

People's March

Voice of the Indian Revolution



NANDIGRAM :

**Slap in the face of CPI(M) Social-fascists
Armed Resistance Assumes New Form**



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NO GENOCIDE CAN KILL THE REBELLIOUS SPIRIT OF THE PEOPLE OF NANDIGRAM

Samya

NANDIGRAM witnessed higher level of struggle than that of Singur. Nandigram learnt from the experience of Singur and initiated an armed mass resistance movement the like of which has not been seen in West Bengal for a long time.

Ever since the WB government made public its intention of handing over thousands of acres of land in Nandigram and adjoining areas to the notorious Indonesian upstart capitalist Salem for the setting up of a SEZ (in reality, Slave Economy Zone or a Special Exploitation Zone), the people of Nandigram, irrespective of their religious, gender or political affiliations, swiftly organized themselves under the banner of Bhumi Uchhed Protirodh Committee (Committee Against Eviction from Land) to put up resistance against any attempt to grab their land. Among those who joined hands on this common issue were a small section of local CPM cadre, TMC, Jamiat-e Ulema-e Hind, CPI, some CPI(M-L) groups, Maoists and others. In 38 mouzas (mouza is a revenue division comprising some villages) under Nandigram Block 1, regular meetings were organized to mobilize public opinion against land acquisition. Women took a leading role and formed resistance groups with whatever traditional weapons they could lay their hands on, viz, sickles, sticks, iron rods etc.

HOW IT STARTED

On 28 December 2006, the notorious Lakshman Seth, the sitting MP of the CPM declared on behalf of the Haldia Development Authority that about 14,000 acres of land would be acquired from the villagers for the creation of a 'mega chemical hub' for the Salem group (10,000 acres), for a shipbuilding centre for the Ruia group (2,500 acres) and for the deposit of silt after dredging in the Haldia dock area (2,000 acres). The formal notice was put up on 2 January 2007. Twenty-nine mouzas—as a whole or parts of them—would be acquired from Nandigram Block 1 and Khejuri Block 2. These include, among others, Kendemari Jalpai, Jadubarichok, Chakchilinga, Kanchanagar Jalpai no.7,

Nakchirachar, Sonachuri Jalpai, Boli Brindabanpur, Balipota Saheb nagar, Osmachak, Gar Chakraberia, Gokulnagar, Kesabpur, Baranagar, Kalicharanpur, Soudkhali, Dinabandhunagar, Nilpur etc. (*Dainik Statesman*, 2,3 January 2007). On 3 January 2007, when the news of a meeting being held in the Panchayat office at Gar Chakraberia Bazar on the issue of land acquisition spread, many villagers gathered and shouted slogans against the government order, Lakshman Seth and the Panchayat pradhan. Sensing trouble, the CPM pradhan sought police help. The police came and started firing on the villagers, as a result of which four persons were badly wounded. The peasants quickly retaliated by attacking the police force, dragging some of them from the police van when the van, in its hurry to leave the area, hit a light post and caught fire. The policemen were beaten up and thrown into the nearby river and they could escape further thrashing only after tendering an apology to the angry crowd. The villagers knew from their experience that soon more forces would be coming. So they started putting up barricades on the road by felling trees, digging roads and placing massive stones on the roads at regular gaps so as to prevent the entry of police jeeps. It was a spontaneous movement of the people and within one night everything was complete. The land of Nandigram is well-known to have a rich revolutionary heritage in both anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggles from the days of yore, and the form of resistance they put up was clearly in conformity with that heritage. All the CPM activists and leaders, who were trying to deceive the people by saying that industrialization would bring more employment opportunities, were compelled to leave their villages in the face of the people's wrath. There were regular armed skirmishes on the Sonachura-Khejuri side when CPM hoodlums — hired from Keshpur, Gorbata and other areas — tried to enter through that point.

The climax was reached in the early hours of 7, January on a foggy day when the CPM hooligans attacked the villagers with arms from the other side of the Talpati

khal i.e, Khejuri, from launches as also from the house of Sankar Samanta, a CPM leader living in a sprawling bungalow on the Sonachura side. They killed three members of the Krishi Jami Uchhed Birodhi Protirodh Committee, namely, Bharat Mondal, Biswajit Maity and Sekh Salim and injured many. True to their hooligan colour, they went on a looting spree in four or five shops, broke furniture and decamped with cash and goods. The intruders, however, did not go unpunished. According to unconfirmed reports, a total number of about 17 persons lost their lives, of which the majority belonged to the CPM goons. Sankar Samanta, whose house was used as one of the places for launching the attack and who himself was involved in it, was lynched by the angry crowd. His granary, betel-leaf field and the two-storied house were burnt down by the crowd. Unlike the CPM goons who indulged in looting, there was no looting in his house. It was a case of typical crowd action where the people did not touch anything in the house. From early January till 13 March 2007, Nandigram was in the hands of the people themselves. They set up a parallel administration in the area, formed resistance groups to protect themselves from the police and the CPM goons. The methods the people used to defend themselves were somewhat similar to those used by the revolutionary people of this region during the Quit India movement of 1942 when a parallel 'National Government' — '*Tamralipta Jatiyo Sarkar*' had been in existence for 17 months.

GENOCIDE OF 14 MARCH

What took place in West Bengal ruled over by a 'left-front' government will put to shame all previous acts of genocide anywhere else in West Bengal, if not in India, Jallianwallabagh massacre included. It was a military operation ordered by Buddhadev Bhattacharya and planned and carried out by the home secretary, Prasad Roy, Arun Gupta, the IGP, the DIG (West Medinipur Range), Anil Srinivasan, the SP of East Medinipur. Lakshman Seth, the MP who sent armed goons and the various zonal and local CPM leaders and lumpens. Biman Bose, the CPM leader, knew

everything and approved of the action. Binoy Konar, the other CPM leader, who had all through been threatening to bring hell to the people of Nandigram was also in the know. According to press reports, the whole operation was planned well in advance on 9, March in the hall of the guest house of the Kolaghat Thermal Power Plant behind closed doors (*Sambad Protidin*, 19, March, 2007). Of these criminals, Anil Srinivan is the person who rose to notoriety by torturing Prof. Koushik Ganguly and many political prisoners accused of being connected with the Maoists and was promoted by the WB government to the rank of superintendent of police after years of oblivion. The force consisted of the Eastern Frontier Rifles, the Indian Reserve Battalion—an army wing created to crush the Maoist rebellion — as also more than 20,000 police forces equipped with sophisticated weapons (*Dainik Statesman*, 15-3-2007). *The Telegraph* in its issue of 17 March, 2007, produced a list of lethal weapons that the force took with them: 1) Prahari (anti-riot tear smoke grenade); it emits smoke for 30-50 seconds. Designed to prevent lobbing back. Canister made of plastic that melts during explosion. 2) 51-mm tear smoke bomb; can be fired up to 800 metres. Helps avoid close contact and averts drastic steps like firing. Emits gas for 3 to 4 minutes. 3) Agnivarsha (multi-barrel launching system); capable of launching seven shells simultaneously or in single bursts. Ideal to disperse large crowds. Quick loading and electric firing mechanism ensure high rate of fire and efficiency.

This huge force was dispatched by Buddhadev & Co. to suppress the just rebellion of the people of Nandigram with utmost brutality. The force was ordered to kill all, rape all, maim all and loot all. Behind their back entered the CPM goons (in police uniforms) trained by Lakshman Seth & Co. to be beastlike in their ferocity. The ruling party, as always, worked in close collusion with the state machinery.

It was obvious that the people, who had been fighting against land acquisition, totally underestimated the ferocity of the enemy. In the first row stood women and children thinking that the enemy would pause before attacking them. But their hopes were belied. The home secretary had been giving press statements regularly that

state forces will enter Nandigram any day after the end of the school-leaving Madhyamik examination and the beginning of the Higher Secondary examination and would capture Nandigram. In the morning of 14 March, the EFR, IRB jawans and the policemen started firing indiscriminately without any previous warning. Women, boys and girls who were in the front were shot down. Women were chased, beaten with sticks and then raped by the state forces and the CPM cadres. In the Bhangabera area, children were kept by their mothers and they were playing in the field, when the killing army came. Many children were beheaded, some had their limbs torn apart, some were killed by being thrashed against the wall and the dead bodies were loaded in the trucks brought for the purpose and taken away to be dumped into the sea. One woman burst into tears when she related to a fact-finding team how her baby was pressed on the oven. An unspecified, but definitely large number of women were raped and tortured by the CPM goons and the police. Elderly women had their breasts torn by sharp weapons. Two of the main culprits identified by many villagers were Asok Guria and Naba Samanta — both local CPM leaders. As time goes by and more and more investigation teams, consisting of civil rights bodies, doctors, other democratic associations, are going to Nandigram, more and more ghastly stories are coming to light. As the report goes to press, the total number of people who are untraced or 'missing' stands at something between 800 and 900, and the number of children butchered is more than 100. These are unconfirmed reports, but as time passes by and if the missing persons still remain untraced, the suspicion of them being butchered will, no doubt, gain ground. However loudly might the home secretary state about the return of the missing persons, hundreds of people are still missing and they are possibly dead, many of whom are children.

In the 19, March edition of the Bengali daily, *Ekdin* it was reported that five women—Kajal Gayen(40), Lali Mindal(50), Susmita Das(30), Sitabala Gayen(70) and Khukurani Das(55) could save themselves by taking shelter in the Jellingham jungles, somehow kept themselves alive without any food for four days and crawled their way back only to be rescued by members of the Bhumi Ucched Protirodh Committee.

They were attacked by the police on that day, mercilessly beaten with lathis and somehow remained alive only to recount the story of state brutality. It was reported in some of the TV channels that as many as 50 dead bodies were found on the *char* land on river Haldi, and that gharials (crocodiles) of the Sunderbans have got a scent of it and are moving through the Haldi. It was reported in the newspapers that the CPM leadership—and the finger is definitely pointed at Lakshman Seth—had hired 300 ruffians at a cost of Rs.2 lakhs each for this operation, 10 of whom had recently been caught by the fact-finding CBI team.

The carnage in Nandigram will go down in history as the worst of its kind in Bengal, if not in the history of India. During the food movement in 1959 in West Bengal, 79 peasants were killed by the police of the Bidhan Roy-led government. In 1971, in the Cossipore-Baranagar area of Kolkata, more than 200 youth and students owing allegiance to the Naxalites, were killed by the Congress and police in collusion with the CPM during the Siddhartha Ray-rule in West Bengal. For sheer brutality, that carnage was unparalleled. The people of Marichjhanpi who refused to go to Dandakaranya, were massacred under Jyoti Basu's rule in West Bengal. During the governorship of Siddhartha Sankar Ray in the Punjab when Ribeiro was the police head, nearly 1,500 people went missing. In the state of Chhattisgarh in recent years, in the name of Salwa Judum, the state had killed and raped villagers with beast-like brutality in large numbers for a long period of time and forcibly confined them in concentration camps to crush the Maoist movement. People were butchered with savage-like ferocity, women raped and killed and many of them had their limbs cut off, houses burnt, property looted. The American GIs adopted this policy in Vietnam to crush the national liberation war. The Chhattisgarh state government, toeing the line of their imperialist masters, pursued the same policy to wipe out the heroic struggle waged by the Maoists there. The Jallianwallabagh massacre perpetrated by the British rulers, took a toll of more than 400 people of all ages, children included, and left thousands wounded in a matter of hours. The situation in each case has its own features. Whether this carnage at Nandigram would surpass them all in brutality, depth, magnitude, loss of lives,

nature of the terror, the trauma that it has caused only the near future will be able to tell. And the state-sponsored intimidation and terror continues even today. Today Buddha plays the role that General O'Dyer played in Jallianwallabagh many decades ago or that Mahendra Karma sought to play in Chhattisgarh. However, the irony of history is that the more the terror and oppression, the more the resistance of the people. Mahendra Karma has had a bitter taste of it in recent months. Buddhadev will also have to gobble the same bitter pill in near future

TERROR CANNOT KILL THE INDOMITABLE SPIRIT OF THE PEOPLE OF NANDIGRAM

Within 48 hours of the bloodbath of 14, March, the heroic people of Nandigram wrested control from the CPM. As many as twenty thousand villagers braving all odds stormed into Sonachura village on 16, March and recaptured the area. Men and women, armed with sticks and iron rods, chased out the CPM cadres. The paramilitary forces were restrained because of the public outcry that the 14, March carnage has caused. The police did not dare to

prevent the militant crowd which had been carrying the bodies of Supriya Jana and Ratan Das in a procession. The crowd pelted stones at the police; some of the policemen were seen pleading with the protesters, while the rest fled in fear. They recaptured Sonachura and brought back all those who were forced to leave, to their homes. At the time of going to press, they have declared their resolve to capture the two mouzas of Khejuri which fall under the SEZ plan and from which the CPM goons had been launching their attacks. Very recently, the government was compelled to declare that there would be no SEZ in Nandigram but did not say anything about it being set up in some other area.

While the people of Nandigram depended primarily on themselves to carry on the relentless battles, people of all walks of life rose in protest, and their protests took many forms. The opposition led by the TMC called a state-wide bandh on 16, March which was spontaneous and total. Intellectuals, teachers, youth and students, artists, theatre personalities, poets, singers and many other people organized demonstrations and demanded the resignation and even the hanging of

'Butcher Buddha'. Many well-known theatre artists and intellectuals such as Bibhas Chakraborty, Bratya Basu, Koushik Sen, Monoj Mitra resigned from the Natya Academy. Poet Sankha Ghosh resigned from Bangla Academy. Nabarun Bhattacharya returned the Rabindra prize to the WB government and declared that he would donate the money to the Nandigram relief fund. Well-known historians Sumit Sarkar and Tonika Sarkar also returned the Rabindra prize and donated the money to the people of Nandigram. Kabir Suman, through his public speeches and regular programmes in the TV channels assailed the WB government and its chief minister. An Artists' and Intellectuals' forum has also been formed with such eminent people as Tarun Sanyal, Aparna Sen, Saonli Mitra and others. The TASAM—forum of teachers and scientists—organized processions and many individual teachers, doctors contributed in their own ways to this battle against the SEZ and land acquisition. Students in Jadavpur University, Presidency College and many other institutions under the banner of such

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A THIRD BATTLE FRONT IS SET TO OPEN

AFTER Kalinganagar and Nandigram another battlefront against forced displacement is set to open in Jagatasinghpur district of Orissa. People from the villages of Navgaon, Gadakujang and Dhinkia are rising in revolt against the setting up of a heavy steel plant by the South Korean MNC, Posco, evicting people from their lands. The Navin Patnaik government of Orissa, signed an MOU with the above-mentioned MNC, promising to hand over 4004 acres of land from the above villages to it, among other things.

The people of these villages whose lives and livelihoods are at stake as their very fertile lands are being stolen from them by the government, only to gift them to an MNC, announced their firm resolve that come what may they will not allow the state to rob them of their lands. They organized themselves in to a "Posco Pratirodh Sangram Samiti" and are

making active preparations to defend their lands.

Taking cue from the victorious struggles of the people of Kalinganagar and Nandigram, they sealed all the entry and exit points of their villages and posted volunteer guards at these points. These volunteers also patrol the streets in batches of 8 to 10. They maintain round the clock vigil. Each family offers one resistance guard. They also dug up the roads at several points to prevent the entry of armed police into their villages. One of the resistance guards told the media that the check posts were set up to keep away the police, government and Posco officials. The leader of the organization told the media that "*we are prepared for sustained struggle against one of the largest foreign direct investment in history. There is no scope for a compromise as our positions are poles apart. We will never allow anyone to dispose us nor we are going to accept any rehabilitation package. We*

drew a blue print to face police action."

Their action plan, as reported by the media, will be two tiered. The police have to first face a children's army, Sishu Sagrama Samity. They also formed a women volunteers force to resist the police.

Meanwhile, the state government is making hectic preparations to seize the lands by force, creating a bloodbath. Nearly 16 of platoons armed police forces have been stationed in Gadakujang since April 18th, while some more platoons are stated to be on the way. The states' Director General of Police made the governments' intentions clear, threatening the villagers that they are acting in an unlawful manner, which will compel the police to use force. With Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's assurance to Navin Patnaik that his government will do everything in its power to see that Posco gets the land, the battle lines are clearly drawn.



SINGUR PEOPLE RESIST CPM'S SOCIAL-FASCIST TERROR

Rudra

SINGUR in the district of Hoogly in West Bengal could well turn out to be the watershed in the long history of democratic struggles in West Bengal. For the last few months it had grown in strength and the issue had already become a national issue. The people of Nandigram drew lessons from the Singur experience and initiated what has been acclaimed as a higher form of struggle. In these days when internet facilities are available to both the people and their enemies, there is no surprise in the fact that Singur issue turned out to be an international issue.

What is happening in Singur? About 997 acres of land are being acquired by the WB government by deceit and coercion from the villagers and handed over to Ratan Tata of the Tata big bourgeois group for the supposed construction solely of a motor car factory. The farmland earmarked for the Tata project stands alongside an arc of the Durgapur Expressway near the Ratanpur crossing with NH1. The area comprises six moujas such as Bajemelia, Beraberi, Khaser Bheri, Gopalnagar, Joymollar Bheri and Singher Bheri. They stand on the other side of the project

completing the expressway's arc into a circle.

The total number of legal owners in this area is 11,029. The land there is very fertile. Heavy rainfall leads to the flooding of vast areas every year, accumulation of alluvial deposits and increase in the fertility of the soil. There is a huge reservoir of water beneath the soil and on the surface there are ponds, canals and rivers. The whole zone, quite naturally, is a multi-crop zone, yielding grains and vegetables such as rice, potato, ladies' finger, cauliflower, jute and some other vegetables. It is a 3-4 crop zone and the people naturally are more prosperous than those living in many other areas. Some among the landowners are absentee landlords living in towns and cities while there are others who live in their own villages. Besides the landowners, there are also a large number of sharecroppers—both registered and unregistered—and a far large number of day-labourers, who are tribal women coming daily from outside and whose day-to-day existence depends on this land mass. Moreover, there are a number of van, rickshaw drivers who carry both men and cargo from one place to another. The whole

economy and society revolve round this land area. And any disturbance in the existing system would affect not just the landowning peasants, but also a far larger number of non-owners.

How did the WB-government forcibly acquire nearly 1000 acres of land from the owners of the soil in Singur? They took advantage of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894—an imperialist Act passed by the British colonial government to promote their commercial and imperial interests. This Act of 1894—the final form that it took after a series of amendments in 1824 (Bengal Regulation I of 1824), 1850 (Act I of 1850), 1857 (Act VI of 1857) and 1870—empowers the government to acquire land—held or owned by the peasants—for “public purpose” and for a non-state body like a company. The government has to give notice to the owners of the land and compensate them according to the “market value” of the property. The owners can challenge the acquisition, but the government can overrule them by citing the ground of “public purpose”. And once it is done, the acquisition itself cannot be questioned. Although the owners can challenge the

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forums as Chhatra Chhatri Sanhati Mancha, Forum for Arts Students or Independent Consolidation organized demonstrations in their campuses and took to the streets, marched through the streets shouting slogans against government barbarity in Nandigram and even formed street barricades along with teachers.

