

The 14th of April 2012 "*Jan Myrdals great award, the Lenin award*" was handed out in a theatre in Varberg, Sweden. Individuals from different countries and mostly from different parts of Sweden came for the celebration. Many of participants stayed at Hotell Gästis in central Varberg which have a lot of interesting arts, a library with revolutionary literature and a beautiful pool, called the "Lenin bath". At the hotel we were very happy to be able to interview the joint secretary of Revolutionary Democratic Front of India, G. N. Saibaba.

Indiensolidaritet, Sweden, 28/8 -2012

Interview with G. N. Saibaba in Varberg, Sweden, 14-15th April 2012

(The transcript of the interview is checked by Saibaba)

Indiensolidaritet: *Can you say something about the political work you do in India?*

Saibaba: I work for an organization called Revolutionary Democratic Front (RDF). It is a federation of revolutionary mass organizations working among different oppressed classes and sections of the Indian society. Revolutionary students' and youth organisations, revolutionary peasants' organisations, revolutionary workers' organisations, revolutionary cultural organisations as well revolutionary women's organisations from different regions across India are constituents of RDF. Thus RDF is a large network of revolutionary organisations reaching out to all sections and strata of the society.

From the year 2009 onwards began the Operation Green Hunt, the Indian state's genocidal war on the poorest of the poor in India. All of us in our organization RDF work with other parties, groups, democratic organisations and individuals to raise our voice collectively and unitedly against the present military onslaught on the people and the extermination campaign against the people of India. We see this massive military operation as a continuation and the latest addition in the war waged by India's ruling classes against the people of the subcontinent for last many decades – be it in Kashmir, North East, Punjab, and now in central and eastern India. So we are at one level involved in the basic struggles of the people and at another we are working along with a large network of political forces and carrying out a countrywide campaign against Indian state's anti-people policies, particularly Operation Green Hunt.

Indiensolidaritet: *The way we see it, there are two lines regarding solidarity work in Europe. One line is trying to unite people on an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal basis and another one focuses more on Maoism. What do you think about this?*

Saibaba: Yes, there is this perception and understanding of how to develop the solidarity movement for the peoples' struggles and the particularly on the military attack on the people that is going on in India. So what I can see is that there are large sections who think that, the large sections of the people of India and the larger confrontation is more important to focus on, to tell

the world outside India. There is another section of organizations which hold that the present campaign by the Indian state is targeting the revolutionaries in India and therefore the revolutionaries should be supported directly. What is important today is that the people of India – the poorest of the poor 80 percent of the country who live an extremely perilous existence – are looking forward to a basic change in their lives. The poorest section of humanity in the world therefore is waging a defiant struggle in India under the leadership of the revolutionary Maoists who are from among their own. So if you take the larger picture of what is happening in India, you can see that this is a great resistance against the loot of the land and minerals by the corporate sector. Monopoly capital in its desperation to dominate the world's resources would like to overcome its crisis by exploiting the cheap raw materials in India and other oppressed countries. It's an attempt by the imperialists, by the monopoly capital on the world scale, to transport their burden of the economic crisis upon the shoulders of the poorest of the poor in India.

Removing the people from their homes and hearths has become pertinent for the corporations backed by the government to capture the valuable mineral resources which are estimated to a value of several trillions of dollars. So the resistance movement is built up by the indigenous people, the poorest of the poor, the millions and millions of the wretched of the earth. To crush this movement and to silence all the people the Indian government has sent more than 250,000 armed personnel to these regions backed by its air force and navy. You therefore can see the importance of the struggle. Of course the revolutionary forces are involved – they work in these areas and organise the people, but the question is much larger. It is an anti-imperialist struggle of the people, led by the revolutionary Maoists. This is a larger question because this resistance exists not only in the central and eastern parts of India where the Maoist movement has a strong presence, but extends to every part of India even where the Maoists are absent. So in our view, we have to take into account this anti-imperialist struggle as a whole. We have to recognize that this is a larger struggle of the people of India who are not led by the revolutionaries everywhere simply because they do not exist in other parts. So the international solidarity should be to the entire movement. The other section of the people who feels that the revolutionary movement is a target too is not wrong in their perception. Yes, the revolutionary movement is a target of attack. In fact the Indian prime minister has termed it “the largest internal security threat” way back in 2005 reflecting the intent of the ruling classes to finish off the revolutionary movement. But what is important to recognise is that the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggle spanning over entire India and the revolutionary movement in India which exists in a considerable part of the country are interrelated. We cannot separate this two. The larger anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle is very important and we must not lose sight of it. We must stand in solidarity with the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle of the common people of India. The Indian ruling classes and the imperialists have planned many genocides and massacres but the people have successfully resisted them so far through coordination and collective struggle, not allowing any of these corporate houses to intrude and take over their lands and resources.

