of the remote possibility of honouring people's aspirations to enjoy the traditional command over their fabled *vasundhara* with reigns of the chariot of real development firmly in their hand.

The deep resentment in this region against the anti-people development has been simmering in this area for decades. But the story of the rest of the extensive forest and hilly region, with fabled Abujhmar (the unknown hills) in the north was no different but for different reasons. There was virtually no administration in these areas except the stray presence of forest guard,

policeman and patwari who ruled the roost with unfettered terror. Even the formally assigned lands in scores of villages have remained without *sarkari pattas* rendering the simple people most vulnerable to action of the minions. Three sanctuaries have been established in this region just through the fiat of the State as the simple tribal remained totally unaware about these processes, which themselves were questionable if not legally but on considerations of natural justice, until the officials struck at their most basic and natural right, the Right to Life with Dignity, in their traditional natural habitat. The very presence of their hamlets and collection and use of forest produce, which they had been enjoying through the ages, was questioned by the minions resulting in untold harassment and even atrocities.

It is at this stage that Maoists appeared in this area some 25 years back that gave instant relief from this low profile State terror through its minions. The message of 'new friends *alias Dadas*' gradually spread in this media-less terrain through word-of-mouth and deeds-on-ground that was taken note of by the administration ironically only when the vested interests got hurt such as tendu-leaf traders, forest contractors and explores of hidden mineral wealth.

The carving out of Chhattisgarh has proved to be a turning point in the relationship between the tribal people and the State. The state was created for facilitating the loot of rich mineral resources by the multinationals in accordance with the Imperialist Agenda with USA in the lead. ***Scores of MOUs running into thousands of crores of rupees have been signed with national and multinational companies unmindful of even the elementary fact that a substantial part of Chhattisgarh is declared as Scheduled Area by the President under the provisions of Article 244 read with the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. The first Policy Vision Document issued by the State Government after the formation of Chhattisgarh preferred not to mention even the very existence of Scheduled Areas for fear of raising inconvenient questions amongst the 'indigenous rights conscious', albeit as ruthless violators, imperialist entrepreneurs on the prowl to grab the global resources.***

It is a pity that the position of Indian Ruling elite is not much different notwithstanding the most powerful Constitutional mandate for the protection and advancement of the tribal people. It may be mentioned here that the Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas,

1996 that acknowledges the 'competence' of the community at the village level in the form of Gram Sabha to manage all its affairs in accordance with its customs and traditions. This, *inter alia*, includes its command over land, water and forests as also ownership over minor forest produce, consultation with the Gram Sabha before acquisition of land, which has to be deemed as consent in view of the fact in a true democracy the verdict of the people's body has to be binding all representative institutions and the executive authorities. This law has not been implemented in its true spirit in any of the States even after a decade.

The situation in relation to the place of people, especially where mining and industrial complexes are being established is still worse. A Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1995 (Chairman: Dileep Sing Bhuria), comprising Secretaries of all concerned Ministries and sixteen tribal M.Ps had unanimously recommended that the command over the habitat of the tribal people is non-negotiable. Accordingly 50% of the shares shall be assigned to the community in lieu of its allowing the use of the local resources. The entrepreneur has to be a junior partner with 26 % share holding for the capital investment, provided the community agrees to the establishment of the venture in its habitat. ***The GOI has taken no steps in this regard so far notwithstanding the fact that the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the historic Judgment in Samatha case have held that even the State is not competent to grant lease of land including minerals to any person who is not a tribal. Part IX A of the Constitution has not been extended to the Scheduled Areas now for more than 12 years because of the indecision in the Government of India on this vital issue. The result is that all urban bodies including the establishments of mining and Industrial Complexes in the Scheduled Areas of the country, are being run without any authority of law.***

It is within this frame of reference that the confrontation between the State and the people is sharpening. The attempt to establishment of a Steel Plant at Mavalibhata in Bastar in 1991 was foiled by the people. The State had to beat retreat from Hiranar in Dantewara in the year 2000. The struggle in Nagarnar is not yet over even though the people had to face worst repression and deceit on the part of administration by forging consent of Gram Sabha. The story is being currently repeated in the case of two proposed steel plants, one at Lohandiguda in Bastar by Tatas and the

other at Kameli-Bhansi in Dantewara by Essar. ***In both these cases the concerned areas were virtually converted into police camps with clamping of prohibitory provisions under Section 144 forcing the people to sign or put their thumb impressions on blank sheets for the purpose of manufacturing consent of the concerned Gram Sabha to the State's proposal for the industry.***

Thus the raw struggle for command over the resources by the State and their capitalist allies and multinationals on the one hand in the face of stiff opposition by the tribal people is on now for more than a decade. This natural upsurge amongst the people is being projects as handiwork of outsiders. The powerful presence of the Maoists as champions of the people's cause is taken as the real hurdle as the State is used to dealing with simple people without any qualms about their natural rights and even special Constitutional dispensation, the narration about the situation in Bastar is a living proof there of. It is in this frame of reference that a notorious programme under the banner of Salwa Judum (Gondi word for Collective Hunting that is portrayed as Movement for Peace by its promoters) has been organised under the leadership of Shri Mahendra Karma currently the leader of the opposition in Chhattisgarh Assembly, with the active support of the State blurring the dividing party line in this initiative aimed at breaking the resistance of the people against the multinationals. It is now continuing for more than a year in the most ruthless form.

The government has virtually sealed the entire area from which no news is allowed to be sent out with a clear warning of dire consequences to the violators of the code. Nevertheless many visits by citizen's committees, dedicated journalists, women's organisations and such like have braved through the impregnable cordon of the goons and State's own police and paramilitary forces. They have their own stories to say which proves that there is virtually on administration in the region except as allies of the Salwa Judum outfit. ***It is unfortunate that in the misguided mission of the State against the people's struggling for their right to life with dignity, the very essence of a democratic polity, hundreds of villages have been literally burnt down, thousands of tribal have been uprooted and huddled together in camps reminiscent of the war-time concentration camps and notorious regrouping exercise in Mizoram that has left a permanent anti-Indian mark on the suffering people of that area. It is estimated that by now over 250 people have been mercilessly and brutally killed, about 100 women have been gang-raped (and many killed after the ghastly act). Over 60,000 tribals have been forcibly uprooted from their homes and 'resettled' in what are de facto concentration camps.*** The objective is to re-group the villages and hand over the

empty land to the multinationals and other interested parties. The habitation less territory for obvious reasons would become incapable of sustaining the Naxal elements, the real case of the State's worry and hurdle in the execution of the nefarious game plan.

The GOI has been blindly supporting the State without even caring to verify even the authenticity of the situation of the official Reports. Besides other paramilitary force, a Naga Battalion has been drafted in this area, which has earned notoriety for its brutality in the area. A Mizo Battalion has also landed in Bastar recently. Back home young boys and girls, many of them minors, are being drafted as Special Police Officers at Rs 1500 a month who are being armed without training and with no clear line of command. They are functioning as terror brigades at the command of Mahendra Karma.