Meanwhile, the peasants of Singur got emboldened by the Nandigram struggle and under the banner of the Singur Krishi Jomi Raksha Committee (SKJRC) broke down portions of the boundary wall being constructed for the Tata car plant site. As reported in *The Statesman* of 19 March, 2007, the SKJRC have decided to go for “guerrilla warfare” to fox the state government and police. “*The movements in Singur and Nandigram have proved that unarmed villagers cannot score over an armed police force. We are looking at employing sustained guerrilla tactics for two months. This will definitely lower the morale of the policemen. The coup de*

grace will come with launching a massive attack on the fence around the project site and bringing it down”. In the meantime, the villagers of Deganga in North 24-Parganas have vowed to resist all attempts at land acquisition. Everything seems to go awry for the CPM since Singur.

The question is: wherefrom does the CPM draw its strength or why is it so compelled to carry on the land acquisition programme when everyone barring a few of its stooges stands against it? The answer seems to lie in a meeting between two top US intelligence officials—David Gordon, vice chairman, National Intelligence Council and Nancy Powell, ambassador and National Intelligence Officer, (South-east Asia) and American consul-general in Kolkata Henry V. Jardine with the home secretary, Prasadranjan Ray and the chief minister, Buddhadev Bhattacharya in the Writers' Buildings on 16 March. The discussion on a wide range of topics included the law and order situation arising out of resistance against land acquisition.

“*However, cooperation and coordination between intelligence agencies on topics of mutual interest also figured during the discussions*”, Prasadranjan Ray said (*The Hindustan Times*, 17 March 2007). Meetings such as these no doubt have sinister implications.

On 16 March, 2007, the Bengali daily, *Dainik Statesman* carried a news based on an intelligence source who wished to remain anonymous, that 150 Maoist guerrillas divided into five squads had entered Nandigram through jungles and mountains to fight beside the people against land acquisition. While news such as these are ludicrous and had no basis at all and are spread in order to justify the presence and stay of para-military forces in Nandigram for a longer period, it has also its silver lining. This is the clear admission of a hard truth. That is, the Maoists are the only force the people could look forward to for their liberation as all other attempts had failed.

PM

compensation decided by the government, the Act allows the government, in the case of urgency, to acquire the land even without waiting to hear any objection to the acquisition. In this Act, as in many other Acts, there is no room for people's choice. The Act of 1894 is cruel and takes no consideration of the sufferings, hardships, mental trauma and the cultural shock that the peasant has to undergo because of this uprooting from the soil. The WB chief minister, Buddhadev Bhattacharjee who occasionally expresses anti-imperialist verbiage in public rallies to dupe the people, utilized the very same Act passed by the colonial rulers, to serve the comprador Tata house. Realizing that any direct hand-over of land to the Tatas would lead to a public furor and legal complications, he tried to deceive the people by acquiring the land in the name of the West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation (WBIDC) for "public purpose" and then hand over the same land to Ratan Tata, whether on lease or on any other term on which the chief minister kept mum. Thereby, he has made a mockery of the Right to Information Act passed recently by the central government. While being questioned about the terms of the contract with the Tatas, Buddhadev, in a truly fascist manner, bluntly replied that that was a "trade secret". What that "trade secret" was, was revealed in *The Statesman* on 20-1-2007. The "trade secrets" are as follows.

It is clear from the letter of Dr. Sabyasachi Sen, principal secretary of WB's commerce & industries department to the HIDCO (Housing & Infrastructure Development Corporation) dt. 12, October, 2006 that both Buddhadev Bhattacharjee and Sabyasachi Sen are "committed to provide" for the Singur small-car-project "upfront infrastructural assistance" possibly worth over Rs.160 crore. The amount is equivalent to the 16% excise exemption that the Tata Motors Ltd (TML) would have got if it had set up its small-car plant in Uttaranchal—a state that enjoys zero excise duty benefit—instead of in WB. This commitment for "significant support in the form of upfront infrastructural assistance" was made by the chief minister "to make the TML investment in WB attractive". Buddhadev's commitment also included a virtual gift of 650 acres of prime

land to the Tata Housing Development Company (THDC) in the Rajarhat area and the adjoining Rajarhat New Town area, for building an IT and residential township along with WBIDC as a partner. The "gift" has been made with the idea that the profit that THDC and WBIDC would make here will be used for subsidizing the manufacturing cost of the first series of the Rs.1 lakh cars to be made by TML at Singur. The Tatas had sought this "gift" so that they are able to provide a cross-subsidy for keeping the cost of their first series of 1,00,000 cars within the Rs.1 lakh price target. This "gift", incidentally, is over and above the Rs.140 crore that Buddhadev has already committed from the state exchequer to pay compensation to about 12,000 peasants whose 1,000 acres of highly fertile multi-crop land have been acquired for the car project. Dr. Sen made it clear that the government made such behind-the-scene-dealings with the Tatas as seeking budgetary support for "infrastructural assistance" would attract legislative scrutiny and censure by the CAG because providing such exclusive assistance to any private company's project is against the declared policy of the left Front government.

This is not the end of the story. The money for the project is to be obtained from a IT township complex to be developed jointly by WMIDC and THDC on 50 crore acres in the Rajarhat New Town at HIDCO's expense and another 600 acres in an area in Rajarhat other than the New Town area. Remember, WBIDC is not at all a partner in the Singur project, and its involvement in it was restricted only to make available land to TML to avoid the costlier route of land acquisition for a private company as provided under chapter 7 of the Act of 1894. "Of the over 1600 acres of land to be given to the Tatas in Singur, Rajarhat and BRADA (Bhangar Rajarhat Area Development Authority) areas, only 300 to 350 acres at Singur will be needed for the car factory. The rest will be utilized for real estate purposes and earning a high profit by the Tatas", a senior state government official said.

These, in a nutshell, are the terms of the behind-the-scene-deal made between a master and a stooge in the name of "industrialization". Thousands of people are to be evicted from their land (which

they regard as their mother), habitat, culture, society and economy by the 'Marxist' chief minister of WB to enable a shark, Ratan Tata by name, to devour people and mint millions.

In a typical Goebblesian way, the WB government through its main media-guide, *Ananda Bazar Patrika* and the CPM party's mouthpiece *Ganashakti* went on declaring from September to November 2006, to make the false appear as true, that more and more people were giving their consent to acquisition and receiving cheques as compensation for the sale of their own plots of land to the government. These statements, false as they were, were refuted by the farmers themselves in their rallies as also in their written representations to the Chinsurah DM that they would not sell their lands to make way for industry. *The Telegraph* in its 14-7-06 issue reported that around 600 farmers owning 500 acres of land, submitted their documents related to their lands at the DM office. The *Krishi Jami Bachao Committee* formed to oppose acquisition of agricultural land in Singur, also refuted government and the CPM party claims. After prolonged delay, the WB government finally came out with a *Status Report on Singur* in which it claimed that till 4-12-06, 952 acres of land were being willingly given away by the landowners of Singur to the government. That such statements are based on deceit and falsehood is attested by several public forums such as the Krishi Jami Bachao Committee, Gana Unnayan o Jana Adhikar Sangram Samiti, Sanhati Udyog, APDR, Utsa Manush, Nagarik Mancha, Chhatra Chhatri Sanhati Mancha, Teachers and Scientists Against Mal-development, as also university teachers, students intellectuals, youth and activists both from within West Bengal and outside, to name only a few.

Sanhati Udyog, "a forum of people's organizations, citizens' rights, cultural organizations, little magazines and concerned citizens in support of the farmers' movement to save farmland in Singur", Kolkata, made a survey of 400 households consisting of 335 landholders and 65 landless peasants spread over all the affected moujas, whose total area comprised 261.49 acres. Of these households, only 20 landholders holding

24.36 acres were willing to part with/or had already parted with their land, while 315 households holding 237.19 acres were unwilling to do so. The reasons cited for handing over land were family pressure/other business/cannot fight CPM & the Tatas/single-crop land. On the other hand, the reasons cited for being unwilling to hand over were: what will we eat/forefather's property/cash will not last/too many dependents/will wait till the last moment ('People's Survey' Facts from the Field, Sanhati Udyog, November 2-20, 2006).

STATE TERROR AND PEOPLE'S RESISTANCE

This land-grab movement of the WB government did not go unchallenged. The peasants of Singur refused to be cowed down by this threat, and this ushered in a process of prolonged resistance that made Singur truly the watershed in the long history of democratic struggle of the people of West Bengal.

The news of the land acquisition bid in Singur spread like wild fire. The representatives of the Tatas were prevented from making investigations in the area on 25, May 2006 by a large number of villagers, many of whom were women. In fact, women in a big way were conspicuous by their presence in the whole movement. On 29, May, when the industries minister, Mr. Nirupan Sen addressed a gathering in defence of their 'industrialization', about 1000 peasants organized black-flag demonstrations against him. On 1, June, several thousand peasants gave a deputation to the BDO office in Singur with bullocks and agricultural implements. Many women who joined it were carrying brooms in their hands. In fact, brooms in the hands of women became the symbol of protest in Singur. The Singur Krishiraksha Committee that was in the forefront of struggle comprised of TMC, SUCI and some other political parties as also some democratic organizations—all of whom worked under this broad forum to oppose land acquisition attempts made by the government. The movement gradually took a militant turn. On 13 and 17 July 2006, several thousand peasants held a spirited march to the office of the DM at Chunchura to register their written objection against

land acquisition. In that rally, women between 14 and 70 years of age took an active part in large numbers. They raised slogans, held their heads high and carried banners of different types all the way to their destination. On 24, July, they resorted to the blockade of the Durgapur Express Road, one of the main arteries of communication. On 18, August the fascist WB government issued a formal notification for grabbing the land from the peasants. The peasants in protest totally boycotted the government hearing on 22, August. On 25, August the BDO attempted to hand over the formal notice of acquisition to the peasants, but failed. Sensing that the situation might get worse for them, the government officials withdrew their camp. Meanwhile, demonstrations had been going on almost every day. On 1st and 2nd September when the district officials went to distribute the final notice to the owners, they had to face demonstrations at their office, in which women took the leading role. Ultimately, the officials were forced to retreat without any success.

What took place on the night of 25, September beggars description. At the Singur BDO office, government officials started distributing cheques to those who were willing, of course under heavy police and RAF protection. The people gheraoed the office and demonstrated. The TMC leader Mamata Banerjee joined them. At about 1.30 on 25-26 Sept night, Buddhadev's police, to whom any opposition to their deeds was unbearable, suddenly and without any prior warning whatsoever, started beating up all those demonstrators. Hundreds of women, men, old men and women, children were attacked mercilessly, the attackers tore off the women's garments, molested them in every conceivable manner. Many women had to jump into nearby ponds and were forced to remain there throughout the night to escape the police attack. Nobody present there was spared. Mayarani Kolay, a woman above 50 years, had to have her head stiched in seven places. Even a three-year-old baby in its mother's lap was not spared from the rod of Buddhadev's police. The whole attack was the handiwork not just of the police and para-military forces, but also of the CPM hoodlums. These hoodlums, according to available reports,

were dressed up in RAF uniforms and actively involved in the attack. Many wounded men and women—arrested on that day and taken to Chandannagar police station, were left all alone for long hours without any treatment. Rajkumar Bhul, a youth, was beaten up so mercilessly that he succumbed to his wounds on the next day. Rajkumar was the first martyr of the state-sponsored terror in Singur.

However, the murderous attacks by the state machinery and CPM henchmen could not cow down the people. On 27th they organized another protest procession in Singur and the opposition parties called a general strike on 9, October in West Bengal. In such an atmosphere of state terror and the terrible prospect of displacement from their ancestral habitats and land, the Durga Puja festival (WB's main festival) could not be held in Singur this year. The day, 3rd of October, was observed as a no-cooking-day (a traditional form of mass protest which is called *arandhan*) in Singur and throughout the month of October the people resorted to various forms of protest. For the first time after many years, a unity was forged between the village and the cities and a series of demonstrative programmes were held in Kolkata and neighbouring areas. *Sanhati Udyog* consisting of a number of democratic and civil rights organizations was formed in Kolkata and this forum sent its representatives to Singur to register their solidarity with the people of Singur. In fact, hardly a day went by which was not witness to any such protest programme. On 27th October in Gopalnagar, a people's commission hearing was held in which Mahasweta Devi and members of various mass organizations were present. The farmers of Singur joined in large numbers to register their opposition to the state attempt at land grab.

The CPM leader Biman Bose did not sit idle; in his habitual filthy language he was pouring venom against the people and the opposition and raised the bogey of 'outsiders'. What perturbed the ruling party and the so-called left-front government was that they were beginning to feel that the façade on which they had built their empire was gradually being eroded by this popular storm. They sent their armed cadres to crush the opposition by hook or by crook. The democratic

people in the urban areas stood up in defence of the rural people and showed black flags when Biman Bose & Co addressed a gathering in Singur on 29, November with van-loads of outsiders. On the very next day, a mammoth procession was organized by the *Krishhi Jomi Raksha Committee*. In order to thwart this gathering from taking place the state took recourse to another repressive measure; it imposed section 144 which prevented more than four people to move in Singur together. Incidentally, this section was imposed in this part of West Bengal for an all-time record of 40 days without any break from end November 2006 to early January 2007. It was imposed again in early February and continued for some days until the Calcutta High Court made bitter criticism of state policy and condemned it as a misuse of power. The imposition of section 144 was made necessary in order to facilitate the process of land acquisition with fencing and then the raising of walls on all sides.

On 2, December, 2006, the people of Singur, nay, West Bengal, were witness to the most barbarous attack on the people recorded in recent years (until the March 14th massacre at Nandigram) by Buddhadev's police force and the CPM hoodlums. According to eye-witness accounts and media reports, as many as 20,000 RAF, police and para-military forces gathered in Singur to crush the unarmed resistance of about 15,000 people on that day. The ratio between the people and the police was clearly in violation of what the state's law permits. Instead of the ratio, in such cases, being 6 persons to 1 policeman, it stood at 1 person to 1 plus policeman. It is clear that they were ready to take any chances. The resistance, whatever the form, should be crushed at all costs. It was an unequal encounter, no doubt. Thousands of unarmed men and women of all ages assembled at a field close to Beraberi Purbapara Khaser Bheri and Uttar Bajmelia and defiantly marched hand-in-hand with slogans that rent the air. Even though they were without any arms, they were rebels for a just cause. They showed a resolve unseen in recent years in this long-suffering state of West Bengal that, come what may, they would never give up their lands. Buddhadev's police force did what exactly they were expected to do. A

faithful lackey of imperialism and the comprador big bourgeoisie, the CPM chief minister of West Bengal, through the state police, directed the combat forces to crush the resistance mercilessly, beat the people up brutally, so that never again in future could they think of resistance to the will of the State. APDR reports that a student of class VI took a sling and marbles to fight against the police. A small village boy carried with him a packet full of chilli powder which he thought he would be able to hand over to his aunt so that she could throw it in the eyes of the police when attacked.

What happened on that day was seen at least partially on the screen of some TV channels. Most of the print media and TV channels, who had all along been busy projecting Buddhadev as the symbol of 'development' — made no coverage of it at all. On the other hand some newspapers gave wide coverage of the barbarity perpetrated by the CPM-led government. The armed forces attacked the people with their batons, made the women particular targets of attack and molestation, rubber bullets were fired indiscriminately, tear gas smoke filled the air, windows of peasants' huts were broken and women and girls were dragged out and tortured barbarously, paddy stores (gola) and timber — the main source of food— were burnt down and filthy languages of every conceivable type were used by the police forces of the 'more developed left-front government'. On hearing of these brutalities, some civil rights organizations rushed to the spot; they were literally lifted, arrested (though they called it detention, which of course was illegal as there is no provision for detention in the penal code) and then sent to Kolkata. Biman Bose, Buddhadev again raised the bogey of 'outsider'. The urban people who went to Singur to express their solidarity with the tortured people of Singur, were described as 'outsiders'; but to Buddhadev and his henchmen, Ratan Tata, armed forces and the armed CPM cadres were not 'outsiders', but Singur's sons of the soil. This provoked much ridicule from the intellectuals, artists and many other people. Binoy Kongar, the CPM leader, who recently earned much notoriety because of his comments during the Nandigram rising, was forced to stammer in the face of

questions put to him by the Kolkata TV channel whether he too was an outsider in his early days when he had to work underground and move from one place to another for organizational work.

At the end of the day, Buddhadev defended the police action by saying that they had to employ mild force as acid bulbs and bombs were thrown on them. The chief minister, like a professional liar that he truly is, stated in Kolkata that in the face of instigation by a handful of 'outsiders', the police had to act, but that they acted with considerable restraint. On that fateful day, 49 persons were arrested of whom six were from other areas and the rest, villagers of Singur. The arrested included 18 women and 31 men. Any comment is superfluous.

If Buddhadev thought he would be able to bend the peoples backs by unleashing police and cadre terror, then he was thoroughly mistaken. All West Bengal rose in protest against what the state machinery did on 2, December, 2006. It developed into a real people's movement. The students of Jadavpur University, Presidency College and some other institutions barricaded the streets. Opposition parties organized demonstrations in many places. The intellectuals called a mass protest meeting in College Street which was attended by many people from different walks of life. Mamata Banerjee, MP, TMC continued her indefinite fast at Dharmatolla under the banner of *Krishhi Jami Raksha Committee*. Teachers and Scientists formed their own forum on the Singur issue— TASAM (Teachers & Scientists Against Mal-development). The peasants of Singur overcame their initial setback and commenced their battle. Many villages initiated a programme of mass hunger strike. Black flags were raised atop many rural homes. The farmers submitted their memorandums in the Chunchura court testifying that they had not given up their land, though the CPM leadership claimed to the contrary. Meanwhile a student's organization—RSF—broke down the glass-panes and damaged other furniture in the Tata Lexpo shop in the heart of Kolkata in protest against the state land acquisition policy.