So we in India feel that to give support to the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles of the people is also to give support to the revolutionary movement in India. Therefore we need not and should not separate these two and give support only to the revolutionaries as if the revolutionaries exist outside and separately from this struggle. The revolutionary struggle in India is a part of the larger anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle going on in the subcontinent.

Indiensolidaritet: *How can we support the people's struggles against exploitation in general and against Operation Green Hunt in particular?*

Saibaba: First of all I will have to give you a larger picture of the present situation back home in India and for this, a longer explanation is needed. Operation Green Hunt is a highly orchestrated and well planned military campaign against the people of India. This operation is modelled by the Indian state and the imperialist forces led by the US along the line of what was called the Red Hunt in the 18th century North America. Through the Red Hunt campaign, the land of indigenous tribal people in that continent was usurped and violently taken over by the European explorers and invaders. They also planned and executed the systematic elimination of the tribes of Red Indians who chose to resist this genocide. The history of the US tells us that this process of extermination of an entire population of indigenous people in North America was termed as Red Hunt. The invading Europeans believed that a good Red Indian is a dead Red Indian. The Red Indians had to be annihilated to establish the country which came to be called the US. There was no place for the tribal people in this New World created by the colonial explorers from Europe. Thus the country called US was constructed on the dead bodies of the Red Indians. Very much the same concept of annihilation and extermination of an entire population operates in this military campaign called Operation Green Hunt. The ruling classes of India call it Green Hunt for two reasons. Firstly, the military experts, strategists and authors who are on the payroll of the Indian state tell us that the hunt – or in more political terms the Indian state's war on people – is taking place in the greenest regions of the Indian subcontinent. Central India and Eastern India have high hills and expansive forests, and is one of the greenest areas of the subcontinent. From the perspective of environmental concerns, we can call this the lungs of the earth. The ecosystem of this region consisting of mountains, forests, rivers, minerals, vulnerable ecology – they sustain life on earth and in this sense are the protectors of all of us. This is one of the very few regions of the world which have still remained untouched by imperialism/capitalism and therefore are very important for our survival as well as for the earth to survive. So it is in this green region that the Operation Green Hunt is being conducted. If successful, you can well imagine that this operation will turn greenery into barrenness. By forcibly evicting or exterminating the tribal people and thereafter facilitating the entry of multinational, private and government corporations, this war will destroy our very lungs and threaten our existence itself. So you can very well imagine the self-destructive nature of this Green Hunt.

Secondly, at another level the security analysts claim that Operation Green Hunt is termed so because the revolutionary fighters wear olive green uniform and are the targets of this hunt. But this mode of thinking too reflects the same 18th century ideology behind the Red Hunt in the US. It is interesting to note that in September-October 2009, one of the ministers in the Indian government who is leading this Operation Green Hunt went to Afghanistan and the US and soon after his return announced this Operation Green Hunt. He did not explicitly term it Operation Green Hunt. He said it is a paramilitary operation. Later the same minister denied that there is anything called Operation Green Hunt. But lower level officers in each of the regions where this operation is being conducted exposed his lie by frequently referring to Operation Green Hunt. Government of India still denies it by saying that there is no Operation Green Hunt. The reason for that denial is not difficult to see. In 2009 when the Indian interior minister announced this operation there was a massive protest from the intellectuals and the democratic forces from all over India. They immediately withdrew the nomenclature, though the operation has continued

