



COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MAOIST)

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Press Release

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Immediately Stop Harassment of Veteran Maoist Leader Comrade Kobad Ghandy! Unconditionally Release All Senior Citizen Maoist Political Prisoners!

Veteran comrade Kobad Ghandy was abducted from a public place in Delhi by the Andhra Pradesh, Delhi Intelligence and Delhi police on September 17, 2009, kept under illegal detention for three days and subjected to severe mental torture in the name of interrogation. It was only after vehement protests and agitations from various civil rights and democratic organisations that he was produced in the court on September 21. The then Home Minister, Chidambaram lied shamelessly that he was arrested on September 20th night and was produced 'within 24 hours'. After the arrest, he was treated inhumanely by depriving medicine and medical treatment for his life-threatening health problems for several days.

It has been five years since this illegal arrest and detention but the State is stopping his release by denying bails and is keeping him in prison under flimsy and foisted charges. Comrade Kobad Ghandy (69) is a heart patient, with acute Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), cervical and lower lumbar spondylitis, blood pressure and a protracted case of prostrate problem. In spite of his age and serious ailments the central, state intelligence officials, prison authorities and the judiciary are acting completely deaf and blind to his plight, ignoring his pleas for minimum facilities which he is entitled to even according to law. All this is being done with a conspiracy to deteriorate his health. He had to fight even to get the health supplements provided by his sister, a chair and a table to sit and write, a bed block and also access to books and writing pad but only after careful scrutiny by the jail authorities.

After the secret execution of Afzal Guru in February 2013, which in itself is a blot on Indian judicial system, all the prisoners were shifted from the High Risk Ward of Jail No 3 of Tihar Jail (Delhi). Despite severe protests from comrade Kobad, he was also shifted forcefully to Jail No.1. On top of it, the jail authorities callously made the ailing old man carry all his belongings without extending any help. Due to this he became bed-ridden for several weeks. Though he is not able to go through his daily chores and finds it extremely difficult to carry water in buckets and wash clothes by bending, he was not given any assistance.

Every time he is shifted from one jail to another, the whole process of requesting for minimum facilities starts and sometimes he gets some of these and sometimes he is not being provided any. They had rejected his request to be shifted to the senior citizen ward in Tihar Jail and instead started shifting him again to Jail No.2 in 2014 July. This they did in spite of his clearly stating

that the shifting would take its toll on him. Left with no choice he started a hunger strike. But he was forcefully shifted to Jail No.2 on a stretcher on July 16.

In view of the way ~~on~~ CPI (Maoist) Politburo member comrade Sushil Roy (Barunda), arrested in May 2005, was driven to death on June 18, 2014 due to the callous way the State handled his health problems there is every reason to be alarmed about comrade Kobad's situation. The State is behaving in the most inhuman, cruel manner with senior Maoist party leaders (in their 50s, 60 and 70s) and is conspiring to make them quickly breathe their last in the dungeons. Bails are denied and even when are granted, they are foisting new cases, arresting them in front of the jail gates and pushing them into the dungeons again. Comrades Narayan Sanyal, Bhupeshda, Pareshta, Sahebda, Chintanda, Sheela didi, Amit Bagchi, Pramod Mishra, Bachha Prasad Singh, Chandra Sekhar Reddy, LSN Murthy, Patit Pavan Haldar, Varanasi Subrahmanyam and several other senior party leaders are being harassed without an iota of empathy for their old age or ailments. Trampling every law under their iron heels, an intellectual like G N Saibaba with 90 percent disability is also being harassed by denying him any kind of facility. When this is the case, the plight of common adivasis, dalits and women who are incarcerated in the dozens of prisons all over the country can only be imagined. They are spending endless years in jails without any facilities and help, being subjected to the atrocities of the police-jail officials and becoming victims of the unjust judiciary. Some are dying in captivity unable to bear those harsh conditions.

Modi led NDA government is now directing the judiciary to give clean chits to blood-thirsty murderers like Amit Shah and providing them with Z plus security. Thus it is trying to legitimise all their gory deeds. On the other hand, even small cases of political prisoners and common prisoners are extended for eternity on flimsy excuses such as not having enough escort police. The prisoners are being denied any facilities they are legally entitled to and the State is acting with vengeance towards them.

The CC, CPI (Maoist) is appealing to all the revolutionary, democratic, civil rights organisations and forces and the lawyer community to put up a united and determined fight demanding a stop to all kinds of harassments by jail officials heaped on comrade Kobad Ghandy by specially targeting him and his immediate and unconditional release. It is appealing to all the people to carry on mass agitations and build up immense pressure on the governments and the judiciary to get all the senior party leaders mentioned above, incarcerated for years together, released and also for their right to be recognised as political prisoners.



(Abhay)

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