As all the previous repressive methods proved futile, the CPM hoodlums and the state machinery sought to apply other

methods to crush the resistance of the people. They decided to kill Tapashi Malik, who was in the forefront of the struggle. When in the early morning of 18 December, she went out of her house to answer the nature's call, she was killed and burnt. Local people have a strong suspicion that she was raped before being killed and burnt. All evidence leading to her death were destroyed by the CPM and local police force. She was attacked, raped and killed by the night-guards who were CPM cadres in collusion with the police. (See also box on page 11)

SPECIFIC CASES OF ATROCITY AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN IN THE HANDS OF THE POLICE AND CPM HOODLUMS

Paschimbanga Khet Majoor Samiti interviewed some women who were subjected to various kinds of sexual harassment. While some among them agreed to relate, many others felt ashamed to do so. Maya Das of Beraberri related how the male police force entered her house, tore off the clothes of women and used filthy languages that she could not describe. Rupa Kohle of Beraberri was badly beaten up. When she started running into her house, two policemen threw their lathis and grabbed her. They pressed her breasts and tore her clothes on the streets. Other policemen standing around were cheering and encouraging them. The police goondas dragged her by her hair, called her a whore and threatened to rape her. They had also beaten up her aunt. Another victim was Asta Rani Kohle. When she went to resist the erection of a fencing, she was beaten on the breast, vagina and belly. They called her a 'whore' and threatened to rape her. Sanju Das had her house broken, glasses, TV and all. Buddhadev's police beat her, her parents-in-law, son and daughter. They taunted them and threatened to rape. The attackers kept showing lathis to them, saying that they would put those lathis inside their vaginas, if they tried to resist. Krishna Bagh went to join the sit-in-demonstration with her 2 year plus baby in her arms on 25, September. She was hit by the police, her sleeping girl was dragged from her arms and the police kicked her, pulled her hair and tore off her

clothes. Many of the attackers were drunk. The women were dragged by the hair and pushed into the police car and subjected to all types of verbal abuse. They threatened to rape them. Bharati Das has related how CPM cadres dressed as policemen beat her inside her house. Those ruffians must have been from nearby villages; otherwise they would not have known her name and her son's name. They called her *chutia*, *haramjadi*, *shuorer baccha* (pig). One policeman put his hand inside her petticoat from the waist and dragged her by it and kept pushing his lathi in her belly. Anuradha Talwar, Swapna Tripathi, Ashtabala Maity, Namita Gayen, Jamila Khatun and Jaba Murmu of the *Shramajivee Mahila Samiti* and Juthika Pal of the *All India Mahila Sanskritik Sanghathana* had been protesting against land acquisition outside the acquired area in Beraberri, Singur on 4-2-07 when the police force arrested them using physical force. Male policemen injured Anuradha on her right hand. Juthika Pal was brutally grasped by her arms and legs and thrown on the ground. Ashtabal Maity was dragged by her hair. Swapna Tripathi was kicked on her waist and dragged by her hair. Everybody was physically violated and wounded to some degree. They were also verbally abused and threatened to be raped. Debashis Ghosh, the OC DIB, Hooghli district and Asit Pal, ASP, Hooghli even gestured with their lathi saying that they would have the same fate as Tapashi Malik. Two police officers were specifically mentioned as the perpetrators of such barbarity. One is Kalyan Mukherjee, SDPO, Channagar, who not only used foul language as mentioned in the testimonies, but also instigated other policemen to do so. The other one is the notorious Harmeen Preet Singh, the IG of Police and the prime accused in the Bhikari Paswan case (Bhikari was a struggling jute-mill worker who was picked up by Singh, tortured and then killed) facing trial for 13 years, and the main perpetrator of atrocity against Raj Kumar Bhool, who succumbed to police torture.

In fact, police brutality is everywhere the same. Abuse and rape of women are integral parts of police torture, either in the police lock-up or outside. In fact, there is nothing to be surprised at such happenings. This is the culture of the West Bengal police, fed and nourished by the

cultural doyan-cum-chief minister Buddhadev Bhattacharjee. What the police of the Congress-led Siddhartha-led government did in the 1970s was being done by the 'Marxist' Buddhadev-led government today. All this strengthen our resolve to get rid of this man-eating system altogether that generates such beasts from among the people.

RESPONSE FROM AN UNEXPECTED QUARTER

The forcible acquisition of land and police brutality have provoked some criticism even from the partners of the 'left-front' government such as the RSP, Forward Block and the CPI. However, very recently, criticism was expressed by a section of the police force itself. The *TOI* in its 8-1-07 issue carried a news item quite unexpected. In Suri, district Birbhum, the "go-as-you-like" event in the annual sports of the police department created an embarrassing situation for the district police administration. A minor girl posed as *Singurer Garib Chashir Ma* (The Poor Mother of Farmers of Singur). A youth acted as *Nandigram Hatabhaga Garib Chashi* (The Ill-fated Poor Farmer of Nandigram) and a lady constable, Mousumi Roy Mallik, attached to Bolpur police station, described herself as *Singurer Gramer Chashir Bou* (The Wife of a Poor Farmer of Singur). The lady constable declared over the microphone, "You see, we are innocent housewives of Singur. But they did not spare us. We are tortured and feel helpless. We do not know what to do and where to go to". The youth, who acted as the farmer of Nandigram, carried a dagger in his hand. The event clearly indicated that a section of the police is sympathetic to the agitators of Singur and Nandigram.

At present, the Tatas have started erecting a wall all along the boundary of the land grabbed by Buddhadev's police on their behalf. Meanwhile, the WB government has declared that it will grab other areas also in Nandigram, Shalboni, Baruipur, Dankuni, Kharagpur etc. and create SEZ (Special Economic Zones) under the Salim, the upstart capitalist from Indonesia. SEZ which, in reality, is a Slave Economic Zone or Special Exploitation Zone, has been discussed at some length in some back issues of *People's March* and

so we are not going into it in this article. This much can be said that for a period of more than six weeks from 4, January, the people of Nandigram have been successfully resisting entry of the paramilitary forces and the armed CPM cadres with such mass support that was unthinkable in an area which was till recently a strong bastion of the CPM party itself. They have cut roads, destroyed bridges, raised all sorts of obstructions on the entry of police jeeps and armed CPM ruffians and running a parallel administration in Nandigram (See article in same issue).

The first phase of the Singur struggle is over. The Tatas have started construction work at the site. That, of course, does not mean that the future would be smooth for them. Even this first phase of the Singur struggle will definitely be regarded as a watershed in the history of democratic struggle of West Bengal. After a long time, Singur had definitely united the people of the city and the village; the Hindus and Muslims have joined hands; women are conspicuous by their presence in large numbers. It was an unarmed movement no doubt. This,

probably, was its greatest limitation. The people of Nandigram learnt from the Singur experience, fought with arms in hand and successfully beat off all attempts at encroachment into their zones and finished off at least some armed CPM goondas who dared to attack. Let us hail the heroic Singur peasants and all those who fought and are still fighting by their side. Let a revolutionary storm rise up and send imperialist forces, domestic compradors and slaves like Buddha-Biman-Nirupam-Binoy-Laksham and others to their graves.

PM

RAPE & BRUTAL MURDER OF TAPASI

TAPASI had gone out of her house to answer nature's call early on Monday. "Later, the villagers found the half-burnt body of Tapasi. She was raped, throttled and then her body was set on fire. Policemen and CPM workers can't deny responsibility as Tapasi's body was found inside the already-fenced area earmarked for the Tata factory. Tapasi slept with her niece Aparna Dhara on Sunday night. Around 4:30 am, she told Aparna that she was going out to relieve herself. "This is usual for her. For, she woke up early, to cook for her father and brothers, who leave for work early in the morning. But on Monday morning, she didn't return even after 90 minutes," Aparna said. By then, a few villagers from Khanserbheri coming to Bajemelia Paschimpara, noticed something burning, barely inside the fence."When we came here, we smelled burning flesh. The remains — only the face and the limbs were visible — was lying in a five-foot long pit".

Tapasi's father said, "She was murdered. I can't fathom who'd do it. I don't suspect anyone." He said both he and Tapasi had been opposing the land acquisition. The mother said, "She (Tapasi) was raped before she was murdered. Why else would anyone burn her so savagely? She had no enemies. We are poor people who survive on our meager earnings."

Twelve hours before her body was found in flames in Singur's fenced area on Dec 18, 2006, Tapasi Malik had been pushing a crowd of young land-acquisition protesters to sing louder.

"*Jokhoni gaan gaaibe, gala phatiye, jore, bhalo kore gaaibe* (when you sing, never hold back, give it all)," the 18-year-old urged the young boys and girls at Sunday's sit-in, which she had taken the lead in organising.

Members of the Krishi Jomi Banchao Committee, the pivot of the protests in Singur where land has been acquired for a Tata Motors factory, said the words of the murdered girl reflected her spirit. Without her efforts, the six-hour show from 10 am on the day at Baro Haath Kalitala off Bajemelia — an effort to get local students and youths to join the protest — would have been a non-starter, committee member Ganesh Chakrabarty said. In Beraberi, Gopalnagar and Bajemelia Tapasi was a hero in the war against the government. Ganesh Chakrabarty, who sees the Tatas' "dream project" as a harbinger of doom, said: "Tapasi was a bundle of energy. She mobilised contacts in other villages — she was a natural organiser."

Tapasi had dropped out of the local Beraberi High School after Class VIII because father Monoranjan could not afford the fees. Still, she was the most educated in her family. "She did the household chores, helping mother Molina. She got up early to prepare food for her teenage brothers Surojit and Subhas, who work as carpenters in Calcutta," said Saraswati Mitra, a relative. Her debut as an activist came the day Tata officials were stopped near a club, Ujjal Sangha, in Bajemelia, yards from her home. On September 25, she joined the gherao of the BDO's office with her mother. Then followed a trip to Calcutta to attend a

Trinamul Congress meeting. "Back in Singur, Tapasi went about liaising with the committee's top leaders, including Nayantara Dhara, who wrote the lyrics for the protest songs," said Haradhan Patra of Gopalnagar.

The murder of Tapasi Malik has further angered the school students who have been fighting against forcible acquisition of land since July.

The numerical strength of the Singur Krishi Jomi Raksha Sahayak Chhatra Committee, loyal to the Singur Krishi Jomi Raksha Committee, has gone up from 35 in July to 600 in March 2007. About 400 girls and 200 boys from schools in the affected moujas have joined the SKJRSCC, said Prakash Hambir, a Class VI student of Beraberi Suryanarayan Memorial School. The SKJSCC's chief advisor and Hooghly district secretary of the Democratic Students' Organisation, Mr Dipak Singha, said the girls, from Beraberi Suryanarayan Memorial High School, Daulatpur-Doluigacha School, Gopalnagar Harharia High School and Gopalnagar Kumud Ranjan High School, were organising rallies separately. Students of the primary schools in the moujas too are active, he said. Bajemelia Dakshinpara's Tushar Ghosh, a Class VIII student of Beraberi Suryanarayan Memorial High School, said: "We are fighting as our parents' livelihood is in danger and in spite of our teachers' stiff resistance. There were only 35 of us when our outfit was formed on 26, July with a rally promising to help the local farmers' movement. There are now 600 of us," he said.

PM

May Day 2007 Call:

INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT ARISE TO LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST THE UNPRECEDENTED OFFENSIVE OF IMPERIALISM, PARTICULARLY US IMPERIALISM

Arvind

ON the occasion of this May Day we find the world been hurtled to new wars by the aggressive designs of US imperialism. After Iraq and Afghanistan now Iran is on the verge of being attacked and open threats are being given out to Syria and Lebanon.

This May Day also witnesses the world being polarised, as never before, into extremes of the rich and poor — both within every country and between the capitalist/imperialist countries on the one hand and the backward countries on the other. In addition, the contradictions amongst the imperialist powers and their lackeys are growing, and the scramble for markets and sources of raw materials (particularly oil and gas) are intensifying; this is particularly to be seen between the US on the one side and the other imperialists competing amongst themselves to oust the US's prime position. Finally, the imperialists are seeking to shift the burden of the crisis on to the backs of the people of the backward countries through their policies of imperialist globalisation and the most ruthless robbery of these countries since World War II.

In short all the major contradictions in the world are intensifying; a result of the growing crisis within the imperialist economies of the world, particularly that of US imperialism. With this, we witness a growing militarisation of the economies of the world, with the US in the lead, whose military budget is today half of the entire world's military expenditure.

India too is caught in this cesspool of the imperialist crisis with the Indian rulers totally bowing at the feet of the imperialists, particularly that of the US. These Indian agents, while enriching themselves, are facilitating the gigantic loot by the imperialists which is causing havoc in our country and to the lives of the oppressed masses. The ruthlessness of this offensive is to be seen in the viciousness displayed by the rulers to

implement their imperialist-dictated policies of pushing mining interests, SEZs, infrastructural projects, et al. To do so they will not stop at killing, murder and mayhem..... killing 12 at Kalinganagar and injuring over 50 to serve the Tatas; massacring over 200 in Nandigram to serve the interests of the Indonesian mafia group, Salim; and killing over 300 in Bastar under the banner of Salwa Judum to clear the land of tribals in order that Tatas, Ruias and host of other mining interests can rob the rich mineral wealth of the region. All these massacres have been accompanied by brutalities of a medieval kind, including gang-rapes, mutilating limbs, and utilising the most brutal tortures. Conditions within the country have probably never been as acute in post-1947 India.

Besides, we see both in India and abroad the worst possible extremes between the rich and the poor. The income gaps have never been as acute as they are today.

In India on the one hand, the number of billionaires are growing at a pace faster than in any other country of the world, while on the other hand roughly 20,000 are being pushed to suicide each year. Today, India has the largest number of billionaires in Asia; even more than Japan. The combined worth of just the 36 Indian billionaires was \$191 billion; equivalent to one-fourth of India's entire GDP. On the other hand 80% of India's population live under \$2 per day; 38% of our children are stunted and 46% are underweight; and the overall conditions are worse than most countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

Even at the world level we find that the 946 billionaires have a combined wealth of \$3.5 trillion or 5 times India's GDP. In the world's major imperialist country, the US, the disparities have reached levels that existed during the Great Depression, and continue to grow. While middle incomes have risen by 11% since 1980, the incomes of the top 0.1% rose four-fold in the same period. In 2005 while the top 1% income rose 14% that of the bottom 90% actually

declined. An estimated 30 million workers have lost their full time jobs over the last two decades and today permanent jobs are scarce.

On this May Day we find such are the conditions in the world where the oppressed are being deprived on a scale rarely seen before in order to fill the coffers of the rich and powerful. Let us now delve in greater depth into the situation to see in which direction events are unfolding so that the proletariat of the respective countries of the world can prepare for the oncoming battles.

INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

The main aspect of the world situation is the growing economic crisis and, as a result, the increasing imperialist contention and frenzied military preparations, particularly of the US.

Economic Stagnation

After the severe recession of 2001 and some halting recovery since, the imperialist economies are once again being hurtled towards recession, crisis and decline. Today, while Europe and Japan continue with their state of economic stagnation, the US has once again gone into decline, and the only economy that has shown some new buoyancy amongst the imperialist countries is that of Russia. China continues its economic expansion threatening markets of the imperialist countries. The backward countries of the world (whatever may be their 'high' growth rates) are being robbed by the imperialists on a scale not seen in the post WWII period. The much-hyped high growth rates of the countries like India, Brazil, etc are nothing but the result of high capital inflows that help service the imperialist industries and that of their local compradors.

The world economy has been facing the typical crisis of over-production. For example the world auto industry was able to sell only 74% of the vehicles made last

year and losses have been piling up of the major US auto manufacturers. Steel global excess was 20%, at 200 million tones. In telecommunications the utilisation rate of telecom networks is around 3% and of undersea cables around 13%. Even in China, it is estimated that after the mid-1990s 70% of China's industries are plagued by over-capacity and average profit rates have plunged by half.

The crisis has once again led to a massive frenzy of Mergers and Acquisitions with the larger/stronger companies swallowing up smaller/weaker companies. It has reached a gigantic \$1,130 billion in just the first quarter of the current year. In Europe too this trend is to be seen with buy-out deals having increased from \$108 billion in 2002 to \$542 billion in 2006.

In the last few years GDP growth rate in Europe has been stagnating at about 1.5%. It is unable to come out of this near recessionary-level growth rates. In addition Britain now faces high rates of inflation, which is the highest since the last 16 years. This has had its political implications with Europe becoming less assertive in its political contention with the US in the past year. In addition the inability of the EU to adopt their new Constitution (with two countries voting against it) their unity is temporarily effected, particularly affecting their ability to stand up to the US.

Japan which was afflicted by over a decade of negative growth and deflation finally witnessed minor partial growth for a year. But this was not due to a growth of internal demand but due to growing demand from China. But in Sept. 2006 it once again slipped into deflation when spending recorded a plunge of 6% compared to the previous year.

In the US there was once again open talk of the economy going into recessionary conditions with housing in decline and the housing bubble expected to burst any time (which had sustained the growth after the burst of the IT bubble). Industrial production recorded a zero growth in Aug. 2006 and negative growth in September. Spending has been dropping and business inventories piled up in Jan. 2007. Corporate profits fell in the last quarter of 2006. The March 07 fall in the stock exchange index was a result of the looming fears of defaults on home loans and poor retail sales for Feb. 2007.

The US while it continues to remain the biggest economy in the world, soaking up commodities from all over the world, it is exceedingly fragile and is steadily losing its ability to affectively compete worldwide. The share of the US global wealth has been declining since the 1970s. The external debt of the US now stands at a gigantic \$ 6 trillion (its total debt is an unbelievable \$ 70 trillion). To balance these huge and increasing debts the US is dependent on the large inflow of foreign funds (particularly from China and Japan) which is threatened by the continuous weakening of the US dollar. The dollar has lost 20% over the past five years vis-à-vis the euro and now stand at its lowest ever at \$1.36 to the euro. It is estimated that the US has already spent a massive \$3 trillion on the Iraq war. And with a defence budget accounting for half the entire world's military spending the US economy is more and more based on the powerful military-industrial complex, which is the backbone of the Bush administration.

Russia's new assertion is primarily linked to the temporary boom in its economy due to the hike in oil and gas prices. Today it is the second largest exporter of oil in the world and the largest producer of gas. It is seeking to form a gas OPEC between Russia, Iran and Qatar (which between them account for 60% of world oil) and Venezuela, Algeria and the Central-Asian gas exporting countries. Russia is also making a big economic push into many backward countries even outside its traditional sphere of influence, particularly with a big jump in sales of military hardware. An example of this is Putin's big push in Latin America, particularly Venezuela. Chavez has signed a \$ 3 billion military deal with Russia for military aircraft; Russia will set up two manufacturing units for AK rifles and ammunition; and further plans are there for the purchase of Russian submarines, air-defence missile systems, infantry fighting equipment, etc. Gazprom will help Venezuela develop its huge but largely untapped natural gas reserves. Gazprom will also take part in the construction of the 8,000 kms gas pipeline to link Venezuela's gas to Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay. Putin recently said that investment in Venezuela could reach "hundreds of million, billions

of dollars". Gazprom is also negotiating \$3 billion investments in Bolivia..

China has already ousted Japan as the largest economy in Asia and its markets have swept most of south and SE Asia. China has also made a big economic push in Africa; the highly successful China-Africa Summit was witness to the growing economic ties. China is also taking a 40% share in Venezuela's heavy crude project; after Chavez 'nationalised' oil production, stripping US corporates of their majority shareholdings.

The crisis in the imperialist countries is resulting in even more ruthless loot of the economies and raw materials from the backward countries in the name of liberalization, privatization and globalization. The most extreme form of this can be seen in the Iraq puppet government's recent approval of a new petroleum law to hand over the country's most lucrative oil and gas fields to the MNCs. {It should not be forgotten that the US, in 1965, assassinated the Iraq president when he tried to nationalize the country's oil and gas reserves} Now, 6½ lakh lives lost since 2003 and millions earlier have been lost in IraQ and the country devastated in order to hand over this rich wealth to US multinationals. Similar policies, to varying degrees, are being adopted all over the world; if the local regimes are compliant, the policies are imposed 'peacefully', if not, it is imposed through bombs and missiles.