Less said the better about the so-called camps. They are located next to the camps of Para - military/police camps at a regular interval of 5 kms. in the name of carpet security. They are 'guarded' by Salwa Judum SPOs. The people have to work like slaves without even the minimal civic facilities. They may be brutally attacked at the slightest pretext as sympathizers of Maoists. The case of women being picked up from camps and raped, even gang-raped by SPOs and security personnel is a common occurrence.

To the best of our knowledge, the Hon'ble Governor, who has draconian powers under the Constitution for protection of the tribal people, should he so deem fit to do, has not submitted any special report under Para 3 of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution. Nor have the annual reports of the Governor relating to this period or earlier have made any mention of the unusual situation developing in this sensitive area. On the contrary the Union Government has been liberally helping the State Government in the unprecedented repression of the tribal people whose protection and advancement is its special responsibility under the Constitution. No special Team even at the official level has been commissioned for any special report. Even the Parliament, which sent an immediate team to Bastar in 1966 when Pravir Chandra Bhajadev and scores of tribals were killed in ghastly police firing, has cared to have a direct report by its own members when the tragedy is of incomparable dimensions.

***As the President of this great country, your Honour is the highest repository of the conscience of the nation having taken the solemn pledge to uphold the Constitution, which has salutary provisions for the protection and advancement of the tribal people. Here is the most unusual situation when the protector State is standing against the people in their raw struggle for survival in face of incommensurable forces that are being let loose in these areas guided by the***

***selfish interests of the ruling elite guided by the global Imperialist forces. As illustrated above all democratic institutions have failed to rise to the occasion in the worst crisis that has been forced on the tribal people of Bastar jeopardising their very survival. We urge on your good self to invoke your special powers implicit in the pledge about upholding the Constitution and take such steps that you may consider fit in this unusual situation. In particular your Honour may consider the following:***

1. Issue necessary directions, as you may deem fit, to the Union and the Government of Chhattisgarh to stop state repression forthwith that is being perpetrated in the name of Salwa Judum;

2. Ask the Governor of Chhattisgarh to submit a special Report covering, inter alia, the points raised above, under Para 3 of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution which should form the basis of further directions to the State under the same Para;

3. Constitute a Special Team, which may inter alia comprise concerned citizens, select legal luminaries, MPs and sensitive officials for assessing the situation in South Bastar on your behalf and submit a report directly to the President that may help your honor to uphold the Constitution that has been blatantly ignored ever since the dawn of independence so far as the tribal people are concerned.

***We are also enclosing the solemn pledges of countless people against Salwa Judum in response to the presentation of the horrendous reality by the cultural team of young artists. We are also submitting the Reports of various groups, which have visited the area facing the vicissitudes of the hostile State and the so-called Salwa Judum goons.***

With best regards

New Delhi

9.11.2006

Yours truly,

1. Dr. B.D.Sharma Former Collector Bastar, Former Vice Chancellor NEHU, and former Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

2. Rajkumar, Chhattisgarh Adivasi Kala Manch

3. Vinayak Sen, Chairman PUCI, Chhattisgarh

4. N. D. Pacholi, Advocate Supreme Court

5. Sivmanagal Siddhantkar ICTU

6. Varavara Rao Revolutionary Poet

7. Rajkishor Revolutionary Democratic Front

8. Kumar Sanjya Singh Delhi University

9. G N Saibaba, Revolutionary Democratic Front

....continued from page25

In a sort of insane attitude Lula said in a recent National PT Congress that he was the president who did more for the workers in the whole world history! In fact, instead of defending the interest of the working class in general he tries to fulfill a unionist and labour reformist agenda to divide and destroy the combative trade-unions, to finish off the few union liberties and to make flexible the still existing union rights. In the meantime he keeps the minimum wage at 155 dollars and freezes the public officials salaries who have not had any increase for 12 years. Unemployment during his government has reached the official rate of 12%; the real unemployment rate reached 20%. Misery and hunger have grown while Lula give alms to the poor accomplishing programmes of compensatory policies prescribed by imperialism which they call "income distribution".

Lula paralysed the precarious agrarian policy adopted by Fernando Cardoso and intensified the concentration of land property; he stimulated land speculation and continues financing the agro-business for seed exporting. In the countryside violence has increased a lot; only this year more than 100 peasants have been arrested; among them leaders and militants of the peasant movement according to data from the government.

Lula participated in the FTAA as a co-president at the side of Bush. By obeying his orders he sent Brazilian troops to Haiti. Lula's government intervenes in the political crisis of the neighbouring countries as Ecuador, Bolivia and Venezuela with help from the North-American embassy, to deviate people's rebellions to the opportunist side.

Different in their forms, the 'left-wing' governments of Latin America follow the same manual. In Bolivia the election of Edo Morales has not meant as well a solution for peoples' problems because what supports him is the maintenance of the same system. Morales, with his government programme named "Andean-Amazon Capitalism" tries to neutralise the fears of the Bolivian industrialists, to maintain the people's support and tranquillise the yankees with his proposal of a capitalist way out for the country's crisis. But the radicalisation level of the last rebellions in the country shows

the decision of the Bolivian masses to promote deeper transformation and not only change the old State manager. Nowadays the contradictions have been developing in Bolivia and the masses - mostly the Indians - and the pro-imperialist oligarchies are in for growing shocks. The country is on the verge of a civil war.

The same is the situation in Ecuador; the peasant masses went back to the streets for re-vindicating their rights. In Uruguay, the population rejects Tabare Vasquez's government and his policy submitted to the IMF which paid in advance 230 million dollars concerning the foreign debt. In Argentina the factory workers, unemployed and retired people keep fighting Kirchner's government. In Paraguay, with the failure of Nicanor Duarte's government, the opportunists prepare the candidacy of a catholic bishop, a liberation theology follower. However there is in Paraguay a growing people's movement led by the Peasant National Front of Paraguay which stands for a revolutionary way out.

In Chile, the 'socialist' president, Michelle Bachelet, has broken her electoralist commitments less than a month after the election. Among other anti-people measures she has conditioned the increase of the assistance pensions to the increase of the Rate of the Aggregated Value, one of the highest in Latin America. Her administration has been creating protests and a great frustration in the masses that have elected her.

In Peru the first presidential election turn has displayed, quite clearly, the people's rejection to the demagogism and electoral farce. More than 30% of abstentions have been registered; the masses have rejected the process disputed by corrupt and genocide candidates.

On the other hand, though the people's war in Peru has stepped back, it has been the most important revolutionary movement in the continent and in its whole history. Before the perspectives of explosion of new and more radical rebellions, this experience of the Peruvian masses will be decisive in the development of the classes struggle all over the world and especially in Latin America.

