

Revolutionary Democratic Front (RDF)

THE FIRST ALL INDIAN CONFERENCE

22-23 April 2012, Sundarayya Vignana Bhavan Hyderabad, Telangana

PRESS RELEASE

22 April 2012

The historic first conference of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (RDF) – a federation of revolutionary mass organisations working among different classes and sections of the society at the grass-roots level – went underway today on 22 April 2012 in the Sundarayya Vignana Bhavan in Hyderabad with the hoisting of the RDF flag by Goru Madhav Rao, the veteran fighter of the Srikakulam Armed peoples’ uprising and the founding president of All India Peoples’ Resistance Forum (AIPRF). The red flag was hoisted with slogans hailing the ongoing revolutionary movement and condemning the Indian state’s repressive class violence in the form of Operation Green Hunt and now Operation Haka and Operation Vijay. The martyr’s column was unveiled by Mallamma, the mother of the martyred revolutionary leader G. Shankar, also known as Sheshanna and Shamsher, state committee member of the North Telangana Special Zonal Committee (NTSZC) of the CPI(Maoist). Resistance songs were performed by members of Jharkhand Abhen, Praja Kala Mandali and Revolutionary Cultural Front.

In the inaugural session, B. S. Raju, the Secretary of the Reception Committee of the Conference welcomed the delegates and participants, and declared that the RDF stands resolutely in favour of a democratic and separate Telangana state. M T Khan, chairperson of the Reception Committee, condemned the Chhattisgarh government for preventing the 34-member team of delegates from that state coming to attend the conference.

Professor Jagmohan, noted democratic rights activist and the nephew of shaheed Bhagat Singh, inaugurated the 40th issue of *Samkaleen Jan Pratirodh*, the magazine of RDF, dedicating it to the people of India and the Indian revolutionary struggle. Pankaj Dutt, the renowned people’s intellectual and academic presented the Keynote address on economic crisis and possibility of revolutionary upsurge in the country. He analysed the confluence of imperialism and feudalism in a semi-feudal and semi-colonial reality like India, which then generates what is usually understood as ‘growth’ and ‘development’ which is so disastrous for the vast masses of the country. He noted that it is the poor and landless peasantry – so far denied the power to exercise their labour creatively – who holds the key to the change of property relations and thereby turn the present world economic crisis into a revolutionary upsurge for a complete social transformation.

Arun Ferraira, the civil rights activist who has recently been released after years of incarceration in Nagpur jail for allegedly being a Maoist, unveiled the collected writings of Comrade Anuradha Ghandy titled *Scripting the Change*. In his short speech Arun noted that in her life as revolutionary, Anuradha has significantly contributed to our understanding of the Dalit question and the womens' question in the context of semi-feudal semi-colonial India. He dedicated this book to all the martyrs who have given their lives to the cause of the Indian revolution.

One of the main speakers of the conference, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, the Chairperson of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Jammu and Kashmir, was welcomed by GN Saibaba, the Deputy Secretary of RDF. Saibaba stated that Kashmir has a continuous liberation struggle of 40 years, and RDF not only supports it but is also a part of it. RDF plays the role of bringing together and uniting all the fighting movements of the subcontinent, including the revolutionary struggle, national liberation movements of Kashmir, Nagalim, Assam, Manipur etc., separate statehood demands of Telangana, Gorkhaland and others, and mass struggles of Dalits, Adivasis, workers, peasants and women.

Syed Ali Shah Geelani in his speech, addressed the audience as his own brothers and sisters, and said that he respects the dedication and commitment of the revolutionaries carrying forward the Indian revolutionary movement. He complimented RDF for raising the voice against the Indian state, against oppression, exploitation and injustice. Geelani said that he belong to place which is being oppressed by the Indian state through sheer military might. He declared that the Kashmiris are not fighting against the people of India, and in fact they have good wishes for the Indian people. He stated that once India was freed from British colonialism, the rulers of India should not have treated other oppressed peoples and nationalities as slaves. However, with firepower and army alone India cannot oppress the Kashmiris for eternity. Kashmir's struggle for self determination and secession has been fought through countless sacrifices, and this suffering of the Kashmiri people will never go in vain. Azadi of Kashmir is a inevitability. Geelani reminded the Indian rulers of the broken promise of plebiscite that Nehru pledged in January 1948. He demanded that India respect the UN Resolution of 21st April 1948 to consider Kashmir as a disputed territory and the people should be given the right to self determination. The highly respected Kashmiri leader said that the people of his nation have been fighting for inquilab (revolution) – a *inquilab* with the fundamentals of justice, moral values and freedom. He said, “We will not accept anything less than Azadi (freedom) from India”. SAS Geelani concluded by saying that “If you further our cause of freedom and spread the call of our freedom and stand by us, we the people of Kashmir will be ever grateful to you and will stand together with the struggling people of India”.