with ever greater intensity in different parts of India from then till now. Nevertheless, the resemblance of India's Operation Green Hunt and US's Red Hunt goes deeper than just the name – in intent, purpose and intensity they are very much similar. “Mr Chidambaram's war” (the interior minister) an essay by Arundhati Roy describes how Operation Green Hunt has three objectives: 1. Occupy 2. Dominate 3. Hold. If you go to the website of the India's interior ministry you can see these words. It is interesting to note that it is the same terminology that the U.S. is using to describe its strategy in Afghanistan. It doesn't matter whether Indian state acknowledges or denies the term or the war it is waging on the people because the war is there on the ground. The entire people of India call it Operation Green Hunt.

We can understand Operation Green Hunt as a “war on the people of India” as well, and this is the main focus of the campaign. The ruling classes may play as much with words, but the truth is that it is a “war on the people of India”. What is this war about? The U.S. and other imperialists from European Union have sent military forces to Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and other places and are fighting imperialist wars of occupation against the people of these countries. In India, too, the imperialists have the same designs as in Afghanistan and Iraq, and elsewhere, i.e., to grab all the natural resources, be it natural gas, petroleum, bauxite, coal or any other available resource. They have not yet sent in their military forces to India, even though imperialists are aiding the Indian government with military strategists, army generals, intelligence input, weapons, surveillance equipment, and so on. These imperialist warmongers think that these resources which belong to the people of India can be grabbed without directly involving themselves in a war. This is because Indian rulers are completely subservient to the imperialist forces and are fighting this war on behalf of the imperialists. The Indian government is fighting a war for the US and European imperialists and others by using the army of India and the paramilitary of India. The servile Indian rulers are sending our own army against our own people. The imperialists are planning and conducting this war in India by simply sitting in their own countries and executing it through the Indian government in waging their war. This is the true nature imperialism since beginning of 20th Century. The Indian government, the rulers of the country and India's big corporations too are eagerly playing to the tune of the imperialists with a hope of earning some crumbs as spoils of war thrown at them. It is shameful for all of us citizens of India to see that the of army and paramilitary forces of our own county, which are supposed to protect Indian “sovereignty” and the Indian people's freedom are being used to completely sell-out our “sovereignty” and to kill our own people in millions through genocides and massacres.

So it is a strange thing for the people in our part of the world, but this is the reality today. I would like to say that the campaign for the poorest of the poor in India who are fighting and resisting the imperialist onslaught is important to the people all over the world because the fight of the Indian poor people is not merely to defend themselves. It is against imperialism and against the monopoly bourgeoisie. And your fight against monopoly capital and our fight against its lackeys in India can build solidarity and come together to save humanity itself. This is a fight not to save the people of any particular country, but to save humanity and the entire earth, the only known place for human existence which is threatened by monopoly capital. So we have a larger reason for unity and a larger ground for solidarity. We must not see the national borders as barriers to our common fight since the question of the destruction of nature, natural resources and the people of global is concern today. Therefore the solidarity across the borders and the building of

a common fight is something that the international community of democratic forces is the need of the hour.

Indiensolidaritet: *So what does it mean this solidarity work for the peoples' struggles and for the Indian government?*