In Colombia the masses keep struggling against the reactionary State.

But as said before the mistakes of the leadership of the peoples' fights in Latin

America, along the years, have caused grave defeats. Revisionism, opportunism, reformism, pacifism and electoralism within the revolutionary and communist movement have been a serious problem in our history. The greatest challenge for the revolutionaries, the authentic anti-imperialists and particularly the communists nowadays is to unmask opportunism raising the revolutionary energy of the masses through a correct programme, form and method of organisation of the struggle under a proletarian leadership.

Presently, when imperialism has to, again, adjust its tactics for maintaining its domination, its preferred way is of militarization and fascism in the continent. Fascism is the policy of imperialism that is facing acute crisis in the metropolis and it is the policy to be permanently applied in the colonies and semi-colonies. For that it utilises clear fascist regimes or dissimulated forms in pseudo democratic orders, which are nothing but sophisticated versions of the same fascism.

The role of opportunism in the management of the old State, at the service of imperialism, is to sell the idea of existence of a 'democracy' while exploiting and suppressing the broad masses. Although it tries to have a different image when defending the 'bourgeois institutions', the 'parliament', the 'press freedom', the 'human rights', the 'citizenship', its action is of a total intolerance to peoples' movements.

However the crisis of imperialism is deep and irremediable. And the flame of revolution is rising in Latin America, while learning from the experiences acquired by the development of the class struggle all over the world and learning from the mistakes and triumphs that have occurred in the history of the mass struggles in the regions.

Imperialism will face great storms in the years to come. And in several parts of the world, particularly, in Latin America, considered its 'backyard'. With the development of the people's revolutionary struggle in the continent, Latin people, exploited and massacred for years, will be following a no return path for its liberation.

May, 2006

PM

## Remembering 1857

*Tipu*

THIS year—2007—the people of India are celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Great Revolt of 1857 ..... India's first War of Independence. It was the first clarion call for India's democratic transformation. One hundred and fifty years ago in the year 1857, the land of India witnessed an upsurge of national dimensions that 'stormed the gates of heaven' and shook the foundations of British colonial rule. The movement began with the mutiny of soldiers at Berhampur and Barrackpur during February-March that year apparently in protest against the serving of cartridges greased with the fat of bullocks and pigs, which was considered as an infringement of their religion. What started as a mutiny of the Indian soldiers soon turned into a prairie fire and became a great people's war. This people's war engulfed large parts of India embracing Oudh, Rohilkhand, Bundelkhand, Sagar, Narmada, Nagpur, Hyderabad, many districts of Bihar, Agra, Meerut, Punjab, Delhi, parts of Bengal and other places. In magnitude, depth as also in significance, this rebellion was unparalleled in the long history of both independent and colonial India. Primarily anti-colonial, it was at the same time directed against the feudal forces. It was described as the 'First War of Indian Independence' by Karl Marx. Although the Great Revolt took place one-and-a-half centuries ago, it has not outlived its relevance and is very much alive in the minds of the people. The causes for which the people fought heroically during those days of colonial rule both against the foreign aggressors as also their domestic collaborators have not lost their relevance and need to be addressed anew in present-day India. We will deal with that part in the end.

The Revolt of 1857 was the obvious and bitter response of the Indian masses to a century of British colonial policy of plunder and ruthless exploitation. The society that had withstood the ravages of time and foreign invasions for many centuries fell victim to Western capitalist aggression and got dismantled. Marx wrote in 1853: "All the civil wars, invasions, revolutions, conquests, famines, strangely complex, rapid and destructive as the

successive action in Hindoostan may appear, did not go deeper than its surface. England had broken down the entire framework of Indian society..." The Indian agricultural system was uprooted, handicraft industries were destroyed and the Indian economy was converted into a raw-material supplying appendage to metropolitan Britain. The old feudal structure was thoroughly dismantled and a new semi-feudal and semi-colonial structure was raised atop the old order. All the social groups and classes—the rajas, princes, landlords, traders, artisans, soldiers and the overwhelming majority of peasants, irrespective of their creed, caste or religion, had to bear the brunt of imperialist exploitation. The British rule doomed millions of Indians to starvation by breaking up hand-weaving and hand-spinning industries and flooded the Indian market with Lancashire cotton fabrics.

The month of April was signalized by incendiary fires in several cantonments of the Bengal army at Allahabad, Agra, Ambala, by a mutiny of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Light Cavalry at Meerut, and by similar appearances of disaffection in the Madras and Bombay armies. It was the soldiers of Meerut who set the ball rolling on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May. Mutinies followed in several stations of the north. In Bundelkhand, Jhansi took the lead. In many areas, British army officials were attacked and killed. At Jhansi, the rebel soldiers released all prisoners. The jail daroga and the barkandazes joined them. Confiscation and the looting of property of the Europeans and their Indian collaborator-officials followed. All houses and offices of the 'firinghis' (foreigners) were burnt down. Official records were taken out and a bonfire was made of them in the open field. Delhi—the traditional symbol of political power—was captured and Bahadur Shah Zafar II—the last Mughal—was proclaimed emperor of India. In the Punjab, open rebellion could be prevented only by disbanding the Indian troops. In Oudh, regiments revolted literally everywhere, escaped with their ammunition, treasures and horses, burnt down all the bungalows to the ground and joined the local people who had taken up arms. The Bombay Native Infantry broke out into successive

mutinies at Nagpur, Aurangabad, Hyderabad and Kolapur.

Widespread mutiny of the soldiers evoked rebelliousness among civil employees as well. During the outbreaks at Jhansi and Nowgong, S. Thornton, the deputy collector of Jhansi tried to raise a body of men from among the local Bundelas in Gorotha to suppress insurgency. The attempt failed miserably as the police and tahsil chaprasis refused to cooperate. The chaprasis even refused to give any money from the treasury without orders from the Emperor in Delhi from whom they said they had received a sealed letter. The first set of actions was aimed at eliminating British authority. The essential prerequisites for its normal functioning, the treasury and the arsenal, were the first to be captured. This, on the one hand, made it difficult for the British to retaliate and, on the other, endowed the rebels with the powers of the displaced state. Then the officials were physically eliminated and all tangible forms of British rule destroyed. Records and the jail were the two most natural targets. These actions were not peculiar to any one region; on the contrary, these were more or less a universal feature.

In areas of mutiny, action was started by one of the three units of the army—infantry, cavalry and artillery, while the others followed. In fact, the basis on which soldiers were organized to become instruments of the state machinery now provided the groundwork for violent actions against the state. Regimental formations and arrangements were not only retained, but furnished the essential structure within which the mutinies were carried out. A mutiny in the headquarters caused battalions in the sub-areas to rise in response (R. Mukherjee, *Awadh in Revolt, 1857-1858-A Study of Popular Resistance*, 1984). After Jhansi, mutiny broke out in Nowgong while regiments in Hamirpur and Banda awaited news from their corps in Kanpur.