The above economic scenario is resulting in growing economic tension, not only for markets, but also a desperate and ruthless scramble to dominate energy resources of the world. The US is finding it more and more difficult to sustain its worldwide supremacy. Pushed to the wall, it is resorting to increasing military adventurism to maintain its world hegemony. This goes under the banner of 'war on terror'.

War Clouds & Growing Contention

Not only is the US bogged down in both Iraq and Afghanistan, unable neither to win the war nor to retreat, Israel faced a resounding defeat, for the first time ever, at the hands of the Hizbollah. Yet, given the needs of the military-industrial complex and geo-political compulsions, it

seeks to continue its war mania with an impending attack on Iran. It is also building up its own hi-tech arsenal and is promoting wars even in other parts of the world to enforce pliant regimes.

Us War Preparations

For the first time ever the US plans to deploy an anti-missile base outside the US by the setting up of the missile defence system in East Europe. This too it says is only a beginning and plans to expand this continuously. The US has also enhanced its first strike capability, installing the high-precision multiple war heads on the Minutemen ICBMs, equipping its nuclear submarines with more accurate and deadly Trident II D-5 missiles, and fitting its B-52 bombers with nuclear-armed cruise missiles. It is also setting up military bases in Bulgaria and Romania. In Jan. 07, the Pentagon relocated the Cobra Dame Floating Radar (biggest in the world) from Hawaii to the Alent Island, within 300 kms of Russia. It is also seeking to establish another Radar station in the Caucasus.

Besides it is instigating wars throughout the world, utilising its client states like Israel, Ethiopia, etc. After its humiliating defeat in Lebanon it is once again pushing the country into a full-fledged sectarian war to crush the Hizbollah. It did the same in Palestine utilising the stooge Fatah to launch attacks on the Hamas after the latter won the election and has now forced a coalition government. Sectarian strife is being promoted also in all other countries of West Asia, particularly Iraq, between Sunnis, Shias and Kurds.

In Africa the US has utilized Ethiopia (with one of Africa's largest armies) to send occupation forces into Somalia deploying its full range of tanks and warplanes against local Islamic forces, mainly equipped with small arms. In most other countries of Africa the US is locked in contention with Europe (and now China), each of whom are instigating sectarian wars all over the continent (as in Congo, Dafur, Nigeria, etc) in order to seize Africa's rich mineral and oil wealth. France too has 18,000 troops in Africa stationed in various parts under various pretexts.

In Latin America, the US has enhanced its military 'aid' 34 times since 2000, to \$122 million. Columbia has US-funded military bases on Venezuela's border. Paraguay

hosts US bases on the border with Bolivia and is so much in the US pocket that the Bush family alone owns 2.7% of the territory as their personal property. About 40,000 troops are stationed in Latin America.

In the East its main fear comes from China's growing influence in the region. Besides strengthening its existing military bases, it is particularly seeking to utilize India as its front paws in the region. It has also been firming up its defence ties with its traditional allies, Japan and Australia.

Russia's New Assertion

With the EU unity in a mess and the stagnant European economies it has been Russia that has been seeking greater assertion against US worldwide domination. The EU has been more concentrating on rebuilding its unity and regaining its economic strength, while Russia has not only ousted the US from much of its backyard (CIS countries) but is making inroads particularly into West Asia and Latin America in a big way.

In a speech at a security conference in Munich on Feb.10, Putin launched a frontal attack on the US saying that their concept of a unipolar world was "*unacceptable and impossible*". Russia has now used its two major weapons — energy resources and defence technology — for its greater assertion against the US. Russian arms sales have surged from \$3.4 billion in 1999 to \$6.5 billion in 2006 and is expected to touch \$7 billion this year. Moscow defied the US and supplied \$700 million worth of Tor-M1 advanced air-defence missile systems to Iran last year.

Moscow has utilized its energy resources to consolidate its leadership over the ex-Soviet States. In Europe, Russia has offered lucrative energy deals to Germany, France and Italy, thwarting US efforts to build a common European front against 'Russian expansionism'. In March Russia signed a much-delayed deal with Bulgaria and Greece to build a Balkan pipeline to bypass Turkey's crowded Bosphorus Straits. The pipeline will strengthen Russia's position in the European energy market further and undercut US plans to promote alternative export routes for Caspian Oil.

Russia has rebuilt close ties with Syria, has resumed arms supplies and plans to set up a naval base in the Syrian port of

Tartus. Putin's earlier visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Jordan saw Russia forge energy and defence deals in a region which has long been the exclusive preserve of the US. The Russian Oil giant, Lukoil, announced plans to invest more than \$2 billion in new gas fields in Saudi Arabia. Russia's weapons-cum-energy diplomacy has been most effective in Algeria, where Lukoil and Gazprom gained exclusive access to some of Algeria's largest oil and gas fields. The deals are part of an agreement that involved the supply of \$7.5 billion worth of Russian arms to Algeria. Russia has also opposed the UN's plan for Kosovo's conditional statehood. So infuriated was the US with this opposition that it warned that "*bloodshed may return to the Balkans*".

We have already seen Russia's big push into Latin America.

Though Russia's defence budget is a small fraction of that of the US (the US's is 25 times that of Russia), it has quadrupled in the past 5 years and has approved a huge \$190 billion re-armament programme through 2015. Russia is also developing highly sophisticated missiles that it claims can break through the US shield. It has also threatened to withdraw from a 1987 treaty with the US banning medium-range ballistic missiles and would resume production if the US goes ahead with its anti-missile plan for Europe.

So, today we find that Russia is once again seeking to assert its imperial power and is locked in growing contention with the US.

Flash-point in west asia

The sudden and summary execution of Saddam Hussain by the puppet courts only showed the extent of US desperation in Iraq. Saddam was defiant till the end and in his last speech called on the Iraq people to unite against the US. This was followed by the hanging in March 2007 of the Iraqi vice-president, Taha Yassin Ramada. He was in US custody and was handed over to the Iraqis only one hour before the hanging. But these illegal killings have not in any way stemmed the tide of Iraqi resistance which continues to intensify in spite of the US's best attempts to turn it into sectarian strife. Today it cannot even trust the Shia's, particularly its leader Al Sadr who is said to have taken refuge in Iran.

Notwithstanding this, the US has raised the tensions with Iran to feverish pitch. It has sent two aircraft carriers to the Gulf. In early March US illegally arrested Iranian officials from an Iranian official building in the Kurdish stronghold of Irbil, in northern Iraq. Iran retaliated by seizing 15 British Naval personnel that strayed into Iranian Gulf waters. Iran also denounced the March 24 UN resolution 1747 where the UN Security Council unanimously imposed fresh sanctions on Iran. We are beginning to see a repeat as to what happened in Iraq!!

War clouds are deepening over West Asia and contention between the imperialist power is growing worldwide.

Growing People's Resistance

As the Iraq war entered the 5th year in March 07 lakhs of demonstrators flooded the streets of Washington, London, Spain, Hungary, Australia, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, South Korea, Chile, Sweden, even Iraq and elsewhere in a surge of protests. Ten thousand protested in Sadr City and on that day itself 7 US soldiers were killed and 5 injured in Iraq. A few days later the Iraq's deputy premier was attacked and injured in Iraq's top security green zone.

Afghanistan has witnessed a resurgence of the Taliban in the last couple of years. In 2006 4,000 were killed and the number of suicide attacks quadrupled compared to 2005. The growing strength has resulted in the Taliban shifting from guerrilla war to conventional warfare. In Feb.07 they briefly seized and held the town of Masa Qala in Helmad province. In March 07 a suicide bomber attacked the entrance of the high-security Bagram Base when Dick Cheney was inside. The strength of the Afghan army which was 80,000 has now got reduced to a mere 20,000 and the US once again has to rely on the notorious warlords to maintain its control over the country. President Karzai's fiat does not extend beyond Kabul and his protection and survival is totally dependent on US/NATO forces.

In the rest of West Asia we find the Hizbollah prestige continues to remain high amongst the people, due to its resounding defeat of Israel. In Palestine the Hamas could not be tamed as yet as they did to the Fatah.

In the last year as far as militant struggles go in the imperialist countries, it was of the immigrant proletariat of France that shook Europe. The pitched battles between the workers and the police went on for weeks. Once again in March 07 violence erupted where the youth fought for seven hours utilising urban guerrilla war methods of resistance. France has not witnessed such militancy since the student revolt of 1968. And it does not look as though this is going to die down, but only intensify as the days go by and the immigrants find themselves more and more marginalized.

In the backward countries of the world there is growing resistance to the imperialist-dictated policies of globalization. We see a veritable tide of people's movements in Latin America which, for the lack of an alternative, has been channelised into electoral politics and the rise of social democratic parties to power. This is bound to implode soon once these have been shown to be unable to provide the answers. There is also a resurgence of other national liberation movements as that of the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka. Their latest attack by aircraft has created a panic amongst the ruling classes of entire South Asia.

The Maoist forces of the world comprise the most advanced detachment of the above struggles. While some of the older movements have faced a setback there is a new hope with the rise of new Maoist movements as in Indonesia. Others continue to advance in the face of the most brutal attacks and genocidal killings. Unfortunately the vast ant-imperialist movement around the world are, as yet, not under proletarian leadership. Yet, the ripe objective situation throughout the world and the growing discontent, has created an excellent fertile ground for a massive new revolutionary upsurge. If the Maoists are in the forefront of the struggles and use creative and effective methods of struggle and organisation there is bound to be a new worldwide awakening.

THE INDIAN SITUATION

The Indian situation is complex with an intermix of acute rural stagnation coupled with oasis of urban 'modernity'. The imperialist-dictated policies of economic reform are resulting, on the one

hand, in marginalization of vast masses, on the other, in the compradors and MNCs enriching themselves beyond all expectations. This results in sustaining the backward semi-feudal relations while at the same time pushing the country deeper and deeper into the arms of the imperialist octopus — particularly that of the US.

Economic Retrogression & Fake Development

Over the last year the rulers have been portraying a booming economy with a high GDP growth rate; artificially boosted by the huge flow of foreign funds. They portray as though India is poised to become an economic powerhouse that will soon catch up with the developed countries of the world. This is a big hoax played on the people of the country to dupe the middle classes into thinking that India is on the road to 'progress'. It hides the extremes of backwardness and poverty being generated by the existing model of imperialist-dictated growth.

There are two Indias — the first is that of malls, multiplexes, 5-star entertainment, etc. The other is the vast backward countryside and filthy slums. The first cater to barely 5% of the population, while about 90% live an existence in utmost poverty, which increases by the day due to government policy. The unheard of levels of suicides in the country is only the tip of the iceberg; but it brings out the extent of destitution of a vast section of the population, the kind of which the country only witnessed during colonial rule. Then, thousands died of famine and hunger due to British policy; now thousands die of suicides, hunger, disease and destitution. People are being displaced by the lakhs in order to hand over prime land to real estate sharks, business mafia and foreign robbers.

In this model of growth the market is sought to be extended in the luxury sector by giving the rich huge concessions and thereby enhancing their purchasing power. This is done by extracting more and more from the already impoverished masses who cannot even afford two square meals in the day. So it is not surprising to see that car sales in the domestic market have skyrocketed from 2,65,000 in 1995 to a massive to nearly 10 lakhs in the current

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MASS RALLIES AND ARMED RESISTANCE TO DEFEAT

Sukanta

THE January 2007, issue of the Peoples' March covered some reports about the mass resistance and advancement of the peoples' war. Now for this issue we have received some more reports which are glowing examples of how the masses are participating on the one hand, in mass political mobilizations and protest rallies and on the other hand are offering mass armed resistance under the leadership of their own Janatana *Sarkars* (Revolutionary People's Committees), an embryonic form of peoples government which is making a new history.

MASS RALLIES

Revolutionary peoples' committees at various levels have been rallying the masses in interior areas and roadside villages. The adivasi masses, who have been opposing *sarkari julum* are now coming out openly and in big numbers to protest against the barbaric atrocities of the Salwa Judum goons lead by Mahendra Karma. On 15th November 2006, around one lakh people, mobilizing under the banner of *All India Adivasi Manch*, held a powerful protest rally in Dantewara town. It is a massive gathering in the midst of an enormous white terror unleashed by the para military forces and Salwa Judum goons. The slogans, 'salwa judum i.e. *sarakri julum*. down down; stop salwa judum etc. reverberated in the four corners of the town .

Sukma town, the administrative and business center was turned into the headquarters of the Salwa goons, traders, contractors and others who are now acting as the leaders of the SJ. On 15th January 2007 a special rally was organized by women in which all the 5000 participants were women. In many villages and Block centers people are mobilising and are organizing protest rallies against the SJ campaign. These protest rallies are fast spreading to even those areas where SJ activities have not spread as yet. The general demand of the adivasi masses was that the state must stop the SJ campaign

in the affected villages and it must not extend it to new areas. In all the villages of 5 districts of the erstwhile undivided Bastar thousands of people are coming out, protesting against the brutal SJ campaign and are actively participating in all forms of resistance.

REFORMS AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Earlier Bastar was only one composite district. Later it was divided into 3 revenue districts and 5 police districts. Now the two police districts of Narayanpur and Bijapur have been upgraded as revenue districts also. So ultimately one district was divided into five, only to felicitate the deployment of more armed forces and administrative personnel with the sole aim of rooting out the revolutionary movement. But the fact is that in no form of the states' administration is able to function freely in the entire Bastar area. The revolutionary forces are waging a war on the existing rulers, advancing through a stiff resistance by the peoples armed forces.

Cooking utensils, blankets, playing equipment and imparting of karate training to the youth etc. such is the list of the government reforms programme. Neither land nor productive materials, capital for cultivation find a place in these programmes though the masses are in dire need of such an assistance. The adivsi peasant masses who have been herded into the government camps by force have on their heads a loan burden of around 200 crore rupees even at a conservative estimate. As they were forcefully herded in to these camps and as they are not being allowed to cultivate their lands by the Salwa goons and the state they are demanding the state, to right off these loans. While this happens to be the plight of those herded in the camps, the revolutionary masses who chose to defy the Sava Judum campaign and to resolutely protect their revolutionary gains, come what may, have been conducting their cultivation operations keeping an eye on the

movements of the marauding Salwa goons and the states' armed forces. Of course, their own armed forces, the PLGA has been offering them protection and was also assisting them in their production work. In this way, according to the revolutionary peoples committees', the peasantry ploughed their lands in the *Khariff* season while on the other hand actively participating in the resistance activities. People of Bastar by participating directly in a class war are getting to see what is what?

THE RAOGHAT RAILWAY LINE QUESTION

The proposed 264 KM Raoghat railway line work was pending for more than two decades but now the government is gearing up its mechanism with all haste to complete the project. Actually, the reason behind all this sudden speed with which the normally sleepy government mechanism took up the task of construction of the rail line was the MOUs it signed recently with comprador big bourgeois houses like Tatas, the Essars etc. Apart from handing over vast tracts of mineral rich forest lands to these rapacious exploiters, the state had the additional responsibility of providing them with the cheapest mode of transport, that too at public cost, to carry away the rich iron ore deposits from Bastar, Nanganar and Lohariguda. While this being the case the state in order to cover its subservience to the interests of the CBB, is bringing forth all sorts of arguments like, the construction of this railway line will bring many benefits to the people of Bastar, that it will mainly serve the iron ore requirements of the public sector Bhillai Steel Plant etc. But the people of Bastar are not taken away by these arguments and are determined to oppose this in order to save their mineral resources and forests. The Special Zonal Committee of the CPI (Maoist), in a press statement, called on the people to oppose the railway line as, it is being built with the sole aim of draining out the wealth of the region to serve the interests of the

T AND SMASH SALWA JUDUM OR SARKARI JULUM!

imperialists and their Indian lackeys, the CBB and it vowed that it will, with the active backing of the people, obstruct the construction of this project.

PEOPLE'S RESISTANCE

The Chhattishgarh state government, operating along with the JOC, set up under the leadership of the central government, has been adopting many new forms of offensive in all fronts in an effort to smash

the ongoing people's war led by the CPI (Maoist), but the people of Bastar are offering resistance in a massive way by all means at their disposal. Andhra Pradesh – Maharastra – Chhattishgarh special armed police are conducting joint operation regularly under the guidance of Greyhounds forces of Andhra. Andhra model police killings through false encounters became a norm here. 14 people, including the members of the mass organisations, party cadres and PLGA fighters were killed in this fashion during the month of January. On 25th December 2006, a new forum 'Forum Against False

Encounter Killings' was formed to mobilize vast sections of the people in protest against these extra-judicial killings. On that day around 5,000 people, moving under its leadership blockaded the Bande police station. On December 31st a massive rally of 20,000 people was conducted. The people also observed a highly successful Bundh on 8th January, 2007 taking out massive rallies.

Apart from the false encounters, police enacted a drama of fake surrenders in Raipur, the state capital, in mid January.

The police big wigs pompously paraded 79 'Naxals' before the media in Raipur. But all this show came unstuck when the leadership of both the ruling and opposition parties protested against this drama saying that the police paraded workers of their parties as surrendering "Naxals" offering them monetary and other benefits. Soon after their shameful drama got exposed a police officer himself

13 people were brutally killed by the states armed police forces is continuing, without let up, facing the state terror. So, it is no wonder that the adivasi masses of DK, who, themselves are being driven out of their traditional homelands by the state and who are fighting tooth and nail against this fascist state onslaught, saw comrades-in-arms in the valiant fighters of Kalinganagar, responded enthusiastically to the above

call and enforced a Bundh, bringing all activities to a standstill. Though, the state made hectic preparations from the end days of December to thwart the Bundh, deploying additional contingents of armed police and issuing threats to shopkeepers and transport operators all over the state. It is heartening to note that not only adivasi masses of DK but people from all walks of life from the four corners of the state, responded warmly to the Bundh call.

The people of DK, while on the one hand are going on with mass political mobilizations and protest agitations have been on the other hand participating enthusiastically in acts of

stiff armed resistance against the states' brutal campaign of suppression. The peoples' forces have dealt telling blows on the states armed forces and on the Salva goons during the past six months period. During this period 24 para-military personell were killed and another 40 were wounded in the operations conducted by the peoples' forces. About 50 SPOs and more than 50 Salva goons were also killed during this period.

On January 7th the PLGA forces killed 7 CRPF men through a landmine explosion.

MAOISTS BLOCK ROADS IN CHHATTISGARH TO ENFORCE STRIKE

MAOISTS of the banned Communist Party of India-Maoist (Maoist) dug up roads and placed landmines at several areas in Chhathisgarh to enforce their weeklong strike to protest the sixth anniversary celebrations of the state's formation.