Saibaba: The solidarity movement for the Indian peoples' struggles which is to be internationally established is very important and has the same significance today as the solidarity movement for the people of Vietnam during the sixties and seventies and for the people of Iraq and Afghanistan in the past decades. The Indian government's war on the people is planned in a large scale and involves carefully planned genocides of the indigenous people of India who constitute a population which is larger than the population of Germany and Sweden put together. It is the indigenous people in the eastern and central India – the *adivasis* – who are targeted by the Indian rulers with active aid from the imperialist forces and the corporate sector. The biggest of the corporate houses from Europe and the U.S. have deep interests in this area. But they know that their interest will not be served unless the people, hundreds of millions of people, are removed from their ancestral land. Not coincidentally, these areas are also the areas which figure among the strongest resistance struggles in the world today. This massive war on the people by the imperialists and the Indian rulers together threatens to massacre these people and as democrats of the world we cannot afford to allow this to happen. In the 17th, 18th and 19th century the European bourgeoisie eliminated millions of indigenous people of Africa, North and South America, Australia and New Zealand. This could happen at that time because an international solidarity of democratic forces was absent or extremely weak. But in the present, at least since the days of the Second World War, there is a conscious international democratic solidarity which effectively raised their voices against the American war in Vietnam. They supported the democratic resistance against the U.S. military campaign in Vietnam and launched several campaigns that helped the Vietnamese people to gain strength and confidence. Similarly, an international campaign today will strengthen the resistance struggle of the people of India and will give them the confidence. They would be assured that the democratic voices of the world are with them and that the people of India are not alone in their struggle against imperialism and feudalism and to establish a new society. Indeed, a new society is already taking shape in these areas of struggle in India and it is our duty to inform the entire world about it. So is the significance of the international solidarity campaign. This is the need of the Indian people and also of the people of the democratic society at an international level. It is a historical task of the democratic forces of the world to defend and stand in solidarity with these fighting forces.

Indiensolidaritet: *Can you tell us something about the solidarity work in relation to the Indian government? Is it somehow disturbing them that this solidarity exists?*

Saibaba: Yes, the Indian government is worried about this international campaign for the fighting people of India. This is because the campaign also makes it clear that the tall claims of the Indian state – that it is one of the largest democracies of the world, that the economy of country is growing faster than other countries and that India is going to be the next superpower in Asia after China, and so on. All these falsehoods will come to light once the international campaign exposes the truth that India is not really a democratic state but is an autocratic and totalitarian state. It doesn't allow democratic descent and there is no internal democracy in India.

And also the so-called high economic growth in India is at the expense of millions of people. Today in India, 80 percent of the people live on less than half a dollar a day on average in a year. This is worse than a subsistence economy, for in half a dollar a day you can't even get something to eat and survive. In other words, the quality of life for the vast majority of Indian people is worse than that of the sub-Saharan populations, with the difference that the population in India is several hundred times more than that of all the sub-Saharan countries put together. We can say that instead of having the largest democracy in the world India has the largest population stricken by poverty, exploitation and oppression.

So the government of India is already worried about the international solidarity campaign which has the potential to expose the reality that it wants to hide from the world. When the international campaign takes shape and speaks up, it will be very difficult for the Indian government to maintain the falsehood that India is a democratic state. India's growth story is like the history of colonial economies which grew out of internal and foreign exploitation. This growth rate is very vulnerable because it is sustained through exploitation, suppression and massacre of the vast masses of people for the benefit of a small minority. This economic growth is inhuman and temporary, since only a few families in India are reaping its benefits while the majority of the people are getting severely facing its brunt. And these realities are coming out now. The western media never brought out these realities to the international community. The Indian government suppresses such information and the imperialists too like to project India as a developing economy or lucrative investment destination. It is a fact that the imperialists don't want the facts and realities of India to come out. The international campaign alone can bring out these facts and present them before the international community.

Indiensolidaritet: *You mentioned earlier that it might be so that the Indian government will be more careful in its genocidal campaigns if there is a large public opinion that knows what's really going on in India, behind all these lies.*