Although the Revolt started in Bengal, it did not generally have any connection with the local people. The mutiny at Barrackpur and the hanging of Mangal Pandey sparked the prairie fire. It was followed by the mutiny at Behrampur in



### **Mutineers attack British troops at Lucknow**

Murshidabad. However, the failure of the rebels to establish contact with the masses made it a short-lived affair. Revolts by small bands of soldiers were reported also from Chittagong, some chiefs were hanged in Burdwan for inciting rebellion, restiveness of some sections of the people were reported from Maldah, Dhaka, Faraizis of Faridpur, Krishnagar, Jessore etc. (WW Hunter, *Statistical Account of the State of Hill Tipperah*; S.B.Choudhury, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies*; J.W.Kaye, *History of the Sepoy War*, vol.I; Promod Sengupta., *Nil Bidroha O Bangali Samaj*).

The ubiquitous presence of the British, especially their economic aggression in the form of commercial extraction and accelerated trading activities had forced the petty kingdoms along with the British-administered districts to integrate with the growing market network operated by the East India Company, foreign private traders and the Marwari go-between dalals. ( We may note here in passing that many Marwari and intermediaries from other business communities served the British

by passing on information about the movement of the rebels, by supplying provisions to them and handing over bungalows for stationing foreign troops, and were knighted in lieu of such services). This had made the local economies vulnerable to fluctuations in the new trading patterns and placed them outside the pale of the traditional forms of control exercised by their rulers. The growing economic decay within the kingdoms of the rajas was creating an ocean of discontent among their subjects, compelling the rulers into greater dependence on the foreign conquerors. This was manifested in the system of the Subsidiary Alliance and it finally led to the annexation of native territories by the Doctrine of Lapse. Moreover, the company fought twenty battles between 1757 and 1857 to transform the vast region from Kashmir to Cochin into its protectorate and thereby to transplant 'European despotism' on Indian society. The foreign rulers also sought to culturally denationalize India by adopting the method of mass conversion, either by

force or by deceit, of the Indian masses into Christianity, which was expected to supply that bond of union between the ruler and the ruled. Every Indian had also to suffer from the racist attitude of the British ruling classes.

Besides soldiers, many thakurs or petty or middle feudal nobles played important roles in that anti-colonial war. They were active not only in Bundelkhand (where they were mostly Rajputs), but in other areas also. From 1857 to early 1858, one can notice the existence of different elements in their actions such as political rebellion, social banditry as also general plunder. From May 1958, they rose to expel the recently reinstated local government officials from as many parganas as possible. Small towns—insufficiently protected—were attacked and captured by them. From these offensive acts at negating authority grew constructive attempts at building alternate structures of power. Some of them proclaimed their individual authority in scattered areas, nearly all of them recruited men, raised revenue and carved out their own pockets of power. Their reprisals were

directed against those regions that reverted to British rule, mahajans—the perennial allies of the foreign rulers and the rich zamindars who opposed rebellion and generally stood for the status quo. Collaborators were relentlessly punished and anyone who acted as spies giving away information about the movement of the rebels, were instantly put to death.

However, the real staying power of the movement could be provided only by the vast oppressed masses, particularly the peasants and artisans. In fact, the resistance of these nameless masses was often a force to reckon with and reports, even though fractured, about them periodically filtered through into official discourse. One major reason for the growing rural distress was that the depression in the cotton trade from 1824-25 was accompanied by a similar crisis in agriculture. Land was increasingly being thrown out of cultivation and arrears of revenue began to mount, as Jhansi records showed. The famine of 1833-34 was said to have been ‘such as have rarely been afflicted so intensely among other portions of the globe’ (Tapti Roy, *The Politics of a Popular Uprising Bundelkhand in 1857*, 1994, p.211.)

Mark Thornbill, a contemporary reported that within a few weeks after the Revolt began, British rule simply vanished from north India. In Bundelkhand, the district of Banda was the first to witness a widespread rural jacquerie. In all cases of rural uprising, violence was directed against those institutions of power with which they interacted directly and immediately, namely tahsils and thanas. Thanas and tahsils were attacked and plundered, records destroyed and government officials driven out. All vestiges of colonial rule were in the process eliminated. The tahsildar, solicited in the eyes of the British collector, was identified by the people solely in terms of the political authority that it represented. From driving out government officials, popular actions turned against all the others associated with the colonial power, outsiders and catalysts of disruption and disorder, the auction-purchasers, the decree-holders and the merchants. While plunder was the principal form by which people asserted their power, arming themselves was the principal means by

which they did so. A contemporary wrote: “Tulwars and matchlocks were scarce in Bundelkhand, but armed with spears and scythes, and iron-bound lathies, and extemporary axes, formed of chopping knives fastened on sticks, they imagined to be warriors, chose their own kings, and defied all comers. Never was revolution more rapid—never more complete” (Mayne, *Narrative of Events, Banda*, para 8, p.325.)

The rebels set up their own ‘Court of Administration’ for an independent India free from foreign control. It was set up with representatives from soldiers and civilians with two representatives each from the infantry, cavalry and infantry and four from the civilians. Each of these representatives was elected by majority vote from their own constituencies. This smaller body elected a president and a vice-president by a majority vote. This supreme body acted in a judicial capacity and also established different courts for discharge of judicial duties. Taking of bribes and other malpractices were firmly suppressed. This Court of Administration proclaimed Bahadur Shah as the emperor of India on 11 May 1857, but took away his power in July in the same year. It again declared him the emperor but the new emperor was deprived of any power. All the power was concentrated in the hands of the supreme body. The body took upon itself the task of administration of the land, maintenance of peace and order in the captured territories, collection of loans from the mahajans and the conduct of war. The emperor exercised no control over these affairs Bundle no.57, Folio no.539-41 in (Urdu, dt.nil, cited in Suprakash Roy, *Bharater Krishak Bidroha O Ganatantrik Sangram*, 1990).

In many areas, villagers armed themselves as befitting soldiers in defence of a political alternative, their own alternative for which they chose their own king in their respective areas. These kingdoms might not have been very large, and in some areas small. But their size should not deprive them of the noble goal for which they had been fighting. Their very emergence and existence demonstrated the power which the people gained through their insurgency in 1857. They zealously guarded their own rule against intruders and thereby defied all

comers. Fleeing officials confirmed the collapse of British power and a growing conviction that British rule once overthrown would never return. The sight of these officials kicked out of their zones of authority presented a spectacle of the authority of a state in retreat. It was also a moral victory for those who wanted to see their motherland free from the presence of the foreign conquerors.