The strike by the CPI(Maoists) in the southern parts began Nov. 1, to coincide with the Nov 1-7 government functions at the headquarters of all the 16 districts. The functions are being held to showcase the development and progress achieved by the state since it was carved out from Madhya Pradesh in Nov 1, 2000.

Maoists have flooded the interior and inaccessible forested parts of the 40,000-sq-km Bastar region that includes the worst-hit Dantewada district, with banners and posters asking people to boycott anniversary celebrations.

They have announced to completely halt normal life in Bastar during the celebrations and most transporters kept their vehicles off the road on the first day of the strike Wednesday.

According to home department officials, the Maoists have blocked roads in the interior Bastar areas with trees and dug up roads in some areas. They have also placed landmines at several busy places, especially where police and paramilitary forces are deployed.

"The CPI-Maoist asks people of Bastar not to join in the government's anniversary celebrations as it is fighting for a separate liberated Bastar state," said banner and posters of the rebels.

circulated a detailed note to the press explaining how the police department prepared the drama. CM Raman Singh, in a face saving exercise ordered a departmental enquiry on this episode.

The Dandkarnya Special Zonal Committee of the CPI (Maoist) gave a call to the people of that area to observe a Bundh on January 2nd, to commemorate the first anniversary of the heroic struggle of the people of Kalinganagar of Orissa, against forced displacement due to the setting up of a SEZ. This struggle in which

On February 7th the guerillas successfully ambushed a combing party, killing 4 Naga IRBP men and 2 state armed policemen. In another incident four policemen were gravely injured and one SPO died on the spot when a booby trap set up by the militia exploded while the police were trying to defuse it

THE RANIBODILI RAID

The PLGA force of the Maoists struck a major blow on the armed suppression campaign going on in the DK area by wiping out a police camp in Ranbodili village in Dantewada District. The state set up a base police camp in a girls school in the above village, housing 55 SPOs and 24 jawans of the Chattisgarh armed police forces. There were 28 young girl students in the hostel building. The police and the Salva hoodlums, ie, the SPOs were without any shame, using these children as human shields. In the early hours of March 15th a contingent of about 600 fighters of the

PLGA forces of the Maoists launched a surprise attack on this camp. A fierce battle went on for a couple of hours during which the Maoists forces were able to kill 68 police men (of whom 40 were SPOs), and injured 12 others. The Maoist forces captured around 50 weapons like SLRs, AKs, LMG etc. The Maoists lost 6 of their comrades, including a divisional committee member. **True to their commitment to the people the Maoists took utmost care to ensure that not a single child got even a single bruise during the fierce battle they waged on the police forces, which went on for hours**

Recently suicide deaths among the various armed police personnel deployed in the DK area for the counterinsurgency operations are on the rise. Earlier in J & K and elsewhere in the country army and paramilitary personal killed themselves with their service weapons to escape from the oppression, suppression,

discrimination and slavery they face in the name of duty. Considerable sections of Jawans of different types of armed forces are killing their own class brethren in various parts of the country in the name of service to the country. But due to lack of a correct political outlook instead of revolting against their higher officials, rulers and anti people forces they are ending their own lives. About 25-armed police personal ended their lives in this way in Bastar. Apart from this, 4 jawans of the IRM-Mizo battalions died due to improper treatment when they suffered ill health. In Salwa Judum camps also more than a dozen people's died during the last rainy season due to non availability of medical attention. Not only that, 32 paramilitary personnel died of malaria and about 500 men were down with Falciperum. This is all what they get from the rulers for all their loyal service to the exploiters **PM**

SALWA JUDUM RAPE & MURDER CONTINUE UNABATED!

ON Feb.9 2007 night the brutal forces of the Salwa Judum — comprising the local SPOs, Naga Battalion and CRPF — surreptitiously crossed the Indravati river and lay in wait for the tribals who would come to harvest their crops. Some adivasi women came out from the forests and began harvesting their crops. Those salwa goons pounced on them and managed to grab five young women; the rest escaped. Three were brutally gang-raped, mercilessly killed and their bodies were thrown into the river Indravati. Two more were also gang-raped and dragged to the police station. These women belonged to the villages, Netravalli, Takleer and Utleer in the Byramgadh region of Dantewada district. The crops that were harvested were also burnt. Not only that, the Salwa goons sought to use the dead bodies as bait to trap those who would come to collect them. They laid in ambush but were spotted by the militia. Finally, the people could retrieve the bodies only on Feb.15, in a highly putrefied and bloated state.

This is just a recent example of the murder and mayhem that continues to be perpetuated by the state forces in Bastar. Since October 2006 these forces — Naga

and Mizo battalions, CRPF, SPOs and Salwa Judum hoodlums — have killed about 100 villagers and six guerrillas. Those killed were mostly members of the mass organisations and the local people's committee members. These goons continue with their gang rapes and the burning and looting of villages and crops. Now there are 14 CRPF battalions, one Naga battalion in operation there, one Mizo battalion and there have been 9,000 new recruits to the State Armed police in just the last one year. Additional camps are being set up, each with 100 armed forces in a policy of 'carpet security'. There are 8,000 para-military forces in just the Bijapur police station area of Dantewada district alone. In addition, at the Jungle Warfare School set up by the Army in Kanker 2,900 para-military forces have been trained in guerrilla warfare since August 2006. Also the Greyhounds of AP have been launching attacks from across the border in the South of the area.

These forces of terror, in a planned way, have been seeking to entrench themselves in this area, adjacent to the Maad region. Maad is said to be the centre of the Maoists movement in the area. They are attempting to encircle the Maad

region. Recently 4 new police camps have been set up in the Maad region. Each is manned with 100 CRPF personnel. Three years back the government began building large 'schools'. These were then allowed by the Maoists. **It is now these 'schools' that have been turned into police stations using the students as human shields!!!** It is reported that about 140 such 'schools' are now functioning as police stations, using the children as human shields.

In fact, ever since the Salwa Judum began some 1½ years back, the people of this region have been living a life of acute deprivation and insecurity. Because of the terror of the SJ forces entire villages have fled to the interior forests. They live there a Spartan existence not knowing when they would be attacked; living under the protection of the village militias. They also have no source of income. Last year their crops were mostly destroyed by the SJ and they are unable to sell the forest produce. Here, the elderly to the little children some how eke out an existence. This year at least they have managed to harvest some of their crops. Yet, their moral is high as they have tasted freedom for the first time ever and are willing to do anything to protect it. **PM**

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fiscal year — an over four-fold increase. The bulk of this was through easy credit from the banks which now no longer go to the primary sector but for such luxury items. 89% of vehicles purchased were on bank loans which have more than doubled in three years — from Rs.46,020 crores in 2002-03 to Rs.1,08,840 crores in 2006-07. The figures on home loans is even higher; but here with interest rates having been increased by as much as 2-3% in just the last one year and the middle classes are feeling they have been cheated.

According to official data there are about 50,000 households with an income of over Rs.1 crore per year (Times of India March 23 07); and government policy is geared to increase this number to 1,40,000 by 2010. Massive tax holidays, subsidies, etc are given to this elite section in order to achieve this increase. The EXIM policy announced at the end of April 2007 has given additional huge concessions to service sector exports. Massive infrastructure 'development', which is the chief focus of government 'development' is geared to create the 'right' environment for big business — whether Indian or foreign. The rulers are only interested in enhancing the coffers of such business houses; thereby creating a totally lopsided economy where the bulk of the GDP comes from the service sector, while agriculture is declining and manufacturing stagnant. Besides whatever growth there is, is without the creation of jobs.

Even according to the latest Economic Survey the growth of employment in the organised sector between 1994 and 2004 actually declined by 0.38%, though GDP growth rates averaged at about 6-7%. While services accounts for 55% (it has grown from 37% in 1990) of the GDP, it formally employs just 20 lakh people, or less than 0.5% of the country's labour force of over 40 crores. Besides, while over 60% of the population continues to survive on agriculture its share in the GDP has now dropped below 19%. And, of this, about 87% of landholdings is that of marginal farmers. (Frontline Feb.23, 07) Such lopsided growth is clearly unsustainable. Between 1990 and 2005, industry's contribution to the economy remained more or less stagnant, crawling from 25%

to 27%. According to some studies (Outlook Apr. 9, 07) over 3% jobs were lost in the manufacturing sector in the past decade. India's unemployment rate is estimated at 30%, or over 20 crore people.

Even for all the talk of a booming economy we find that India has one of the largest fiscal deficits even among the other backward countries. In 2005 India's fiscal deficit was 7.5%, compared to Brazil's 3.3%, Malaysia's 3.8%, China's 1.2%, Mexico's 0.1% and Indonesia's 0.6%. Even the Current Account Deficit (trade deficit + services), while in the rest of Asia was positive, in India it was minus 3%. India still amounts to a mere 0.8% of world trade compared to China's 6.4%. Together with this the trade deficit for the 11 months ending Feb.28 07 rose by a phenomenal 49% over the previous year to reach a figure of \$56 billion. Not only that, once again the external debt has begun to skyrocket from \$136.5 billion (Rs.6,27,112 crores) in end Sept. 2006 to \$142.7 billion (Rs.6,32,051 crores) by the end of the year — a rise of \$6 billion in just three months. So what is this nonsense of India rising to be a new global power?

Much of the much-hyped 'growth' is being generated through the speculative economy and the gigantic increases in the defense budget. Merely "futures" turnover (one of the derivatives) rose by a massive 59% in 2006/07 to cross Rs.1 lakh crores. The mere capital expenditure of the military was hiked in the current budget by 22%, to a huge Rs.41,922 crores. Of this Rs. 21,000 crores will be foreign purchases to fill the coffers of the international arms dealers. India is today one of the biggest importers of arms in the world.

On the other hand expenditure on social welfare for the masses have been continuously dropping. The Economic Survey for 2007/08 has pointed out that education expenditure has been stagnant at 2.8% of the GDP for the last 3 years. Where GDP growth rate was 9% and the official inflation rate was 8% the expenditure on health and family planning grew by a mere 1.3% (amounts to a relative drop of about 15%). In addition, prices have been skyrocketing in the last year, particularly of essential commodities, making life even more miserable for the masses. For example the wholesale price of pulses (dals) rose a massive 35% last

year; the retail price increase was even more. Similar was the situation with all other essential items. Besides there was a drop in production in 2006/07 of tur (arhar) dal by 4%, jowar by 9%, maize by 8% and ragi by 50%. Total cereal production has been stagnating for a number of years, around 195-200 million tones.

In spite of the suicides and the acute distress in the rural sector the government is aggressively pushing private sales of agricultural commodities with the aim of dismantling the public distribution network. In the worst hit region, Vidarbha, by mid Dec.2006 while private traders had bought 45 lakh quintals, the government had purchased a mere 6 lakh quintal. Both were paying the farmer Rs.1,700-1,800 per quintal compared to Rs.2,500 per quintal a few years ago. This year MNCs and big business have been buying up the wheat crop of Punjab on a massive scale. With such policies, the peasantry of the country, already ground down in the cesspool of semi-feudal stagnation, is being further marginalized and pushed to destitution.

The working class is facing an equally disastrous situation with the informalisation of most labour in the country — whether in industry, mining or even the service sectors. Organised labour has been dropping drastically and the unorganized sector is enveloping the bulk of the labouring masses on virtually starvation wages. Today even in manufacturing, 85% of the workers are from the unorganized sector. In this unorganized sector the workers work for long hours with little pay and no benefits what-so-ever. No labour laws apply to this vast mass. And now, with the arrival of the SEZs, the workers will officially be deprived of all their rights. Though the workers have been fighting back, the stranglehold of the reactionary and revisionist trade unions have time and again led to the betrayal of their struggles.

Today the most frightening aspect of the model of development is the ruthlessness with which the ruling classes are displacing lakhs and lakhs of people to seize prime agricultural and urban land for big business sharks and the foreign vampires. The massacre at Nandigram by the CPM shows the extent to which they are prepared to go to seize the land — in this case for a mafia Indonesian business

house. In Bastar so far 300 have been massacred and over 400 villages destroyed to clear the land for Tatas, Ruias and other mining projects. Mining projects, SEZs, big dams, 'infrastructural development', urban renewal, et al; are all taking their toll in the displacement and marginalization of lakhs of people in their own country. Earlier it was only the slum-dweller and poor peasantry; now it is even the middle and rich peasantry, traders, small businessmen, kirana shop owners. The entrance of the retailing giants have already begun to force the closure of lakhs of small kirana shops. Barely a few months after the entry of Reliance Fresh into Chennai, the wholesale market claimed it faced a drop of 40% in its sales and called a one day bandh; the plight of the small retailers would be even worse. There are today four crore people working in 12 million retail outlets, most of which are family labour; many will soon face destitution.

Ofcourse the worst hit are always those at the bottom of the ladder — the poorest of the poor, the dalits, women, tribals. Economic retrogression is being accompanied by cultural and social degeneration. Feudal and imperialist culture and social values have seen a resurgence reflected in numerous ways — particularly upper caste superiority and exclusiveness, brahminical elitism and increasing dalit oppression/violence. Women are at the receiving end of both the feudal and imperialist cultural resurgence. The former is reflected in growing dowry deaths, increasing incidences of violence on women, infant feticides, warped sex ratios, etc; the latter is reflected in the massive commoditification of women, prostitution, child sex, etc to service the tourist and fashion industries.

Today, no one is safe from these vultures, preying off the flesh of the common man. Never before have the TNCs, Ambanis, Tatas, Wipros, etc made such gigantic amount of profits as they are able to today due to these government policies. And every year the government gives these tycoons further concessions. The recently passed EXIM policy is yet another example where the commerce ministry announced a slew of tax benefits for export in the service sector.

And together with this frightening scenario we witness the country going deeper and deeper into the hold of the imperialists.

Hardly a day passes without the takeover of some company or the other by foreign capital or the increasing penetration into existing ones. Today the big comprador houses are so completely tied to the apron strings of foreign capital that the two are barely distinguishable. And the grip is getting tighter and tighter with the government allowing in FDI and FIIs on a bigger and bigger scale and pushing fast towards capital account convertibility.


In late March the Cabinet increased the FDI allowed in Telecom from 49% to 74%. Most telecom companies are already in foreign control, just as the IT companies. The biggest comprador house, Reliance, is already tied up deeply with foreign capital. But, with each day the bond tightens further. In March 2007 RIL signed an MoU with the US-based specialty chemicals major Rohn & Haas for setting up an acralyic monomer complex in Jamnagar. In mid-March it handed over 25% of its equity in Reliance Exploration and Production, the holding company for RIL's foreign oil and gas projects, to the US giant Chevron. The major so-called Indian pharmaceutical companies depend on foreign markets for the bulk of their revenue — Ranbaxy's foreign sales increased from 66% in 2005 to 79% in 2006 (36% from the US); Reddys Lab gets 88% of its revenue from abroad (50% from the US). What is Indian left about such companies? Quite naturally the Technical Expert Group on Patent Laws — Mushekar Committee Report — presented in March 2007 fully echoes the interests of the powerful MNCs and big comprador houses; which, if implemented will have a devastating impact on the pricing of medicine. Even small and medium sized companies are selling big stakes to foreign capital. Examples of these can be seen daily in the business newspapers — like, in March 2007 the Chennai-based N Trust Infotech sold 50% of its share capital to the US based management consultant, Real Foundation; in the same month French Banking major BNP Paribas picked up a stake in Geojit Financial Services, and the US bank Citigroup bought 20% in Mumbai-based

Anand Rathi Securities. The list goes on and on.....

It is clear where the country is heading — greater and greater neo-colonisation of the country, destruction of agriculture and local business, with impoverisation of the masses reaching unprecedented levels together with the ruling classes amassing wealth on a scale not even seen in colonial India. The country is heading towards an explosive situation.

Battle Lines Are Being Drawn

On the one side stand the moneybags — both Indian and foreign — together with the massive state machinery that protects them; on the other side stand the vast masses of oppressed people of the country, together with all patriotic and democratic people. The entire mass media are in the service of the former, with the TV, films, newspapers, radio, etc creating the atmosphere glamourising the degenerate lives of the big and powerful and hiding the real condition of the masses. They openly propagate lies and falsehood to dupe the masses and condemn their struggles. They portray patriots and revolutionaries as terrorists; and the corrupt and mafia rulers as heroes.

Yet the truth breaks out. It cannot be suppressed indefinitely. Reality is more potent than paper reports. Nandigram tore off the fake progressive mask off the CPM and showed them up for what they really are — social fascists; i.e socialism in words fascists in deeds. The bulk of the other parliamentary parties are already known to be mere agents and tools of the imperialists, comprador big business and the big feudal elements. Today, it is the Maoists that are emerging as the true people's alternative in the country. They are gaining recognition from more and more quarters throughout the country. They are being seen as the real fighters and liberators of the country from the imperialist and feudal yoke. Their People's Liberation guerrilla Army acts as the backbone to defend the people's interest and take on the fascist and brutal forces of the state. Let all the progressive, democratic and revolutionary forces of the country unite into a massive tidal wave that will wipe away all reaction from this country. Justice is bound to prevail. 

GROWING INFORMALISATION OF LABOUR AMIDST A SUPPOSEDLY THRIVING ECONOMY

Rashmi

INDIA is poised to enter the 11th five-year plan (2007-2012) with a seemingly impressive rate of growth of GDP in excess of 8 %. The approach paper to the 11th plan targets at even higher growth rates. The fastest growing sector is the service sector, particularly communications. This showed a growth rate of 22.8% in 2004-05. In the same year, the growth rate of manufacturing sector was 9.1 % whereas agriculture showed 0 % growth. But this growing economy has no jobs to offer to the people of the country. Till date, around three-fifths of our population depends, directly or indirectly, on the slowest growing sector of the economy i.e. agriculture. The only new jobs, which are being created, for people at large, are low quality jobs without any protection and with no floor to wages.

The decade of 1990s saw a decrease in the rate of employment generation. This has been true both for the urban and the rural areas. At that time, the ruling classes dismissed this by claiming that the effects of reforms would take some years to work through, and that it was too early to come to any judgement. But the recent results of surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) have shut up the loudest votaries of reforms.

The results of 55th Round of NSS that was conducted over 1999-2000 provide the first comprehensive estimate of changes in employment growth and patterns over the 1990s. These reveal a sharp, and even startling, decrease in the rate of employment generation across both rural and urban areas. The per cent of rural population, both male and female, showing some *usual status* employment (employment of more than 180 days in a year), has not only declined over the 1990s, but in 1999-2000 was at the lowest level in thirty years. Even in urban areas, there is evidence of decline since 1993-94, although the levels are not the lowest over the period as in rural areas. Thus, the fall in employment has come in a period during which economic activity in the aggregate is supposed to have accelerated.

Some economists have estimated the annual rate of growth of rural employment. It had fallen to as low as 0.67 per cent over

the period 1993-94 to 1999-2000. This is less than one-third the rate of the previous period 1987-88 to 1993-94. In fact, it turns out that this is the lowest rate of growth of rural employment in post-1947 history.

The decade of 1990s clearly shows that the high GDP growth did not contribute to commensurate growth in employment.