Saibaba: Yes, the international campaign and your voices against the genocidal war in India have forced the government of India to rethink about its genocidal campaign. It has already started happening. For example, several protest demonstrations at Indian embassies in several countries in Europe, the US and South America put pressure on the Indian government. Initially in 2009, the government of India planned to complete the war on the people within three years. They wanted to evict the people from tens of thousands of villages within three years using army, paramilitary and other coercive forces. But the campaign within India and outside, particularly the international campaign, forced the Indian government to go slow on its plans. Though the Indian government went through with its deployment, it slowed down the military campaign and during these three years the peoples' resistance got precious time to consolidate, build its defence and gain more strength. As a result, the carrying out of the military campaign became much more difficult for the Indian government in the last three years. The resistance grew and expanded during this period and thus the international campaign has direct impact on the people who are resisting. The people also gained confidence and strength. One more example that I remember is as follows. Last March the government of India declared in the parliament that the campaign taken up by some organizations in India and outside has portrayed the government of India in poor light and that there is no war on the people of India. It was called a false propaganda to smear the image of the Indian government. This shows that the government

of India have not been able to politically counter our collective international campaign and is forced to claim it as a false propaganda campaign. Officials of the government in the parliament say that the campaign actually has exposed the government of India. This shows how the government of India is concerned about maintaining its image which it feels is under threat due to the campaign. The real relevance of the international campaign began to be felt by the Indian government itself. Thus the international campaign stands for the benefit of the people and for the protection of the peoples' movement. It is a kind of legacy for the world people.

Indiensolidaritet: *Of all the struggles we are supporting, the Naxalite movement is very important. What is the Naxalite movement of today?*

Saibaba: You may know of the history of the Naxalite movement. The first ever armed rebellion of the tribal people in post-1947 period took place in the North Bengal village of Naxalbari in 1967. It opened up a new arena of class struggle and came to be known as the Naxalite movement. An important characteristic of this movement is that it is a peasants' armed rebellion led by the proletariat. It is primarily an agrarian revolution, similar to what happened in China during the thirties and forties of the last century. The struggle that started from Naxalbari inspired the youth, intellectuals and the workers of India in every part of the country because they understood that any kind of struggle in India has to be based on the peasantry who constitute the vast majority of the population. Soon after 1967 the Indian government sent its army to suppress that movement and completely crushed that movement in Naxalbari, the one village. But Naxalbaris sprang up everywhere in India in the 1970s and 80s. In 600 regions in India they modelled themselves along Naxalbari uprising and today the armed revolutionary movement that is going on in vast parts of the countryside in India are a continuation of the Naxalbari uprising. Naxalbari has given the Indian people a vision and a future model of the struggle that runs along the axis of agrarian revolution. The understanding that the agrarian revolution will liberate the vast majority of the population following the proletarian ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism which is later called Maoism spread among the masses.

So, after the suppression of the Naxalbari uprising since the late 1960s the predominant trend of the peoples' struggles is the path of Naxalbari, if you are a keen researcher of history of all peoples' struggles since 1947 in the subcontinent. That is why it is said that Naxalbari is the only path of struggle in India. This is the slogan you can see in every street, in every wall for the last 40 years. It is the writing on the wall in the subcontinent, despite all major attempts by Indian and Western European historians to hide this fact from the history writing. There is no doubt to say that the ideological position and trajectory of the Indian revolutionary movement has been shaped by the Naxalbari movement. Today the vast swathes of rural India are gripped by the ideology of Naxalbari – a revolutionary breakthrough which was aptly termed as “Spring Thunder in India” by China under Mao's leadership. So the Spring Thunder is continuing and that is the basic line of struggle in India and constitutes the largest revolutionary resistance movement in India today, though this has not happened without colossal ups and downs.

Indiensolidaritet: *As I understand it, there are several parties or groups that you can say belong to the Naxalite movement. Which are these parties?*

Saibaba: In the 1970s there were mass uprisings in about 600 places following a split in the communist movement in India. The undivided communist movement represented by the Communist Party of India (CPI) split into CPI and CPI(Marxist) in 1964. In 1968 CPI(M) further split and CPI(Marxist-Leninist) was formed under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar. But in the decade of 1970s the Marxist-Leninist movement got split into several parties due to the differences on the questions of how to conduct the revolutionary struggle, attitude towards the Indian parliament and the attitude towards the imperialist forces and the Indian ruling classes. The splitting of the Marxist-Leninist party and the movement into small factions was the major trend in the seventies. But the decade of 1980s saw the consolidation of the major Marxist-Leninist parties in important regions of the country. The formation of major parties took place during this time. You can see three strands in party building – the party in South India called itself CPI (ML) (Peoples’ War) while in North India two parties emerged – Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) and CPI(ML) Party Unity. These three parties worked in three different areas in isolation from each other and without knowing much about each other. But they considerably expanded the revolutionary areas and later they came together.