There is no doubt that feudal elements were present in this national rising, and they were not free from the limitations and vices of their own class. It was the common cause that made them join hands at least for the time being. It is pertinent to point out that each and every person taking part in a movement suffers from limitations—both as a member of a particular class as also as an individual. And it is in course of participation in the struggle that he or she could expect to transcend the limitations of their own class. This is true both of the Revolt we are talking of as also of the present-day struggles. Of course, there is a basic difference between the rebellions of those times when there was no revolutionary Communist Party and now when we do have one. In fact, each person taking part in revolutionary struggles would have to fight not only against the enemy but also against self—the self-seeking individualistic thinking, and the struggle against the latter is definitely more difficult than that against the former. The participants in that Great Revolt was not free from such limitations either.

The Revolt of 1857 has been variously interpreted by historians and writers. While imperialist historians like John Kaye (*History of the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58*, 6 vols, 1897-98) and G.B.Malleson (*The Indian Mutiny of 1857*, 1912) tried to depict it solely as an armed sepoy mutiny and deliberately concealed the involvement in it of broad sections of the Indian masses. R.C.Majumdar (*The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857*, 1957) does not consider it to be a national uprising; he abused the rebels and even warned the readers against the spread of the ideas of sedition. V.D.Savarkar (*The Volcano or the First War of Indian Independence*, n.d.)—one of the leading figures of Hindu fundamentalism—portrayed the war as the nearest approximation to an Indian War of Independence. S.B.Chaudhuri in his two

works on the subject has linked this rebellion to those that preceded it. He described the leaders of the Revolt as the “unconscious tools of nascent nationalism”. The popular character of the rebellion was highlighted by Promode Sengupta, Suprakash Roy, R.Mukherjee, Tapti Roy and many others. To scholars like R.P.Dutt, however, it was not the war of independence, but the last attempt of the decaying feudal forces to regain their rights and privileges which they saw in the process of destruction (*India Today*, 1948). There is a tendency in recent years to depict that great rising as a purely Islamic religious ‘jehadi’ movement directed against ‘kafirs’(infidels) and ‘nasrani’(Christians) and devoid of any national aspirations(W. Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal*, 2006).

Karl Marx, in his own inimitable style, wrote a series of articles in the *New York Daily Tribune* where he pointed out that the motive force behind the insurrection was the people and that the instrument of retribution was forged by the offenders themselves. He was the first to describe the rebellion as a national rising. Referring to its characteristic features, he wrote: ‘It is the first time that sepoy regiments have murdered their European officers; that the Mussalmans and Hindus, renouncing their mutual antipathies, have combined against the common masters’; that ‘disturbances beginning with the Hindus, have actually ended in placing on the throne of Delhi a Mohammedan Emperor’; that the mutiny has not been confined to a few localities, but had spread to places far between.

In the Programme of the CPI(M-L) adopted at the Party Congress held in May 1970, it was stated: “The First war of Independence in 1857, a war fought by the peasantry and rebel soldiers, turned into a conflagration engulfing the whole of the vast country, inflicting many humiliating defeats on the imperialists and shaking the very foundations of alien imperialist rule. This great uprising of the Indian people failed owing to the betrayal by the Indian feudal princes”. Since then India witnessed innumerable armed peasant revolts. However, these revolts failed as there was no scientific theory and no revolutionary leadership capable of leading them to victory.

The Revolt of 1857 was primarily an anti-imperialist war directed against oppressive foreign rule. Numerous social groups and classes affected, in one way or the other, took part in it. It also contained within it elements of anti-feudal struggles directed against the feudal rajas, feudal magnates, notables and others. It coincided with the greatest peasant rebellion in the history of modern China, namely the Taiping Rebellion. Although much short-lived than the Chinese rising that preceded it, it left a permanent imprint on the future history of India and acted as an inspiration to those who dared to fight for a better place to live in.

After the transfer of power in 1947, direct colonial rule came to an end and India was transformed from a colonial and semi-feudal country into a semi-feudal and semi-colonial one. During those years of sham independence the big comprador-bureaucrat bourgeoisie and big landlord ruling classes have been serving their imperialist masters quite faithfully. These stooges of imperialism, while preserving the old British imperialist exploitation, have also brought US imperialist and Soviet social-imperialist exploiters to fleece our country. With the weakening of the power of British imperialism the world over, the Indian ruling classes had hired themselves out to US imperialism and Soviet Social imperialism, and after the decline of the latter, to the former alone. The semi-feudal land relations have transformed our country into a land of perpetual famine, as a result of which millions of people die of starvation every year. Through the so-called ‘green revolution’, the policy of liberalization, the imperialist powers led by the USA in association with their domestic collaborators are fleecing the people and the beloved land of ours has been transformed into an El Dorado to be ravaged at will by them. Our natural resources, mines, forest lands, water, agriculture, industry, education, culture are being systematically plundered like the British East India Company of the old days. The “illegitimate marriage” between the Indian comprador bourgeoisie with the imperialist

bourgeoisie have been daily ruining the country as never before. In the name of ‘development’(in reality, mal-development), people are being displaced from their land in Maharashtra, WB and many other areas. Everywhere people are seething with discontent, everywhere there are protests and movements of one type or another and the state machinery is coming down heavily with all their might to suppress them. The latest example is Singur where the hated Buddhadev-led government is trying to forcibly grab many acres of land from the peasants and hand those lands over to the Tatas—one of the top representatives of the big comprador bourgeoisie. This is what these faithful lackeys of imperialism call ‘globalization’ which ruins millions of starving people every day and leads to the accumulation of property in the hands of a few.

The Indian people would have to fight against such globalization. It is a national war of resistance against imperialist control and exploitation by comprador-bureaucratic capital and feudalism—a new War of Independence more gigantic than what one witnessed one hundred and fifty years back. The revolutionary party of India, the CPI(Maoist) is in the forefront of this struggle and is heroically leading the people with all its might and, with the joining of more and more people, its strength is growing with every passing day. Let all the people who love their motherland and seek to transform this country into a better place to live in, a place free from exploitation, where hunger and poverty would be things of the past—peasants, artisans, other toiling masses as also policemen and soldiers—join in this glorious struggle. It is a struggle worth fighting for. It is a struggle which would surely lead to the creation of a new society where human values would triumph over the lust for profits. Let another great thunder crash over our land to rid us of the muck of all ages. Long live the Great Revolt of 1857!!

**P.M**



# Latin America – a volcano about to explode

*(ILPS - Brazil / Latin America Coordination)*

**L**ATIN America is today a volcano about to explode. The worsening of the general crisis of the system is directly reflected in the economical, political and social situation of the continent.

In the last 20 years the number of poor people in Latin America has increased from 120 to 230 million - more than 100 million are indigenous - out of a total population of 517 million inhabitants distributed in 36 countries. The exploitation of the proletariat and the people's masses has reached intolerable levels supported by the maintenance of the semi-feudal landownership in all the Latin countries.