The data from the 61st Round of NSS (2004-05) shows that there has been some growth (3% per annum) in employment between 1999-2000 and 2004-05. But partially, this growth is a reflection of low base of 1999-2000. (If rate of growth were calculated using a low initial base, the growth rate would be higher). **The increase in the workforce (those employed) was accompanied by an increase in the number of unemployed showing that there were more people looking for work relative to those who found work. However, what is more worrisome is the fact that even this growth in employment has largely been of low quality.** By now, it has become an undeniable fact that only 13 percent of India's workforce is engaged in the organised sector and this sector is not creating any new jobs. This means that the bulk of India's workforce is employed in the unorganised sector.

ORGANISED AND UNORGANISED SECTORS

The process of LPG has led both to the increase in the size of the unorganised sector as well as to more and more casualisation of workers employed within the organised sectors. The dividing line between organised and unorganised sectors is not very sharp and differs from country to country. Formal or organised enterprises are those, which have been legally registered. Generally, these are the enterprises which are expected to file returns, maintain formal accounts and most significantly whose employees are covered by protective labour legislations. In India, the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) was set up in 2004 and it defines unorganised enterprises as, "*all unincorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or households engaged in the production and sale of goods and services operated on a*

proprietary or a partnership basis and employing less than 10 persons".

What this means is that if someone opens up a STD booth or starts a tea stall, such kind of activity and employment would come under the informal or the unorganised sector. Also if a large enterprise outsources the work of packaging or binding or making washers to a small unit with 5-6 workers, the latter would again fall in the same category. Here, there are no fixed hours of work, which usually becomes a basis for exploitation of labour. These are also those enterprises where the workers are not covered by any protective labour legislation such as the Minimum Wages Act or the Maternity Act etc. Nor do they enjoy any social security such as pensions.

Agricultural operations fall almost entirely in the unorganised sector in our country whereas roughly 80% of the workforce in the non-farm sector is informal. In recent years, not only has the size of informal sector been growing, but enterprises within the organised sector are also sub-contracting work implying that there is a growing informalisation of workers employed in this sector too. **According to various estimates, nearly 92-93% of India's workers have informal employment. Either they are employed in the informal sector itself, or they are part of growing numbers of casual and contract labour working for the organised enterprises. In other words, they lie outside the ambit of any kind of labour protection.** According to NCEUS estimates of 1999-2000, 86.2% of the workers were in the informal sectors of the economy. Of the 13.8% in the formal sector, 6% or almost half were not covered by any labour protection. More and more workers are being thrown outside the ambit of formal workforce increasingly.

During the decade of 1990s, while employment in the formal sector had been stagnant, employment had largely been created in the informal segment of the economy. The overall annual growth in employment was 1.99 per cent but the same for the organised sector was only 0.34 per cent. And this also includes the growth of informal workers within the organised sector. If one were to look only at the rate of growth of formal workers within the

organised sector, it would be close to zero!

GROWTH RATE OF ORGANISED AND UNORGANISED SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

It can be seen clearly that although growth rates declined for both the organised and the unorganised sectors in the 1990s, the latter has acted as a buffer for the decline in the employment opportunities in the organised sector.

Year	Organised	Unorganised	All
1983 to 1987-88	1.25	2.05	1.99
1987-88 to 1993-94	1.26	2.43	2.34
1993-94 to 1999-2000	0.34	1.25	1.99

(In per cent)

The sectoral break up indicates that the share of unorganised employment is quite high across the board.

SHARE OF ORGANISED AND UNORGANISED SECTOR EMPLOYMENT ACROSS INDUSTRIES 1999-2000

Between 1993-94 and 1999-2000, the transport, storage and communications sector experienced the fastest informalisation of labour employed. This can be seen in the increase in number of STD and phone booths, migrant workers coming to the towns and plying rickshaws

Industry	Organised	Unorganised
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and	0.6	99.4
Mining and Quarrying	43.2	56.8
Manufacturing	14.9	85.1
Electricity, gas and water	79.0	21.0
Construction	6.5	93.5
Trade, hotels and restaurants	1.2	98.8
Transport, storage and communica	21.5	78.5
Services	34.8	65.2

(In per cent)

or even youths buying or hiring auto rickshaws and plying them. **Manufacturing also shows that 85 % of the workers are unorganised.** This indicates the increasing trend of subcontracting and hiring casual and contract workers.

The recent period of 1999-2000 to 2004-05 has been no different in terms of the nature and quality of employment generated. Using the data of the 61st Round of NSS, some studies have pointed out the worrisome feature of the recent growth in employment namely the growth of part-time

workers. These are unemployed people engaged in an economic activity for part of the year. Women are entering the workforce in both full-time and part-time capacities. There is also a growth of part-time self-employed activity in urban areas.

This kind of employment certainly does not qualify as dignified employment. The informal sector workforce and the informal component of the workforce even in the formal sector have no rights whatsoever. They do not enjoy any protective

legislations, nor are they covered by any kind of social insurance. There is no floor to their wages. In fact there are studies indicating the redistribution of incomes away from these workers and in favour of profit incomes and remuneration of white collar, regular employees. The participation of women in home-based, low paying self-employment is an indicator of distress rather than assertion of their identity. Employment in activities such as bangle making, *bindi* making, selling tea or cheap foodstuff on a cart, pulling a rickshaw, cleaning cars at signals and a myriad of such activities is a reflection of an attempt to somehow make ends meet.

Thus we have a situation where output growth in the economy is concentrated in

those sectors, which do not contribute very much to employment. The Primary Sector contributes roughly 20 % to the GDP, the secondary sector 25 % and tertiary sector 55 % or more than half of the total GDP. The picture however becomes vastly different

when one looks at the contribution of different sectors to employment. The bulk of our employed continue to be absorbed by the agricultural sector or have to make do with low paying, bad quality, informal sector jobs. To talk of economic growth in this context is nothing but a cruel joke. The growing economy has virtually nothing to offer to the large masses of this country. The growth of the economy has become synonymous with the growth in the profit share of imperialists and compradors. The private corporate sector has little jobs to offer. On

top of it, people dependent on agriculture are being divested of their livelihood by large-scale land acquisition to serve this very section of monopoly capitalists. When the employment statistics show any growth in employment, it is mostly these people who are thrown out of agriculture and have no other means of subsistence and thus take up all kinds of odd-jobs, on the worst possible terms, in order to survive.

As we approach another May Day, it needs to be recognised that while big capital is using all possible means to unify against the workers (forums like CII, FICCI etc), all rights of the workers, won through decades of struggles, are being taken away. In such a situation, there is a greater need for the workers to come together and collectively fight this onslaught.

Today, it is this gigantic mass of informal workers who are the real revolutionary potential in the battle against capital and this inhuman system. The existing establishment trade unions, of the 'left', centre and right, ignore this section and focus all their efforts on the organised sector, whose conditions are also deteriorating due to the anti-labour policies of the ruling classes and the capitulationist policies of the unions. The need of the hour is to organise this vast mass of populace living on the fringes of society in the urban, semi-urban and even rural areas into a powerful revolutionary force. For, it is they who truly have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win in the revolutionary re-organisation of society.

F M

Correction

In the February Issue of the magazine we printed an APCLC report on the massacre killing of AP State Committee secretary and others without verifying the contents. The following comrades who were said to have been killed are still alive — coms. Viswanath, Uday Kumar, Eswar and Syamala. The error regarding the names arose as the bodies were not handed over to the parents until a big movement was initiated and by the time they were received they were disfigured beyond recognition. As mentioned in the report eight comrades were killed, but their names are: Coms. Madhav, Ramesh, Madhavi, Suseela, Parvati, Mamta, Sita, Mallikarjun. We apologies for the error.

SEZs—A SHAMELESS ATTEMPT TO SNATCH AWAY RIGHTS OF WORKING CLASS

Rashmi

The entire area has the look of an impregnable fortress. There are high walls and only one gate. The guard at the gate checks and frisks everyone before letting him or her in. This is no jail but NEPZ or now NSEZ i.e. Noida Special Economic Zone. This treatment is not restricted to outsiders, even the workers who enter this gate every morning to go to their factories have to undergo this check twice a day—once while entering in the morning and again before leaving in the evening. Here, there have been instances of workers being fined when they have gone to the toilets without tokens (which are too few compared to the number of workers). The same workers, whose blood and sweat would yield massive profits to imperialists and compradors are treated with contempt and suspicion. There is also large-scale use of contract labour in this SEZ. These contract workers often work long hours below minimum wages. It is not as though the situation of workers is much better elsewhere, but the SEZs are already becoming a means for institutionalising non-applicability of labour laws.

After Nandigram, SEZs or Special Economic Zones have attracted attention from all quarters. The perpetrator of the massacre, the CPI(M) has come up with a number of proposals to make SEZs seem more acceptable. The central government has been forced to bring in some amendments such as a cap on the land to be acquired, (which is again being reversed) government not acting as a mediator in the process of land acquisition etc. But none of these proposals for changes in the SEZ policy talk of reversing the attack on rights of labour.

In the name of flexible labour laws, SEZs represent the most blatant snatching of all protection from labour. They will take away from labour, whatever little rights they have today. Not only this, soon they will become the torchbearers to wean away from workers all rights and protection in the non-SEZ areas as well.

For completely inexplicable reasons, SEZs have been granted the status of public utility services. It means that workers working in these SEZs would have little scope to protest or go on strike

against their employers.

In complete contravention of the Industrial Disputes Act, the Labour Commissioner would have no conciliatory authority in the SEZs. The disputes between management and labour in SEZs are to be decided by the Development Commissioner (DC), unlike in the rest of the country where the Labour Commissioner (LC) resolves them. DC is part of the SEZ Authority along with three officers of the central government and two entrepreneurs of the SEZ. This Authority is supposed to “*undertake such measures as it thinks fit for the development, operation and management of the Special Economic Zone for which it is constituted.*” An officer placed under the supervision and control of the DC will function as the Registration Officer, Conciliation Officer, as well as Inspector under various labour laws to provide single window service. Incidentally, one of the main functions of the DC is to promote the growth and functioning of his SEZ and to woo investment. Thus it is quite evident that DC’s main allegiance would be towards the investors and it most certainly will not act as a neutral conciliatory agency.

As a part of the liberalisation process for filing returns, a Consolidated Annual Report (CAR) has been designed, consolidating various periodical returns (quarterly, half year, etc.) under the following Acts – Workmen compensation Act 1923, Payment of Wages Act 1936, Factories Act 1948, Minimum Benefit Act 1948, Maternity Benefit Act 1961, Payment of Bonus Act 1965, and Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act 1970. Units in SEZ will be required only to file annual CARs to the DC, SEZ. The units in the SEZ will not be required to file periodically separate returns. For inspection relating to workers’ health and safety, units will be permitted to obtain inspection reports from ‘accredited’ agencies notified by the state government. This means that lapses on part of the employers will become a routine and there will be no mechanism to keep periodic checks. The units in the SEZs will have to report only once a year about payment of minimum wages or granting of

maternity benefits etc. And these annual reports can be easily fudged.

In accordance with the SEZ policy of the centre, the states have formed their own SEZ policies – each state trying to out compete others in initiating labour ‘reforms’ in the race to attract private capital. Different states are giving exemptions so that establishments are allowed to hire contract labour even when there is no emergency (presently, exemptions are allowed only in cases of emergency). Now outsiders will be barred from becoming office-bearers in the trade unions inside SEZs.

Tamil Nadu’s SEZ policy clearly says that “labour laws/ rules will be examined and steps taken to simplify the same”. In addition, the reporting system will be simplified. The number of forms/registers, filing of returns and their periodicity shall be totally revamped. Inspection requirement shall be kept at minimum level. New concepts like self-certification, flexi time, working time for women etc., would be introduced.

In Maharashtra, agencies like the Directorate of Steam Boilers and Directorate of Industrial Safety & Health cannot conduct inspections without prior permission from the DC. Given the fact that Development Commissioner or the DC is part of the SEZ authority along with representatives of capital, the implications are obvious.

Andhra Pradesh, apart from giving exemptions under the Minimum Wages Act 1948, will also amend the relevant Acts so as to make possible 365 days working for 24 hours a day, provided suitable overtime allowance is paid. Andhra Pradesh has laid down rules, which prohibit outsiders in unions, thereby significantly reducing the scope of collective bargaining.

The most dangerous fact is that sooner or later, these SEZs would become ‘models’ to be emulated on a countrywide scale. In other words, these islands would soon pave the way for scrapping protective labour legislations all over the country. SEZs are nothing but a death warrant for labour. Private capital always wanted to be able to exploit labour and extract surplus to the maximum and SEZs would allow just that.

PM

RED HOMAGE TO COMRADE RAGHAVULU

COMRADE Raghavulu, a member of the AP state committee of the CPI (Maoist) was killed along with 8 other comrades (five of them were women comrades and two were district committee members) by the blood sucking AP Police in a brutal one-sided encounter on 8th November, 2006, in a forest area near Vallelavari Palem village of Cuddapah district in AP. The 'People's March' bows its head in reverential red homage to the eternal memory of these Peoples' Heroes.

Comrade Raghavulu (Elaga Appa Rao-Obilesu) revolutionary career spanning more than two decades represents a phase in the revolutionary movement of Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh during which it reoriented itself from an urban movement into a militant armed rural agrarian movement, spreading, establishing firm roots and turning the backward Palnadu area into a guerilla zone. Comrade Raghavulu's dedicated revolutionary work played a pivotal role in this process of transformation. In fact, one can say for sure that comrade Raghavulu is one of those comrades who laid the foundations and through years of hard work and personal sacrifices built up the Palnadu movement which by the closing years of the 90s grew into a mighty movement challenging the state by way of militant peasants and workers movements and by way of series of military actions launched by the fighters of the PLGA forces of the CPI (Maoist) against feudal lords and against the states' armed police forces to defend the gains of the revolutionary movement. Comrade Raghavulu continually developed his skills and knowledge all through out the above period of transformation, so as to be able to meet the demands of the growing movement, to lead and guide it to the next stage. Starting his revolutionary career as a student organizer comrade Raghavulu grew up to become a member of the state committee through hard work, revolutionary dedication, practice and study and good leadership capabilities.

A COMRADE FROM A POOR PESANT BACK GROUND

It no wonder that comrade Raghavulu took to the revolutionary movement as fish takes to water since he was born in a poor peasant family from a backward cast (Yadava). He lost his mother in his childhood days itself. The youngest of

four siblings he grew up herding goats and cattle and attending to farm work while continuing his school studies. This family back ground enabled him in gaining an understanding about class and cast oppression in the rural areas. He developed a strong empathy to wards his class brothers and sisters. This empathy naturally led him to search for an organization that will lead him and his class towards emancipation. His search finally ended when he was able to contact the organizer of the Radical Students Union, in 1983. At that time comrade Raghavulu was studying Intermediate (+2) in a collage in Narsaraopeta town in Guntur district. From



that time to the moment of his martyrdom there was no looking back for that comrade in more than two decades of revolutionary life. He became one of those great revolutionary leaders who left their imprint on the revolutionary movement of Andhra in general and of Guntur district in particular.

EARLY GROWTH

Right from the time he came into contact with the RSU, comrade Raghavulu started playing an active role in its activities. He enthusiastically participated in the "Assembly Election Boycott Campaign" and the "Go To The Villages Campaign" the RSU conducted in December 1983 and the summer of 1984 respectively. It was during the course of the later campaign that he decided to dedicate his life in the service of the revolution, having been enthused by his experience among the masses during the campaigns and having obtained a more

deeper theoretical understanding through the political classes conducted as a part of those campaign programs. He became a professional revolutionary in 1984.

From that time onward he worked in different areas as per the decisions of the party, the erstwhile CPI (ML)[PW], as an organizer of the youth in his home town, Narsaraopeta, as an organizer of a rural center, Tripurantakam, abutting the Nallamala forest, as an organizer in Phirangipuram, and as an organizer in Gurajala town in Palnadu area. Here he was arrested and sent to jail. The harsh jail life could not dampen the revolutionary in him; instead he turned that period in to a period of deep study to improve his theoretical knowledge with the help of fellow comrades in the jail commune. He came out of the jail in 1988 and immediately plunged in to revolutionary activities with renewed energy and enhanced understanding. This time the party sent him to the area, which he was raring to work right from the start of his career, the Palnadu area. Now, here a few words about the Palnadu area.

PALNADU —A GUERILLA ZONE WITH A GREAT REVOLUTIONARY LEGACY

Palnadu lies in the western part of the coastal district. Guntur. Though the coastal areas of the district are highly developed, Palnadu remained and still remains as one of the most backward areas of the state, though it has vast mineral resources like limestone etc. Much of its area is covered by Nallamala forest, though not thick. Feudalism is deeply entrenched here with upper cast landlords (Kamma, Reddy) owning hundreds of acres of land running virtual fiefdoms in their areas of influence. Thousands of acre of Temple Endowment lands are in their absolute control. They rule every aspect of the lives of the toiling masses, exploiting them ruthlessly by every possible means.

Like the landlords, forest officials here used to run their own kingdom squeezing money and appropriating livestock like chickens, goats etc of the masses by way of fines, levies and through exhort ions.

With such an exploitation going on for centuries, the people of this area naturally had a glorious history of waging anti-feudal, anti-imperialist struggles. This area stood as one of the strong rears of the Great Telangana Peasant Armed Struggle. After the outbreak of the Naxalbari Peasant

Armed Revolt and the formation of the CPI (ML), the AP state committee of that party was constituted in the presence of comrade Charu Majumdar in Guttikondabilam village of Palnadu.

Taking the social conditions, history and the terrain of this area in to consideration the district committee of the erstwhile CPI (ML) [PW] started earnest efforts to spread the revolutionary movement to this area during the middle 80's. That party was able to gain the confidence of the people by 1987. The guerillas of that party were able to penetrate among the peasant masses, mobiles and organize them in to series of anti-feudal struggles and struggles against the corrupt and oppressive forest officials. Strong mass organizations got established in many villages.

It was at this stage, the party decided to send comrade Raghavulu as an organizer of a rural center, the Bollapalli center, in a 1+2 formation.

FULL BLOOMING OF REVOLUTIONARY POTENTIALITIES

The fast growth in the revolutionary movement in the Palnadu area, gaining more depth and intensity brought along with it new challenges and problems at every step, which were in way a new experience as well as a test for his leadership capabilities. To his credit, comrade Raghavlu passed this test with flying colors, by deep study and dedicated hard work and bringing in to full play all his capabilities and potentialities. With his excellent leadership qualities, his deep and penetrating analysis of the problems and methods for solving them and his exemplary revolutionary behavior toward the masse, he soon won the love and affection of the revolutionary masses of that area. That area soon witnessed series of militant mass struggles on diverse issues, the important ones being, the struggles against the oppressive forest officials, land occupation struggles, struggle for enhancement of rates of collected Tendu leaf, struggle for a ban on the sale of country liquor, trade union struggles etc. In fact, the party organizations and mass organizations of that area took up all most all issues concerning the life and livelihood of the peasant masses and of workers, mobilized, organized and waged successful struggles under his guidance and leadership.