A Bhumaiah of the Telangana Praja Front (TPF) said in his speech that Hyderabad, where this conference is taking place, is a part of Telangana. RDF has already recognised Hyderabad as a part of Telangana. For recognition from the Indian government the Telangana struggle will have to be intensified. He thanked RDF for taking the cause of separate Telangana to various parts of the country and mobilising public opinion in its favour in the subcontinent.

Varavara Rao, revolutionary poet and Virasam member, told the audience that on Lenin's birthday we are having the historic RDF conference. Lenin spoke about the worldwide crisis of imperialism in the early twentieth century which directly helped in the Russian Revolution in

1917. The imperialist crisis of 1940s led to the Second World War and the Chinese Revolution in 1949. The present period is also characterised by the acute crisis of the worldwide capitalist system, and this crisis once again provides us with the possibility of another revolution, this time in India. Joining RDF or working for RDF's programme means joining hands in this struggle. 1970's was a period of division in the revolutionary movement in India, while from 80's efforts have been made for consolidation and 1990s onwards was a period of unity. In 2003-04, when the merger of CPI(ML) PW and MCC resulted in the formation of the unified Maoist party, it gave a new energy and thrust to the Naxalite movement. He stated that huge mass movements need to be created and political work among the people has to be intensified for transformative politics to take advantage of the crisis in imperialism and its agents, the Indian ruling classes. He appealed to everyone to strengthen this struggle.

Shoma Sen of Committee against Violence on Women (CAVOW) said that we have to understand the essence of the Maoist slogan 'women hold up half the sky'. When companies are closed, it is the women who suffer the most. In times like today with inflation and price rise, the task of managing household and the families is taken up by women. They are the last ones in the family to eat. The problem of alcoholism also affects women. There is an agrarian problem in India – peasants are committing suicide. But what happens to the wives of those farmers who commit suicide, she asked. They are forced into desperate acts like prostitution. To solve the problems women in our country, as well as in other countries, the struggle for New Democratic Revolution is the only way forward. To come out of the house and to participate in these struggles is confronting the problem itself – is the only path. In places like Gadchiroli women have been educated by the revolutionary comrades about issues like water purification, agrarian and health issues, and the question of political power. Revolution cannot happen without women and women too want revolution. This is the main point on which we work for.

Professor Anand Teltumbde, noted civil rights activist, emphasised the need for the Dalit and revolutionary movement to come together to annihilate caste and to complete the democratic revolution in the country. He was critical of both the parliamentary 'Left' like CPI and CPI(M) as well as identity-based parliamentary Dalit political formations, and said that there is a need to carry forward the class struggle with the participation of Dalits and other oppressed masses. He said that Dr. Ambedkar too believed in class-based politics, and therefore the need of the hour therefore is to reinvent Dalit militancy as well as revolutionary resurgence under Maoist leadership.

G Kalyana Rao, the noted revolutionary Telugu author, released a compact disk of Jana Natya Mandali songs on the martyrs of the Maoist party. Kalyana Rao stated that revolutionary culture is the expression of the oppressed, and this culture articulates the blood and sweat of the wretched of the earth, presented in the form of songs, dance, plays and other popular forms, and thereby carry forward the message of class struggle.

Many speakers such as Lenin Kumar, editor of Odiya cultural magazine *Nishan*, Jharkhand's Sharmila of Nari Mukti Sangh, and others addressed the delegates of the conference on its first day. Sharmila noted the role of revolutionary culture as an integral and organic part of the lives of the Adivasis, which has traditionally upheld the principles of collective life and production. It

is this voice of revolutionary culture and resistance that the fascist Indian states are trying to crush, by perpetrating violence and class hatred.

Fraternal organisations and peoples' movements sent their solidarity messages to the RDF Conference. Atom of National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN) of Nagalim sent the good wishes and political solidarity from the national liberation struggle of the Naga people.

Along with speeches and messages, cultural troops from Jharkhand, Delhi, Telangana and Punjab performed revolutionary songs and dance.

The first RDF conference strongly and unequivocally condemned the fascist Chhattisgarh government for preventing the 34-member team of delegates from that state coming to attend the conference, and demanded their immediate release. In addition, RDF also condemns the Andhra Pradesh government for cancelling the permission to the RDF mass rally scheduled for 23 April 2012.

In Solidarity,

Raj Kishore
General Secretary, RDF

G N Saibaba
Deputy Secretary, RDF