On the other hand, this is the material base on which the recent people's rebellions have developed in Latin America, a prediction of some other larger and more overwhelming class confrontations that will certainly explode very soon.

A broad anti-imperialist feeling has been developing and yankee imperialism and the puppet governments are the centre of its attack.. Subjected to a growing spiral of hunger, misery and repression the masses are motivated to rebel by the firm Iraqi resistance and resistance in some other parts of the world against the imperialist invasion. This proves once more that the peoples, when they organise themselves and struggle, can defeat their class enemies.

Because of such an explosive situation, mostly in South America, yankee imperialism has been forced to change its plans. And even guaranteeing their permanence in Iraq they are obliged to change the axis of their attacks in the Middle East towards Latin America, since - as a consequence of the general crisis - the economical crisis on different Latin countries have created a serious social crisis and successive political crises without any perspective of solution for the problems that threaten its domination.

The imperialist offensive headed by Bush has taken the contradiction between the nations and oppressed people to an incredible level. Because of that and the general systemic crisis of capitalism the anti-imperialist contradictions are becoming more acute although apparently they try to display an unquestionable domination of the USA. On disputing new markets and raw materials,

South America has become an important target for the new investments for financial capital where China and European imperialism attempt to establish profitable commercial relations. With this picture and in face of the huge and insoluble crisis, the safety of the hegemonic imperialism is intrinsically related to the need of a complete dominion of Latin America.

In fact USA has imposed the FTAA - Free Trade Agreement of America; it threatens Cuba and begins to prepare a plan for a possible aggression to Venezuela. Besides installing military bases in several Latin America countries as Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay and Colombia, it plans to install itself at the Triple Frontier of Plata which includes Brasil, Argentina and Paraguay.

As Venezuela - their second biggest oil supplier - is off their control, the conditions of their crisis have aggravated more as the largest world oil consumer. Chavez's criticism to the USA have been utilised as a pretext for a future intervention since a possible confrontation with Venezuela is part of a group of yankees' strategies after Iraq's.

The internal Venezuelan reaction has politically had big defeats though keeping important economical controls as well as controls in the means of communication. Chavez however counts on the people's support and he is enlarging the army with the organisation of militias. He ventures in the articulation against the US with international support and in alliance with Europe, China and Russia as well.

Nevertheless the central problem of the continent —in the light of this objective situation of deep crisis and perspective of explosion of new and more radical people's rebellions for the peoples liberation — is the strong influence of opportunism and the lack of a proletarian leadership to indicate the revolutionary way for building the New Power.

The large masses in Latin America have already lived different experiences including the armed struggle. But their leaders have capitulated and nowadays nearly all of them are involved in electoralist disputes for the management of the old States in their countries. Opportunism continues shamelessly speaking of socialism while being a devoted servant to imperialism.

Because of that Daniel Ortega, from the Frente Sandinista of Nicaragua, has been accused recently - by an ex- Nicaraguan guerrilla - to having transformed himself from anti-imperialist into a capitalist craftsman.

And with the crisis overflowing all over Latin America, the election of many presidents considered as 'left-wing' has been the general tactics used by the ruling classes and imperialism to deactivate the social explosion in the region where at any moment a flame can ignite a prairie fire. Lula, Kirchner, Bachelet, Evo Morales, Tabare Vasquez, Nicanor Duarte, Alejandro Toledo are, all of them, pro-imperialists; Chavez has an anti-yankee stance.

The Brazilian case is a very representative example of this general picture. Despite the official publicity campaigns that inform us that Brasil is an economically emergent country, this is not true. According to World Bank data Brasil is among the five countries with the worst wealth distribution in the planet; there are 40 million landless poor peasants or with little land and 60 million of miserable people; among them 40 million live "below the poverty line".

In 2002, because of the worsening of the bureaucratic capitalism crisis in Brasil the fight between the local ruling classes has aggravated too, permitting the PT (Workers Party) electoralist front to elect Lula. And Lula, as soon as he was elected, started consolidating his alliance with the big bourgeoisie implementing the monetary, tax and cambial programme dictated by IMF, whose objective is the payment of the foreign and national debt of around 800 billion dollars.

Lula has used for that a primary surplus around 5% of the Brazilian GNP that amounts to 700 billion dollars. Likewise he used only 4% of the GNP in education; he maintains the interest rates that are the highest in the world; 17% he paid on our IMF debts with the IMF and Paris Club; he did the reforms required by the IMF that the previous governments were not able to do — as for instance the pension reforms which was a hard blow to the retired people's rights. Now he is implementing the university reform in accordance with the World Bank with the goal to privatise public education.

.....continued on page20

.....continued from page13

Palestine, Afghanistan, Nepal, India, Turkey, Peru, Colombia and the Philippines. There are those between the reactionary state and the oppressed minorities fighting for self-determination.

There are also those between reactionary forces who struggle for power by following different imperialist masters and taking advantage of communal, ethnic, religious and racial differences. These armed conflicts have arisen in the wake of economic and social ruin due to depressed prices of raw-material exports and unbearable debt burdens, especially in Africa.

The Marxist-Leninist and Maoist parties that are waging the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war play a signal role in bringing about the world proletarian revolution. They hold high the torch of armed revolution. They illumine the road of revolution for the peoples in the underdeveloped countries, in the retrogressive countries of former socialist countries and in the imperialist countries. They encourage the formation of Maoist parties where these do not yet exist.

### **Current Major Contradictions in the World**

In the epochal struggle of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the fundamental contradictions to reckon with are those between labor and capital, among the imperialist countries and between the imperialists and the oppressed peoples and nations. From time to time, the arrangement of these contradictions changes according to concrete conditions.

At this time, these fundamental contradictions may be seen as four major contradictions and may be arranged according to current world reality. These are contradictions between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations, between the imperialist powers and countries upholding national independence, among the imperialist powers and between the proletariat and the monopoly bourgeoisie in imperialist countries.

The contradiction between the imperialist powers and the oppressed peoples and nations ranks first because within it armed revolutionary movements have arisen, even if still few, and the central

question of revolution is being answered through the serious endeavor to seize state power. Every day that these armed revolutions for national liberation and democracy exist and develop, they demonstrate that the US and other imperialist powers do not have enough power to suppress them and pacify the entire world. They encourage the people to wage armed revolution. There is high potential for more armed revolutions to arise in Asia, Africa and Latin America because the peoples and nations in these parts of the world are the most oppressed and exploited.

The contradiction between the imperialist powers and countries invoking upholding national independence has in fact resulted in wars that are even more dramatic for a certain time than the revolutionary wars of oppressed peoples and nations. Any government, whether motivated by bourgeois nationalism or socialism, invokes national independence against imperialism to assert its legitimacy and compliance with the sovereign will of the people. We have seen the blitzkriegs launched by the US and its allies against Iraq and Afghanistan. The governments of Saddam and the Taleban have fallen. But the people continue to wage a war of liberation against the occupation and has pushed the US into a quagmire.