Comrade Raghavulu never lost sight

of the task of building strong bodies of the party and of the mass organizations. Under his focused guidance and leadership, organizers and members of the guerilla squads assiduously built party cells and organs of the mass organizations. Thanks to his dedicated and focused work, a network of strong party and mass organizations came into functioning all through out the area of his work.

Comrade Raghavulu was co-opted as a member of the district committee in 1993. He was re-elected as a member of the DC in 1995.

REJUVENATING THE MOVEMENT IN THE DACHEPALLI AREA

Much enthused by the work and capabilities of comrade Raghavulu the district committee entrusted him with the responsibility of re-juvenation of the movement in the Dachepalli area, which incidentally was the center of the revolutionary movement in that area and where the movement was on the ebb since 1991. Comrade Raghavlu took the task the party entrusted him as one more challenge and worked hard to re-ignite the movement there, which incidentally had a strong party and mass organizations structure. Soon his efforts bore fruit and a new wave of mass struggles shook that area. The people moved in hundreds in such struggles as the occupation of Temple endowment lands; the struggles against exorbitant rates of interests; struggles for enhancement of wages of agricultural labor etc. The movement soon grew to a stage of the revolutionary masses enforcing a ceiling on the land holdings of the landlords and occupying the surplus land. The masses occupied thousands of acres of land. Village development committees and genuine people's co-operative societies were formed in several villages, as for-runners of the revolutionary organs of peoples' power. Comrade Raghavulu made strenuous efforts to improve him self in a way he can give able and efficient leadership to the ever-intensifying class struggle and paid particular attention to gain more in-depth knowledge from the raging mass struggles.

AN EFFICIENT MILITARY COMMANDER

A fact that must be mentioned while paying tributes to the eternal memory of the exemplary revolutionary, comrade Raghavulu is that he is equally adept in

military matters as he was with the organization of militant mass struggles. The famous military actions executed by the fighters of the PLGA units of Guntur such as the raid and seizure of rifles from the NCC godown of SSN Collage of Narsarao peta, the successful raids on the police stations at Addanki, Nandigama and Chilakluripeta, the Kottur militia ambush and the attack on the Gray Hounds police in Adigoppula village were all executed under his careful planning and direction.

STATE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND THE ENTRUSTING OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ROYALASEEMA REGION

Comrade Raghavulu was co-opted in to the AP state committee and was entrusted with the responsibility of the Royalaseema region of AP. As a dedicated and disciplined member of the party he took up the responsibility. In the one year he was able to work there before his martyrdom, he tried by all his might to revive the movement there. But before he could gain a real grip over the situation there and before he could re-juvenate the movement there as he successfully did in the Dachepalli area he became a martyr,

succumbing to the bullets of the fascist Andhra police.

A LEADER WITH MANY QUALITIES WORTH EMULATION

Comrade Raghavulu was the son of an ordinary peasant from a backward cast who grew up in to a top leader of the Maoist movement in India by sheer dedicated revolutionary work, practice and study. A life that was dedicated solely to the service of the oppressed masses of the country, a burning hatred towards the exploiters and oppressors of the people, a great heart which forever was ready to accept his shortcomings and mistakes, a discipline that befits only a great communist, a great sense of self-sacrifice, these and other such great qualities which stand as the touchstones demarcating the genuine revolutionaries from the fake ones, are the qualities comrade Raghavulu acquired during the course of his two decades of revolutionary life. Any true tribute to the memory of that comrade will ring true only one sincerely tries to emulate them as far as possible.

Long live the memories of the fallen people's hero- comrade Raghavulu. **PM**

IN MEMORY OF COM. CHANDRASEKHARA RAO

ON Nov. 22, 2006 Com. Vemuri Chandrasekhara Rao (alias Ravi, Duryodhan, Buchchi, and Khateeb Ansari) passed away at the age of 62, as a result of an attack of dengue. Ravi was one of the main initiators of the Maoist movement in Maharashtra, having been steeled in the fire of the historic Srikakulam movement in Andhra Pradesh during the late 1960s. Though he distanced himself from the Party in the mid-1980s, he remained a sympathizer of the movement till his last days.

Comrade Ravi was born in a village in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh into a middle-peasant family. From his youngest days he lived by his ideals and principles. Initially he was attracted by Gandhism, but, by the time he reached college, he drew close to Marxism and became an active member of the SFI. While he was studying at the Bapatla Agricultural College in Guntur district, the thunder of the Naxalbari uprising echoed in Srikakulam, inspiring an entire generation of youth. Students at the Guntur Medical College were among the first to be inspired by the new revolutionary upsurge in the country. The Srikakulam upsurge attracted the cream of the students from AP, and Guntur was a major centre. The most brilliant students, fired by the ideals of revolution, like the gold medalist, martyr Dr Chaganti Bhaskar Rao, gave up their studies and picked up the gun. Another such student to go to Srikakulam was Chandrasekhara Rao. From 1969 to early 1971 Ravi was tempered in the fire of the ongoing armed struggle and he witnessed the best of his fellow comrades falling to enemy bullets. He, now known as com. Chandram, grew to become a sub-centre commander under the leadership of Vempatapu Satyam, the legendary leader of the Srikakulam movement. He was one of the accused in the notorious Parvatipuram Conspiracy Case and an important target for the enemy.

By late 1970 the best of the leadership in Srikakulam were martyred and the movement was facing serious problems. Without a rupee in his pocket, avoiding the intelligence network of the AP police, he went to Mumbai (a place he had never seen), with the aim of spreading the revolutionary message.

In the early days, he lived a life of semi-starvation, working as a hotel boy washing dishes and living on the streets. He could not approach any relative as all would be

under police surveillance. Even in those days, on this count he showed no liberalness, and worked his way to survival. Being a brilliant artist, and getting to know the ways of a big metropolis, he devised the art of paintings on egg-shells and sea-shells, selling them in the market. With this he was able to earn proper meals and stay in some dingy slum room on rent. But even through this agonized existence, he did not lose his revolutionary ideals, and soon got in touch with workers and developed a core of Maoists who began spreading their ideology and organization in some major factories of Mumbai. He also initiated contacts amongst Telugu workers and built an extensive base amongst them, particularly amongst the textile workers. He initiated a Telugu workers' magazine called 'Karmika Vargam', which brought Maoist politics to the working class. Later, it was these working class cells that merged with the rising revolutionary student movement in Mumbai that became the embryonic form of a Maoist unit in Maharashtra.

This was a period of ideological confusion with various forms of rightist and left sectarian trends dominating the then M-L movement; and Ravi, with his depth of ideological and political understanding, was able to steer the incipient Maoist movement of Mumbai away from these pitfalls. And as the revolutionary movement began to spread extensively amongst the workers, slum-dwellers and students, Ravi established links with what was to become the CPI(ML)(PW). Convinced by the standpoint the PW took, he translated the Telugu PW documents into English. This helped the process of the Mumbai group being absorbed into the then CPI(ML)(PW), once it was formed.

Being a prolific reader with an insatiable thirst for knowledge of all kinds, he wielded the pen as effectively as he did the gun in Srikakulam. He wrote extensively in both English and Telugu under various pseudonyms. Particularly important was his intervention in the then ongoing debate on the mode of production where many a Left intellectual sought to portray the Green Revolution as having transformed India into a capitalist society. Writing under the name of Khateeb Ansari, Ravi conclusively proved that India continued to be semi-feudal. His particular interest was philosophy and his article, '*We Must be Good at Our Philosophy*',

continues to act to this day as one of the best teachers of dialectical materialism for the ordinary cadre. Besides, he wrote numerous articles in magazines like Frontier and Aruna Tara (Telugu). He was also a poet giving poetic expression to his deep feelings on many facets of life. He was an extremely intense person.

Many of his qualities were a model for communists to emulate. He was highly principled and never resorted to any petty intrigues; he was most forthright and straightforward and said exactly what he felt; he had a very critical mind and did not accept anything at face-value and sought to go into the essence of phenomena (and individuals); he studied voraciously and sort to go to the roots of all questions and problems; and, most important of all, he was a patient and effective teacher, always educating and raising the consciousness of the cadre.

Ironically, it was this depth for seeking answers that led to his distancing himself from the Party after the restoration of capitalism in China and the setback to most of the communist revolutions. He was seeking answers to various ideological issues, including the bureaucratization and dangers of power corrupting communist leaders after the victory of all the revolutions, leading to the rise of a new bourgeoisie and capitalist restoration. Also, his health problems were serious.

Yet, even after leaving the Party he could not cut himself off from the movement and never went against it and continued his life as an agriculturist/gardener in Andhra University at Visakhapatnam till his retirement. Meanwhile, he had married a fellow comrade and they had two children. His health was improving and had begun to write again when dengue tragically took his life. A memorial meeting in his village in Krishna District was widely attended by a varied spectrum ranging from the CPI, to various comrades from ML groups and the Maoists.

Comrade Ravi was a person whose simplicity, honesty and straightforwardness endeared him to all those who live by principles. His was an important contribution to the communist movement in India in the period when the M-L was in a state of confusion. He will be remembered by those who knew him for all these values and as a patient teacher.

P M

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writers and artistes among those killed. Most of them were uneducated who learnt to read and write after joining the movement. They had fought the patriarchal feudal attitudes at their homes and in the villages and had stepped out into the movement to change their lives and those of the people for the better. For example Sangeetha who got killed along with Com. Madhav (A.P. State Secretary) was a young widow from Medak district. She had to face many hardships for being so 'inauspicious' as to lose her husband at a young age. She came to Hyderabad not only in search of work but also in search of a dignified life. She was an illiterate and used to wash dishes for a livelihood. Her search for dignity for herself broadened into the search for the dignity of the whole womankind which led her to join the revolutionary armed struggle. Soon she learnt to read and write and became a member of the JNM squad.

Though it has been proved time and again that the AP police are the most notorious in inventing new methods of killing, the recent mass murders of armed squads by poisoning them before pumping bullets into their bodies is very appalling. It started with the Manala mass murder on 7th March 2005. Under the guidance of the police a covert mixed poison in the food of the CPI (Maoist) guerillas of Nizamabad district. The police caught ten unconscious guerillas, tortured them in a very cruel and ghastly manner and killed them. Three of them were women - Shobha was a commander; Sunitha was a deputy commander and Sneha a squad member. Only one person, who escaped alive by hiding under a rock and coming out only after the press reached the spot, later revealed that the police raped Sneha, who was injured and lying helpless and then killed her. Premalatha and Manjula got injured in an encounter in Nalgonda district on July 25, 2005. They were raped and killed by the police as alleged by the people of that area.

YSR comes from Kadapa district and to keep him safe the most loyal police started 'cleaning' Kadapa of its RED color. The more they tried to wipe it the darker it became, but with the blood of the sons and daughters of the revolution. The "Maanala"-type incident was repeated twice in Kadapa, which took 18 lives of revolutionaries of which 10 were women. Once on 24th April 2006 when the whole

squad was poisoned and shot at point blank range in Sundupalli, 6 women comrades were killed along with three others. The second time, on 9th Nov 06, the same ghastly method was used to kill a squad of 9 in which the State committee member Com. Obuleshu was killed with 8 others. Com. Chandana, who became a terror in the hearts of the Prakasam district police, was among the martyred. She continuously made headlines in the district papers while in Nallamala. It is reported that she was a district committee member and recently shifted to Rayalaseema. Four women were martyred in this incident.

On July 23rd when Com. Madhav got killed 5 women comrades were also killed along with two men. Police harassed the family members who had to agitate for four days to get home the bodies of the deceased. Though the Home Minister Jana Reddy gave his word in public that they will preserve the bodies they shamelessly violated it and as a result the bodies were disfigured and highly decomposed. The police didn't even bother to take photographs to identify the bodies. They didn't allow the photographers to take close up shots. The family members could not identify their dear ones in that horrifying state. The confusion regarding the identity of the women comrades persists till date.

Apart from killing in 'encounters' many state sponsored black gangs with different names sprang up to 'tackle' the democratic movements. Earlier it was different types of tigers, like the green tigers, Rachakonda tigers, Nallamala tigers etc, now it is the Cobras. The AP police and SIB have been floating black gangs to create terror among the sympathizers and revolutionary masses and revolutionary and democratic mass organizations since a decade. They convert some renegade naxalites into mafia gangs and use them as black gangs to threaten and also to kill democrats. These gangs never even spared women. Since AP has a rich tradition of women participating in revolutionary and democratic movements since the Great Telangana Armed Struggle days, it is not surprising that the police target them through these gangsters also.

One of the first victims of these gangs had been the people's singer, the nightingale who expressed the anguish of the Telangana people — Belli Lalitha. The first and most notorious of these gangsters, Nayeem planned to murder her.

He and the police conspired and got her hacked into 17 pieces. They tried to dispose these pieces in various places but after a lot of agitation from the people finally the truth came out. This was one of the most gruesome murders in the history of AP, and that too of a woman. This was in 1999 when Chandrababu Naidu was the Chief Minister of AP.

The Narsa Cobras were formed after the CPI (Maoist) guerillas killed a Congress MLA Narsi Reddy in August 2005. The Kakatiya cobras, Nallamala cobras and many others followed suit. These Cobras have killed Kanakachary, a teacher on August 24th 2005 and Mannem Prasad, a bank employee on 10th September 2005 and Dasari Muneppa, a teacher and District convenor of the Holiya Dasara Sangam on 22nd November 2005, for being active in democratic organizations and lending their voice to the cause of the oppressed. Of these three, Muneppa was killed just because he condemned the killing of Mannem Prasad bravely in spite of the threats from the killer gangs. There were 10 others who were silently condemned to death by these gangs in different methods. Some were killed in the name of the CPI (Maoist) also. At a later date the party leaders clarified that it is the handiwork of these Cobras. Not stopping at that, they have been issuing death threats to many democrats and activists of mass organizations. Releasing long lists of their targets to the press, calling them and their family members on the phone, trying to terrorize them by asking them to resign or face death, following them in a threatening manner etc — are some of the terrorizing tactics of these Cobras.

After killing the above mentioned democrats they did not stop there. They went on calling all the activists of different organizations and threatened that nobody should attend the funerals and conduct memorial meetings. The "hit list" was so long and includes many women too, like: Sujatha, the General Secretary of APCMS; Jyothi, President of APCMS; Pavana, State Joint Secretary of the APCMS; Jaya, State EC member of the APCMS; Devendra, State EC member of APCMS and also the Working Group member of CAVOW (Committee Against Violence on Women), a nationwide Organization; and Sandhya, an EC member of Stree Chaitanya Sravanthi in Mahaboobnagar district, a constituent member of APCMS. Swarupa, a local leader of Stree Chaitanya Sravanthi, was

arrested and booked in the Narsi Reddy's murder case just because she lives with her family in Makhthal where the MLA got killed. Her husband who is an activist of another mass organization (KNPS) was also jailed in the same false case. Their STD booth was ransacked by the Cobras while they were participating in the funeral of Kanakachary.

The state co-convenor of the 'Martyrs relatives and Friends Committee', Padma Kumari's name appeared many times in the 'hit list' of the Cobras. She was even threatened by them that her head will be chopped off and hanged at the entrance of Warangal if she continues to fight for the dead bodies to be handed over to the families. That, of course, is another story where movements with the relatives and friends had to be built up even for the fight for the dead bodies. The police simply and shamelessly say that even dead bodies will "agitate" and hence they will not give the bodies. The Home Minister himself said this recently in front of the media. It is indeed true in A.P. People defy any police order, however cruel it is, and just go bravely to pay homage to their beloved leaders.

Padma Kumari, Vengalamma, Anjamma, Bharathi, Venkata Subbamma, the leaders of this committee in various districts, were continuously under the threats of the Cobras and the police. Venkata Subbamma's son Jeevan and daughter Nagamani laid down their lives for the people. Her husband Uppu Krishna who is the convenor of the 'Martyrs relatives and Friends Committee' was also on the list. Some months ago he was severely beaten by the gangs with iron rods. He had multiple fractures. And later he was kidnapped by the civil police, and was only produced in court under false charges after the activists agitated for his release. Venkata Subbamma tried to stop the plain clothes police when they were abducting her husband. She bravely questioned them and she too was kidnapped along with him. They were in a bus after attending Com. Obuleshu's funeral when this incident took place. The teachers of DTF (teacher's organisation), the activists of KNPS (anti-caste organisation), members of RWF, Members of PDF (anti-imperialist front), and activists of TSF (Telangana movement), APCLC and HRF (civil liberties organisations) are the regular targets of these gangs. These gangs are mainly used to suppress the democratic and

progressive movements, while the armed struggle is being suppressed with 'encounters'.

Sneha, Kasim and Ramu, the state leaders of the Telangana Student Front, went to Rayalagandi temple in Amrabad mandal in Mahabubnagar district to attend another TSF member's, Raghu's, marriage. They were picked up by the police and kept in illegal custody for one day and were released after a major protest by the students. The police accused them of attending a secret meeting with the Maoists in the temple and to plant land mines in the nearby forest in the guise of attending the marriage. They even booked them under false cases in which they alleged that these people have the "*hit list of important police officials and ministers who are to be eliminated*" by the central committee of the CPI (Maoists). They even alleged that these people are assisting the central committee in their task.

The attack on Laddah, the S.P of Prakasam district, was used as the pretext to unleash violence on the legal mass organizations that are active in Prakasam district and are in no way connected with such actions. The state president, D.Prabhakar, and the Prakasam district secretary of KNPS were picked up from their respective homes in Chimakurthy of Prakasam district on May 9th 2005 and were kept in illegal custody for 11 days. Meanwhile their arrest was denied by the police. So Prabhakar's wife Kusuma and Venkatarao's wife Adilaxmi went on hunger strike in front of the MRO's office, on 12th May 2006 demanding the release of the two. The police instead of producing the leaders arrested these two women also on 15th May. Suseela an activist of the KNPS from Aalapurapadu was tortured for 3 days along with 8 other mass organization leaders. Mahabubnagar district secretary of KNPS Laxminarayana was threatened and forced to resign from the organization. He was later booked under false cases. They did not even leave his wife Ramulamma. She was booked under false cases just because she is the wife of Laxminarayana. Similarly Leelamma was booked under a false case just because she is the wife of Balaiah a leader of APCLC.

There are several incidents to show how even ordinary persons are being harassed by the police just for living in the movement areas. We are mentioning only two or three incidents just to understand the nature of such repression. Gopavaram

Mahalaxmi is a 21 year old destitute who lives in a village in Prakasam district. She has nobody except her old father whom she has to feed. She was arrested in February this year on the charges that she is a naxalite and extorting money. A.P police think themselves to be too smart. So they added some more charges like destruction of government property etc on the poor lady. She was remanded and got bail subsequently. But where is the money for her to pay the security deposit? There was no one to stand as a guarantee either. She remained in the jail for 9 months. Finally the district judge who studied her case took sympathy on her and released her on personal bond.