But let me also tell you that there are other ML parties which do not believe in taking up armed struggle but they want it to start much later in the course of struggle. This can be understood as Phase Theory which many revolutionary parties in India conform to. According to this theory, in the first phase one has to prepare the masses through open and legal mass resistance struggles. In the second phase, underground organisation of the movement is carried out, while in the third phase the armed struggle is started. Though these parties had large mass base initially, due to their faulty understanding, they became smaller and smaller. This Phase Theory did not work. But the first of the three revolutionary parties I have mentioned started armed struggle straight away, as they did not believe in phases of revolution. They analysed that a revolutionary situation already exists in Indian society and the people can be organized for an armed movement. Even they believed and understood that armed forms of struggles predate their own existence. Hence they need to lead them with the MLM ideology at the centre. They succeeded while the rest of the groups became weaker and alienated from the oppressed masses. The revolutionary classes and individuals in the society came together in the larger revolutionary groups and these groups expanded over time. On the other hand, those groups which believed that they should spread the revolutionary ideas by going to the parliament or believed that they should start the armed struggle much later, could not carry forward the revolutionary movement. They remained for forty years in the same preparatory stage and are now smaller forces – almost non-existent – even foregoing their character as revolutionary forces. But those who believed from the very beginning that the phase theory is wrong, that the Indian parliament has no relevance in India and that the peoples struggles’ can and should start with armed struggle became major revolutionary forces. They joined hands and merged in 2004 to become Communist Party of India (Maoist) – the largest and the most formidable revolutionary force in India. About ten smaller ML parties still exist, but they have no relevance, leading no major struggle, thereby existing only on paper mainly. One such organization is called CPI(ML) Liberation which contest parliamentary elections in some pockets of the country. People consider it to be a revisionist group like the CPI and CPI(M) which has no radical or revolutionary content and relevance. On the other hand, CPI(Maoist) has emerged as the single largest Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Party of the country after the coming together of all revolutionary forces in

India. The movement it leads is still called the Naxalite movement because its origins lie in the Naxalbari village.

Indiensolidaritet: *Ok, but I also heard that there are parties called CPI(Naxabari) and CPI(ML) (Janashakti) that exists and some people also call them progressive.*

Saibaba: As I said, there are about ten parties including CPI(Naxabari) which is a small group with a revolutionary spirit. They have not gone down the path of other parliamentary Marxist-Leninist groups. They are close to CPI(Maoist) than the revisionist ML groups. Similarly, two or three other very small parties which have a revolutionary content are much closer to CPI(Maoist). But the rest of the parties, CPI(ML) New Democracy, CPI(ML) Kanu Sanyal and some lesser known parties called CPI(ML) Provisional Committee, CPI(ML) Second Central Committee etc. have no revolutionary content left in them and are more or less like the revisionist parties. They hardly have any influence among the people.

Indiensolidaritet: *We are using the flag of the Revolutionary Peoples' Councils and its logo for our organization. Can you say something on how and where this peoples' government is developed?*

Saibaba: The Revolutionary Peoples' Councils (RPC) have come up gradually, particularly in Bastar encompassing south Chhattisgarh. There are about a few thousand of such RPCs in Bastar, and some of them have also come up in Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar. But in Bastar RPCs and the peoples' government have developed to a higher level. In the rest of the areas too they are developing in the same direction. The RPCs are called *Janatana Sarkars* in the local language in Bastar. *Janatana* means 'of the people' and *sarkar* means 'government' – 'peoples' government'. In the political language of the revolution they are called Peoples' Revolutionary Councils. They are formed and elected by the people in a direct election where the entire village sits together and elects. The ruling-class elements in the village have no voting rights while all the people from the oppressed classes have voting rights. Once the peoples' government is elected it acts like a government of the village which has several committees, such as the development committee, the health committee, the education committee, the security committee and the peoples' militia. Peoples' militia works under the village government or the RPC. The government has full political power and it works for the people. If any elected member is not functioning according to the expectations and interests of the village and people, the constitution of the RPCs provides the right to the people to recall the member and re-elect another person in his/her place.