Individually, China, North Korea, Cuba, Iran and Syria invoke national independence and take a stand against the dictates of US imperialism on certain outstanding issues, like Taiwan, nuclear research and development, economic sanctions and Israeli Zionism, to cite a few. Politically, economically, financially and militarily, there are limits to US imposing itself on any or all of the aforementioned countries. It is already in serious trouble even only in Iraq. Together with its NATO allies, it is increasingly faced with armed resistance in Afghanistan.

The contradiction among the imperialist powers has long been cushioned since the end of World War II by their anti-communist alliance against the socialist countries, the national liberation movements and the proletariat and people. But it can easily take the No. 1 position when it results in war among the imperialist themselves, as in World War I and World War II. Such a war is always of

high significance because it is the most devastating to the people, it is self-destructive to world capitalism in general and gives the people the opportunity to turn the war into a revolutionary civil war for national liberation and socialism. No direct inter-imperialist war has arisen since the end of World War II because the imperialist powers have developed various frameworks for settling their differences at the expense of the proletariat and people.

The contradiction between the proletariat and the monopoly bourgeoisie can be looked at first within the imperialist countries. It can develop rapidly only after the other contradictions develop first. The revolutionary potential of the proletariat can arise from the internal economic and political crisis of imperialist countries. But before the monopoly bourgeoisie resorts to the use of fascism, it uses its superprofits from the rest of the world to counter and delay the rise of a revolutionary movement of the proletariat with the use of reforms and concessions.

We can reckon with the contradiction of the proletariat and the monopoly bourgeoisie on a global scale. The proletariat has a global presence. Outside of the imperialist countries, there are varying degrees of modern industrial development. On the basis of this, the trade union movement and revolutionary party of the proletariat can arise. As the most advanced political and productive force, the proletariat can amplify its strength by uniting with and leading the peasant masses in the people's democratic revolution in countries like the Philippines and Nepal.

The people's democratic revolutions through people's war on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and under the leadership of the revolutionary party of the proletariat are very crucial today in keeping alive the hope of the broad masses of the people to defeat imperialism and its lackeys, free themselves from oppression and exploitation and enjoy a life of freedom, democracy, justice, plenty and progress in socialism.

Contribution to the International Solidarity Conference on the Struggle of the People of Nepal for Democracy and Human Rights

Kathmandu, Nepal  
September 22, 2006

**P.M**

## Demand Unconditional Release of Maoist Leader Com Narendra (alias Chintan)

ON Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> 2006 the Bihar police arrested com Narendra (alias Chintan, Osho, P.P.Singh) from the Ghobaria PS area of West Champaran District, along with two of his comrades, Deepak Umrao and Virendra Prasad. After bringing them to Bhaga and subjecting them to physical and mental torture they were sent to jail. No reasons were given for the arrest and no warrant produced.

Com Narendra has been working for nearly two decades amongst the tribes (particularly Tharu tribes) of North Bihar. Com Narendra was born in a middle class family in a village from East Champaran (Motihari) district. He got his basic education in his village then he did engineering. Soon after getting his engineering degree he got a job in the railways. But after six months he gave up his job and continued his studies in Delhi. Here he got an engineering degree from the IIT and then did his PhD from the JNU on the conditions of tribals.

In the early 1980s along with his engineer friends he put up a factory in Oakhla, Delhi. It is then that he began organising the workers in the region. He set up a library called "*Ekta Pustakalya*" which became a centre for workers to read and discuss their problems and thereby build their organisation. It was during this time he came in touch with the Janshakti party and set up the registered union "*Delhi General Mazdoor Front*" which is in existence till today. The office of this union was in his factory premises itself and he began giving all his time to build the union. The union began to spread to the

entire area and undertook many struggles. It even built a branch in the CPM printing press where he organised the workers to demand minimum wages. In the course of the struggle he exposed the anti-workers role of the CITU and also brought out a booklet against revisionism. This booklet was distributed not only in the area but amongst the working class all over the country.

The struggle in the printing press intensified and the CPM went to the extent to unleash goondas on the struggling workers. In this attack many workers were injured and one was even killed. In spite of these attacks the union continued the struggle and the CPM rather than give minimum wages closed down the press. Similarly in Sept 1983, on another occasion, when a factory owner beat and killed a worker, under the leadership of comrade Narendra, the entire Okhla area observed a three-day bandh. During the bandh there were serious clashes with the police and CRPF. For quite a few years the union became so powerful that the factory owners of the area had to retreat in the face of the activities of the union. Com Narendra became a much loved workers' leader and the D.G.M.F. union also spread to other areas of Delhi.

In the course of all these struggles Com Narendra had to face the attacks of the police. Throughout this period he continued with the Janshakti group. At that time after discussion with his worker comrades he decided to work amongst the most oppressed tribals of the West Champaran district in North Bihar. He spread his work in the jungles

of the area spreading from Valmikinagar to Sitamadi. Though some senior party leaders opposed this work he convinced them and began work in this region. First he opened a school in the area and began educating the most backward Tharu tribes and established links with the peasants. Within a few years he began organising the villagers and began some revolutionary struggles. Known as a mini-Chambal, he had to face the wrath of the dacoits who tried to chase him away from the area. But deeply integrating with the people he could increase his influence and thereby opened a number of schools in the area. He organised the tribals against the exploitation of the forest department and the inhuman loot by the dacoits. He traveled from village to village awakening the tribals against the causes for their oppression.

In the course of his activities he came in touch with MCC comrades and in around 1996 joined the MCC. Now he organised the tribals into armed detachments. Due to his sacrifices and efforts this entire area became a centre for anti-feudal anti-imperialist struggles. After the merger of the two parties and the formation of the CPI(Maoist) he became a member of its central committee. Earlier too, many a time he has been to jail, but has always valiantly continued his fight against the enemy, whether inside or outside the jail.

Com Narendra has been a consistent fighter for the oppressed who has sacrificed everything for the cause of the people. We demand his unconditional and immediate release.

### .....continued from page 27

uncommonly intelligent military general. Another exemplary fighter was Co. Manna, who was then platoon commander of the then regular guerrilla forces of the Party; and KM was the assistant commander. Later on, through gathering many multifarious experiences in various battles, he became one of the commanders of the guerrilla forces.

Through the basic military training he got in 1965, many practical experiences in the bloody war of 1971, and a thorough study of all books published in Bangla on communist guerrilla warfare, he became the military theoretician of the Party. He became the most important teacher — both political and military — which enabled the untrained

irregular guerrilla forces to persist in battle and hit at the counter-attack. He was one of the three master theoreticians that followed the military line of Charu Majumdar in Bangladesh. The other two were Coms. Badol Dutt and MC. The reactionaries martyred all these comrades. Com Badol Dutt had summed up the military experiences of the Party but these are lost. KM and MC while conducting the 2LS had also dealt with military issues which was part of the debate.