In another incident, Dhanikonda Jyothi became the victim of state violence. She belongs to a poor basket weaving family. Her family could not make a living with the traditional basket weaving work and hence shifted to masonry work. She migrated to Nandyal (Kadapa district) along with other masons. One day she was stopped by the police while returning from mason work along with three other women. They got suspicious that she is a Maoist (for no reason) and picked her up. She was kept in illegal custody for 15 days and tortured like hell. When they could not get any "information" they realized their "mistake." But there is no problem for them. It is always easy for them to tackle "women". They booked her under the "Immoral trafficking act" and sent her to jail. But by that time that poor woman lost all energy due to the police "treatment" and became unconscious in jail. She was rushed to the hospital with numerous injuries on her body and she was suffering from blood stools. Her turmoil did not end there. She was chained to the bed in the hospital and two cops kept vigil on her. They were worried that the semi conscious woman will "escape" from the hospital. A reporter photographed the scene and enquired into the details and found the true story. Next day the chains were removed but not the cases foisted against her, leave alone the punishment for violating human rights.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. All the incidents quoted here in no way give us the complete picture of the state violence on women in AP. These are just a documentation of some of the most publicized events or those that managed to make it to the papers or magazines. In fact, we could not even get all the details of the women who died in encounters. This


report would become a book if we mention all the information available with us. But one more incident is worth mentioning as it represents another type of killing. There was a small hospital in Appapur (perhaps the only one) which is close to the Nallamala forest. But this is the only hospital to which many Chenchu tribes usually go. A good hearted doctor was posted to this hospital and she was booked under a case that she was treating naxalites. In AP performing one's own duty is also a crime. When it is so difficult for male doctors to face such charges one can imagine the plight of a female doctor, the additional pressure from her family and society. She left the job months ago and no other doctor dared to join till date. The Chenchu population is falling drastically and a major reason of death is malaria, besides malnutrition. In the past one decade the population has reduced from 10,000 odd to 7,000. Who is responsible for these silent deaths? Is

it not state violence?

There is another angle also to this state repression. It is the story of those women who are not members of any party or mass organization but face state violence just because they are the members of the family of party cadre or mass organization members. We have not added all that here. If we add the sufferings of the wives, mothers and daughters of the mass organization members who were continuously threatened by the Cobra gangs and the like; the anguish of the female members when they lost their dear ones; the violence they have to face just because they relate to those who were targeted; the picture becomes grimmer. But these brave women of the fighting land of AP are painting the State red with their resistance.

Let us end this article with an incident of protest. When an activist of KNPS was arrested and kept in illegal custody his wife went on hunger strike with the support of many activists. The police made him call her and tell her that if she will not end the

hunger strike he would be killed. She replied: *"okay you will die in their hands I will die on the hunger strike. But both of us will die for the same cause."* That is how the women of AP are continuing their fighting spirit creating their rightful space in half the sky.

Whether it is the women who are braving the bullets or the "nameless" women who mean just nothing for the State, they have become a source of inspiration for many. It is these brave women who stood like a mighty wall in Mangapet when the police tried to disturb the funeral of Com. Madhav, that are the ray of hope in this darkness. It is the strength of the hundreds of mothers and sisters and wives of the martyred who are fighting for their rights to perform funerals. It is their mass mourning in a land where even tears are banned that gives us the courage to defy any unscrupulous law or their so-called order. This is the added strength for the men and women who are already fighting for their just rights and an egalitarian society. 

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capitalists are coming now to West Bengal? He asked. Because, the price of land here is far lower than the price in, let us say, Noida or Faridabad. The Tatas are coming to West Bengal on their own and Buddhadev, the WB chief minister cannot take any credit for that. They would have definitely come had there been so such lackeys as Buddhadev. What kind of 'chemical hub' are the Salims going to set up in Nadigram? Nobody knows. Is it for toxic chemicals which had been banned by the European Union? Nadigram could well be the ideal place to dump those toxic elements. Who would benefit from the Tata motor factory? Undoubtedly the Tatas themselves. As it would be a capital-intensive enterprise, only a small number of people would get employment. That, in his opinion, could never be called 'development'; it could only be mal-development.

The next speaker was Prof. Dipankar Chakraborty who spoke on 'Singur and Nadigram in the light of the global Struggle against Globalization'. He started with a comparison between the peasant movement of the 1960s and peasant movement of Singur and

Nadigram. Unlike the earlier days, natural scientists are coming to the fore in support of the peasants' struggle against the land acquisition policy of the state. This is welcome. While referring to globalization in the context of present-day neo-liberal policy, he said that in the present-day world, the role of the state had not diminished; only that there is a relaxation in state control. Then he dwelt on the anti-globalization struggles in different parts of the world, such as the Zapatista movement of 1993 in Mexico, that of Venezuela in 1992, that of 2006 in Bangladesh—all against land acquisition. The latest is that of Singur. These movements were not led by any particular political party, but by new social and political forces. Nadigram struggle, no doubt, is a higher form of struggle. It is part and parcel of the struggle against globalization. Then he cautioned against the attempts of some political parties to utilize these for petty election gains. The more the people stand united in this struggle, the stronger the anti-globalization struggle would become. The struggle in Nadigram, in his opinion, is more directly a struggle against SEZ. However, there should be a

clear-cut ideology to fight against imperialism. There might have been mistakes in the struggle for the realization of socialism. But, he added, anti-imperialist struggles would have to be launched on the socialist basis.

The last speaker, Prof. Ratan Khasnabis talked on the 'Politics and Economics of Globalization'. He spoke in general terms on accumulation of property, rule of property, currency convertibility, FDI, jobless growth etc. The interactive session was chaired by DR. Meher Engineer, former head of the Bose Institute.

What was generally lacking in the all-day-discussions was that important questions were not raised. The alternative model of development, the nature of it, whether we should import foreign capital and technology or part of it, or whether we should be entirely self-reliant, whether a true model of people's development could at all be feasible without at the same time getting rid of the present property relations altogether—these questions remained practically unaddressed. Let us sincerely hope that vital questions such as these would be addressed by the teachers and scientists in future. 

LIST OF MAHILA COMRADES KILLED IN AP DURING THE LAST 2½ YEARS

S. No.	Date	Name	Status	Place of the incident
1.	8,Jan. '05	Lakshmi,	APCMS State ECM,	Prakasam dt encounter
2.	15,Jan. '05	unidentified comrade	Nallamala, fake encounter	
3.	15, Jan. '05	Santha	Squad member,	Mahabubnagar, fake encounter
4.	23, Feb. '05	Padma	Squad member, Korutla,	(Karimnagar dt)encounter
5.	27, Feb '05	Vasantha	VRCSmember`	RamagiriKhila,(krmgr) fake enctr.
6.	7, Mar. '05	Shobha	Commander, Nizamabad, Manala covert operation	
7.	7, Mar. '05	Sunita	Deputy Commander, ,, ,,	
8.	7, Mar. '05	Sneha	Squad member, ,, ,,	
9.	15, Mar.'05	Sudha	DCM, CPI(ML)Janashakthi, Wgl dt., encounter	
10.	1, Apr.'05	Pushpa	Commander, Mahabubnagar, Fake encounter	
11.	17, Apr.'05	Santhi	Squad member, East Division, encounter	
12.	17, Apr. '05	Swarupa	Squad member, ,, ,,	
13.	17, Apr. '05	Anitha	Squad member, ,, ,,	
14.	21, Apr. '05	Vasantha,	Squad member, Guntur, fake encounter	
15.	21, Apr. '05	Sunitha,	Squad member, Guntur, fake encounter	
16.	25, July '05	Premalatha,	Squad member, Nalgonda, encounter	
17.	27, Apr.'05	Madhavi,	CPUSI(DBSV)Veeranna gp, Fake	
18.	27, Apr.'05	Manjula,	Squad member, ,, ,,	
19.	26, Oct'05	Rajeshwari,	Squad member, Visakha Dt	
20.	21, Nov.'05	Battu Elisha	Squad member, Warangal Dt	
21.	22, Nov. '05	Ammubai	Squad member, Jogapur, Adilabad, encounter	
22.	10, Dec. 05	Sruthi,	Squad member, Prakasam Dt encounter	
23.	27, Dec. 05	Vijayakumari,	Squad member, Guntur dt	
24.	5, Feb.'06	Eshwaramma,	Sympathiser, fake encounter	
25.	21, Apr.'06	Bayamma	(prajaprathighatana)	Bhupathipur,wgl dt encounter
26.	28, Apr.'06	Saake Laxmidevi, Sundupalli, Kadapa		Dt covert operation
27.	28, Apr.'06	Uppara Chandrakala	- do-	
28.	28, Apr.'06	Boya Varaalamma	- do-	
29.	28, Apr.'06	Konanki Nagaveni	- do-	
30.	28, Apr.'06	Boya Rathnamma	- do-	
31.	28, Apr.'06	Kumari	-do-	
32.	30, Apr.'06	Basupaka Devi		Mahabubnagar dt fake encounter
33.	30, Apr.'06	unidentified	Sympathiser,	Peddarutla, Prkm dt., fake enctr
34.	22, May '06	Chandrakala		Malleswari, Prakasam Dt.
35.	31, May' 06	unidentified	Squad mbr,	Kalimela.Joint operation Ap.Or
36.	31, May' 06	unidentified,	Squad member, Kalimela.	- Do-
37.	18 June,06	B.Suvarna ,	platoon member,Racharla,	Prakasam dt.
38.	20 June,06	K.Salamma	squad member, Sagar rd,	Nalgonda,fake enctr
39.	21 June,06	Swarupa	commander Khammam dt,	encounter
40.	27 June,06	Indira ACS,	Kalwakurthy squad,	MBNR dt, encounter
41.	27 June,06	Swarupa	deputy commander	-do-
42.	27 June,06	Madhavi	squad member	-do-
43.	27 June,06	Suguna	squad member	-do-
44.	27 June,06	Padma	squad member	-do-
45.	27 June,06	Pushpa	squadmember	-do-
46.	23 July,06	Rajitha @Suseela	ACM, Palutla,	Nallamala encounter
47.	23 July,06	Sangitha	JNM member,	-do-
48.	23 July,06	Madhavi	Section commander	-do-
49.	23 July,06	Mamatha,	Platoon member	-do-
50.	23 July,06	Seetha @Parvathi	Platoon member-do-	
51.	14,sept, 06	Prameela,	commander Thadwai, Warangal dt encounter	
52.	14,sept, 06	Padma	squad member	-do-
53.	14,sept, 06	Nirmala	squad member	-do-
54.	14 oct.'06	Mesram Jangubai	DCM, Mangi, Adilabad	
55.	9 Nov.'06	Prashanthi@Chandana	DCM, Kadapa, covert operation	
56.	9 Nov.'06	Parvathi @Nagamani	Platoon member -do-	
57.	9 Nov.'06	Golla Rajyalaxmi	squad member	-do-
58.	9 Nov.'06	Sujatha @Lalitha	squad member	-do-
59.	15,Dec.'06	Manjula,(PrajaPrathighatana), Wgl dt		fake enctr
60.	27Dec,'06	Kavitha @Jyothi, Visakha Dt		fake encounter

RED SALUTES TO MARTYR NATHUNJI

ON March 6th 2007 Nevada Zonal Committee Secretary of the CPI (Maoist), com.

Nathunji (alias Arunji) was arrested from Khera village while he was recovering from illness. He was then brutally tortured and beaten to death in police lock-up. The police sought to cover up by instituting an official inquiry into the death. First they sought to diffuse the situation when even the DIG of police issued a call to the Maoists not to retaliate as a high level inquiry had been ordered and promised action. But as the masses of his area in Gaya-Aurangabad districts immediately reacted with bandhs and road-blockades, the police changed their story propagating that he was

involved in numerous cases and had an award on his head. The Bihar- Jharkhand Special Area Committee gave a call for a Bihar Bandh on March 15th which seriously disrupted life throughout the state, particularly in Gaya and Aurangabad

districts. This was inspite of the fact that armed contingents were swarming all over Bihar three days before the bandh call.



Com Nathunji began his political life as far back as 1980 when he was involved in anti-feudal struggles against the landlord of his village. In 1984 he was arrested and spent one year in jail. His area was the centre for many of the Landlord

Senas. He fought against all these valiantly. Not only against the landlord senas, he also had to face the wrath of the Liberation party. In the 1990s when he had gone to Lithora village the liberation attacked him so brutally that they left him for dead. He was grievously injured and just about managed to survive.

Nathunji was a very dedicated and simple comrade and was very popular amongst the people. Wherever he went people accepted him as one of their own family. His village has always been a centre of the revolutionary movement. Working first as an ordinary member, in 1990 he became a member of the Zonal Committee, and later its secretary.

Nathunji was exemplary in his service to the people and was an example for all communists. The immediate reaction of the masses was an indication of his popularity. His comrades, in a statement have vowed to live up to his ideals and avenge his killing.



SEMINAR ON THE 'PATH OF DEVELOPMENT'

A SEMINAR on the 'Path of Development' was organized on 10 March by the newly-formed organization, 'Teachers and Scientists Against Mal-Development' (TASAM) in Sevakendra on Convent Road in Kolkata. The panel of speakers included Prof. Debdas Banerjee of the Centre of Development Studies, Kolkata, Shri Debabrata Banerjee, a former official of the Revenue Department of WB government, Prof. Dipankar Chakraborty, editor of *Aneek*, a Bengali periodical and Prof. Ratan Khasnabis of Calcutta University. The session was chaired by Prof. Debabrata Panda. The session was followed by an interactive session where many of those present in the hall took part. It was a well-attended gathering.

Dendas Banerjee, speaking on 'Debates relating to Development: Recent Perspectives' started with the neo-liberal paradigm that seeks to relate development to the increase in per capita income. He then referred to other schools of thought to refute this view and cited examples from Punjab, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu to argue that the increase in per capita income did not necessarily imply a decrease in poverty. Human development should necessarily have to be an all-round development in agriculture, industry, education, health and other fields and that there should be some place for representative democracy and people's choice. There is no such place of the people in the neo-liberal scheme of development.

Debabrata Banerjee dwelt on 'Land

Reform: Past & Future' in West Bengal. He stated that there is nothing to boast about 'Operation Barga' introduced by the 'left-front' government of West Bengal after the CPM and its allies came to power in 1977 by riding on an anti-Indira wave. Operation Barga was simply a step to record the names of bargadars who tilled other's lands. In 1978, when the three-tier Panchayati system was set up in the countryside, the CPM party had a meager 28,000 members, most of whom were from urban areas. Through the new Panchayati system, it expanded its support base among the middle peasantry and the moneylenders. In fact, a large number of CPM members in the rural areas now-a-days are usurers. Why is it that big

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YSR's "INDIRAMMA" OR EMERGENCY RAJ IN AP

An Account of brutalities on women Activists in the 2 ½ years of YSR Rule

Sangitha and Suvarna

Mr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh kept on saying that he will bring "Indiramma's Raj" again for the people. A farmer in a cartoon wonders whether he means emergency. That's no more a joke now. He more than proved it with so much of bloodshed in the past two and half years of his "police raj" in A.P. YSR came to power promising the people that he will restore democratic rights, give free electricity to farmers, hold talks with the naxalites etc. He held the drama of democracy for six months and started to shed his masks one after the other. Many times YSR called the former CM Chandrababu Naidu a stooge of the World Bank while he was in the opposition. He not only continued the tradition but also tried to outwit him in no time. He and his favorite DGP (in) Sen experimented with many new methods in curtailing the revolutionary movement. Though repression is not new to the people of A.P., still this extent of bloodshed is unprecedented even when compared to Naidu's rule.

After the "Talks Drama" was over, his government didn't waste any time. The mayhem started with a fake encounter of Lakshmi, a state executive committee member of the Andhra Pradesh Chaithanya Mahila Samakhya, a mass organization working among women. She was brutally tortured before being killed. An eyewitness to her postmortem told the press that she had 16 injuries of torture and 5 bullet injuries on her body. Many fact finding teams proved that it was a fake encounter. This first 'encounter' in YSR's rule took place on 8th Jan 2005. Since then, more than 300 people got killed of which a large number were in fake encounters. (The number went on increasing while collecting the material, so to be precise, this figure is up to 30th December 2006) In addition many lost their lives at the hands of black gangs, in lockup deaths etc. Needless to say that they were killed only after being branded as naxalites or sympathizers to the revolutionary movement (Though the civil and human rights organizations never get tired of asking the question "can anyone be killed

just for being a naxalite?"). There is no gender discrimination in the killings. That's why, 60 women have been killed in the so called encounters and 54 of them belong to the CPI (Maoist), one to the CPI(ML) (Janashakthi), one to the CPUSI (DBSV), two to the CPI(ML) (Praja Prathighatana) and two belong to mass organizations and two sympathizers.

In fact, we could not get the complete details of all the persons who were killed and have depended entirely on newspapers to write this article, so we do



Com. Karuna, Martyred with CCM Com. BK

not know how many are really party members and how many are sympathizers or just ordinary women. A decade ago, civil liberties organizations used to go to the encounter spots to find out whether it is a genuine or fake encounter. But now there is no need to go for that purpose, because any one in A.P knows (or who knows about AP) that 'encounter' means to catch and kill after torturing. The story that the police gives on these occasions didn't change a bit in the past three and a half decades. Though the situation on the whole is so violent and many are laying down their lives valiantly for the people, this article tries to throw light on the state repression on women in particular.

A.P. has an appreciable history of people's movements. Women always participated in these movements in large numbers and played a very significant role.

So it is natural that even they were targeted by the state. AP, with its rich natural resources and a thousand kilometer long coast, has become a favorite place for imperialist plunder. There is much resistance against the mushrooming projects that are multiplying day by day. Women are participating in large numbers in these struggles. **But the disturbing fact is that many women who are leading these masses are being ruthlessly killed.** In a society where it is very difficult for women to come out of the house, leave alone participate in such struggles, 60 able women leaders, who could lead the struggling masses, getting killed is of grave concern. In spite of this fascist repression the revolutionary movement continuous to draw women. We are giving in the following list the minimum details available with us, of those women who braved the bullets of the cruel police. All those belong to the CPI (Maoist) unless otherwise mentioned. Wherever it is written 'fake encounter' it is already proved beyond doubt that it is fake. Wherever it is written encounter it is not that it is a genuine encounter but it is not proved that it is a fake.

Nearly 180 women were killed during Chandrababu's nine-year rule. In just two years, the YSR government killed 60 women. Perhaps this is the only

sphere where the Government doesn't show any 'discrimination'. Some of the finest women leaders who had dedicated their lives for more than a decade or two in the service of downtrodden have been killed in this period. Comrades Rangavalli, Nyalakonda Rajitha@ Padma, Aruna@ Lalitha, Suguna@ Latha, Prashanthi @ Chandana have been legendary leaders in the areas they worked. Com.Sudha from Janashakthi was also a very senior leader. Lives of many upcoming women leaders, who emerged from poor peasant or labouring classes and from dalits, adivasis and backward castes, were nipped in the bud. Women and girls were killed for being members of the revolutionary women's organizations. Apart from Padma of the JNM (cultural organisation) and Belli Lalitha there have been many singers,

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