The peoples' government or the RPCs promote and develop indigenous technology in industry and agriculture. They don't depend on the technology or the so-called development model that are imposed by imperialists and the ruling elite. The very idea of development according to peoples' own technology, knowledge and skill is part of this experiment. The effort of the RPCs is to raise the level of peoples' consciousness and cultural level. The technology they use is in consonance with the consciousness and the level of the peoples' culture so that there is no feeling of alienation between work and knowledge. In the process, they completely reject the technology

developed and promoted by imperialists and the comprador bourgeoisie which are oppressive and exploitative. So the development that is experienced in the villages with RPCs is based on a self-reliant economy. The hundreds and thousands of these committees and councils have established a self-reliant economy based on their own needs, own resources and their own technology. This is a complete negation of the model of 'development' dependent on imperialism, imperialist technology and imperialist funds which has been introduced by Indian rulers in 1947. It is through this imperialist technology and imperialist investment that the exploitation of our country and resources has taken place. 'The revolutionary people and the revolutionary peoples' councils completely reject this. So in these areas of central and eastern India where agriculture was developed only to a rudimentary level, the people through RPCs have developed agriculture and fisheries, small-scale industry and so on. As a result, for the first time in the history of these regions, the vast masses of the people have successes in creating surplus, and socialise it without allowing it transform into capital.

The RPCs have systematically carried out land distribution among the indigenous people and other oppressed people, so that there are no landless people in the areas under RPCs today. RPCs put the surplus back in collective agricultural farming, while everybody gives their voluntary labour. The people produce their crops and a portion of it goes to the common pool overseen by the peoples' government. The rest of the produce is distributed among the people as per their requirements. It is not just only the agricultural produce that the people collectively control, but the RPCs also regulate all trade and commercial activities in their purview to establish and ensure non-exploitative exchange. But they still require necessities like medicine and other products that the RPCs do not produce. So the surplus produce that remains after being used for the village is sent to the market. So the surplus that is generated in the village is used for the welfare of the village, again socialising it. But this is welfare from a revolutionary perspective, and has nothing to do with the government's welfare schemes which are launched to keep social discontent under check. The surplus generated in this manner serves the people in that the RPC uses it for their health, education and other requirements apart from putting it back for the development of agriculture and industry, i.e., for further revolutionising production. In this way a new society is being built in India by the most oppressed of the people. As a part of this process, the feudal and reactionary cultural practices are being discarded on the one hand while imperialist culture and exploitation is being resisted on the other. RPCs are the foundations of this new society. The revolutionary movement wants to expand the RPCs from the village level to the block level and gradually a larger government will be formed at the district level. With the development of RPCs in different parts of India, the power of the Indian rulers will be overthrown and peoples' power will be established in their place. Peoples' power is at the centre of these Revolutionary Peoples Councils. Like the slogan of "All Power to Soviets" in revolutionary Russia, "All Power to the People" is the slogan of the revolutionary movement in India. The RPCs have all the power, which is the implementation of the slogan "All Power to the People". This is the guiding principle with which the RPCs function in all spheres of social life in the revolutionary regions.

Indiensolidaritet: *Do you know how the Maoist party is related to the new government?*

Saibaba: The peoples' government has the party committee within its core. It is not the case that all the people in this government are party members, but a section of them are. When

representatives to the RPCs are elected, both party members as well as non-party members will be there. The party functions through these party committees within the RPCs. So you can understand that the RPC is like a united front, because there are communists, non-communists and general people. CPI(Maoist) does not believe that Revolutionary Peoples Councils should be run by the party alone. In the RPCs, members of the party work with the common people who have traditional wisdom and knowledge of the struggle. Like in a united front, in RPCs, Maoist party forces and non-party forces come together to form the peoples' government. The party members elected to the government function as per party ideology to develop revolutionary consciousness among other members of the Revolutionary Peoples Council.