Although the so-called independent state of Bangladesh was formed on Dec. 16 1971 a life-and-death struggle continued between the regular guerrilla forces of the Party and the Police-BDR combine.

At the period of setback KM fought

against all liquidationist and flightiest views and with determination called for keeping the politics of the party alive amongst the masses. It was only this way that the Party could strengthen itself and then launch a counter-attack. Fighting against the opportunist politics of self-protection he resolutely applied his line and thereby revived the movement.

Just 40 days after his martyrdom, on August 24 2006, the guerrilla forces annihilated four policemen, seized their arms and gained great popularity throughout the country. The Communist Party of East Bengal (ML)(Red Flag) continues to grow in strength notwithstanding the serious losses.

PM

## **In Commemoration of Martyr Comrade Kamrul Islam**

**{Based on a statement issued by the Communist Party of East Bengal (ML)(Red Flag) issued on Sept 20 '06}**

**T**HE murderous elite force, RAB, created and by its close allies FBI & RAW, arrested Kamrul Master(KM) from his lodging-house in Dhaka at 12-30 am on July 13 2006. after three hours of interrogation at the house they took him to the RAB headquarters. At 4 am on July 14<sup>th</sup> they took him to his home district of Pabna and shot him dead in cold blood. After that they abandoned his body by the road and gave a statement of a 'cross-fire' to the media the next day.

Com KM's history is interwoven with the history of the Maoist movement in Bangladesh, being one of the major pillars of the movement since its inception. It was in the early 1970s that the movement achieved a great momentum of which he was a part. But then in the brutal repression hundreds of comrades and intellectuals were martyred. The armed peasant war faced a huge setback in 1974. Prior to that the Raksha Bahini arrested him and sent him to jail, sentencing him to 12 years imprisonment. After 4½ years rigorous imprisonment he was released due to the legal efforts of comrades. His life became a Marxist university for him. Here he studied world history, Indian history, geography, politics, economics and philosophy along with nearly all Bangla literature and much world literature that is translated into Bangla.

Party secretary, Com. Moniruzzman Tara, was martyred prior to the setback, and all the living central leaders were sent to jail. Though some district leaders continued their revolutionary activities separately, there was no contact and coordination amongst them. In 1976 coms. Madhu and MC after coming out of jail, established co-ordination amongst comrades and organisations scattered around the country; and in September 1976 built a COC (Central Organising Committee). In 1977, KM after coming out of jail, went to the struggling areas of Pabna and once again introduced armed struggle. In 1979 the Party co-opted him into the COC. Since then com. KM has been a central committee member till his death. The April Plenum (actually Congress) on 1985 elected him as a CCM in the 3<sup>rd</sup> CC of the Party. In Sept 86 a 13-year long two line struggle (2LS) was introduced in the party. At a certain stage of that 2LS when the opinion of KM was a majority, Com.

MC resigned from the post of CCS and Com KM was elected as CCS and performed that duty for 6 months from Oct 89 to Apr 90.

In the year of 2000 though the party mainly adopted his opinion, yet he did not agree to be CCS. He vigorously proposed com. Raka who was with him in the 2LS, but much younger to him. After com. Raka was elected secretary he took enormous effort to train him for the tasks. Though many asked him to take the post of CCM he refused and stayed steadfast to his task of building the party. In 1999 when Com. MC was removed as CCS and started a new 2LS raising a host of questions and split the party with his factional activities. Com KM and Raka led the 2LS and firmly solved the problems the movement was facing, steadfastly leading the armed struggle forward. It was about this time that the Party joined CCOMPOSA and gained new experiences from the other parties of South Asia. KM also led the party to participate in the CCOMPOSA.

From this time onwards it was KM who played the prime role in the realm of ideology seeking to unite all the Maoist parties involved to in armed struggle. His efforts culminated in his party and the PBSB (CC) signing a unity statement just before his martyrdom to conduct unity talks. Moreover he played a major role as the chief teacher to build the proletarian outlook of comrades within the party. Through his intensive studies and participation in the practice of revolutionary struggle he played a major role in establishing the class line of the party. In this way he had trained a generation of take over the tasks which have now fallen on their shoulders after his martyrdom. Through the numerous political and ideological struggles he led he trained the entire party on the communist outlook. His latest contribution was towards building the unity amongst the numerous revolutionary and patriotic-democratic forces in the country.

We now trace his four decade long history of building the communist movement in Bangladesh. Com. Kamrul Islam was born in the village of Nurpur, near Pabna town, on Nov.10 1949. His father, Ahmed Hussain, was a school teacher. His uncle, Ahmed Hussein, was the then MLA. He was the leader of the extremely weak nationalist stream within the Awami party. In 1971 he was for fighting for

freedom standing on their own within the country and not depending on India. More than that, he planned to hand over some arms of the Pabna Armoury to the communists through comrades KM and Shohid to fight the Pakistani army. Due to this the pro-India Awami conspirators killed him and spread the rumour of a heart attack. Com.KM commenced his education at the Narayaanpur Primary School where his father was a teacher. He got his secondary education from the Radhanagar Mojumdar Memorial Academy High school. During this time, at the time of the Indo-Pak war of 1965, along with others he got basic military training, given by the Pakistani Army, which helped in the future people's war. After passing his metric exam from the RM Academy in 1966, he entered the Pabna Edward College, where com Charu Majumdar had also studied. Passing the intermediate exam from here in 1968 he then entered the Pabna Polytechnic Institute. If he had not occurred he may have become an engineer; but the war of 1971 and the activities of the CPEB(ML) changed his life.

Com.Shohid, his cousin, had already joined the Party, and it was he who used to keep all the party's secret documents. Originally KM read the communist manifesto and soon many of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. At a certain stage he began to attend party meetings as an observer along with com. Shohid. So he became acquainted with leaders like Allaudin, Motin, Tipu Biswas, Mofakhkhar Choudury (MC) and others, and gradually he became active in political work. No sooner had he joined the party, he became a leader, because of his previous basic Marxist study and basic military training. He became a hero of many military actions. At the beginning of the war of 1971, the CPEB(ML) introduced guerrilla warfare against the Pakistani invaders, standing on its own strength. Later, when the freedom fighters, trained and equipped with arms from India, had begun attacking the guerrilla forces of the Party, the Party adopted the principle of struggling on two fronts. In this prolonged fight Tipu Biswas performed the role of Commander-in-Chief. Though he later changed colours many a time turning from a communist to a patriotic-democrat, com Tipu Biswas was an

**.....continued on page 27**