Indiensolidaritet: *How is the Peoples Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) related to the peoples' militia? Is the peoples' militia the backbone of the PLGA?*

Saibaba: As far as my study and understanding of this vast movement goes, I can say that the militia is constituted by the participation of a large number of people in the villages, and therefore the militia is called the basic force. Behind the militia functions the Peoples Liberation Guerrilla Army. So the PLGA is very much dependent on the militia. The peoples' militia is the basic force and the PLGA is the main revolutionary army. But all basic requirements related to the defence of the revolutionary areas and the revolutionary movement are taken care of by the militia because they are the largest force in number and it should be the principal force. However, the growth of the peoples militia can only begin after the PLGA is established in an area. But once people's militia develops, the PLGA goes to the background. Then, the PLGA is called in only when the militia needs reinforcement. Otherwise the PLGA does not take the main role in the armed struggle. So the first on the frontlines of the revolutionary armed struggle is the peoples' militia followed by the PLGA. This is what I have understood in the emergence and development the people's militia in different areas of Central and Eastern India over the last two decades of the history of this trajectory.

Indiensolidaritet: *Some people might say, "Oh the party is controlling everything". What do you think?*

Saibaba: People who do not know how a revolutionary party like the CPI (Maoist) functions or those who would like to malign the Maoist party may say such things. But then there places where wrong things are practised or mistakes happen. But then it is not to be understood as the policy of the CPI (Maoist). But if you see the reality and closely follow the movement, you can understand that the CPI (Maoist) gives primary importance to the agency of the common people in their area. It is the people who themselves take the initiative in struggles. There are many examples of this. The roadmap of how to develop a village in a revolutionary way or how to develop guerrilla warfare is not centrally given by the CPI (Maoist). In these areas the people know of this through practice through their own history of struggles. For example, the indigenous people have a long history of waging guerrilla fight. They fought the armies of the Mughal emperors and the British colonialists in hundreds of rebellions in all of the last three hundred or more years of their known history, and this is equally true of their earlier history as well – a peoples' history which is yet to be written. They might not have termed it as guerrilla warfare, but the history of the peoples' uprisings in these areas is invariably of guerrilla fight. There were about 150 armed rebellions against the British by the tribal people mostly written but

many more which were not yet properly written— the indigenous people – and in each one of them they won while the British were defeated. The mighty force of British imperialists was defeated by the tribal people with superior knowledge of the terrain and but with simple bows and arrows. They seized the weapons of the imperialist invaders and used them against the British. Not always more developed social formation has won over the less developed social formation. One such massive uprising is the Bhumkal Rebellion of 1910 in the Bastar region. The rebellious tribal people used sophisticated guerrilla methods against the British forces and defeated them. In popular memory all these methods are still alive because they have taught each other and passed on the experience of guerrilla warfare from one generation to the other. Therefore, it is not the CPI (Maoist) who taught guerrilla warfare techniques to the indigenous people. Rather, it is the indigenous people who taught them how to wage guerrilla warfare. A public intellectual in India called B D Sharma who worked with the adivasis for the last 50 years always reminds us about this in his public lectures and writings. In this example we can see that the initiative, assertion and creativity in every stage of the struggle come from amongst the people, including the development model they have chalked out for themselves. In the revolutionary movement the people are at the centre. The Maoists give utmost importance to the peoples' initiative, assertion and participation, particularly the people's agency in the revolution. Any party which places itself at the centre can't become an instrument of revolutionary change because it's the people's agency that develops to transform the society in toto that that can play this role. So the people and their party advance the movement together. This is really where the party has played its role – by creating the conditions for the people to take initiative and unleash their full potentials, creativity and regeneration in the making of a new society free from exploitation and oppression. And then the history is created by the masses of people themselves, whose agency is central to this process.

[End]