
PEOPLE'S MARCH

Voice of the Indian Revolution

Vol. 13, No. 2 October-December 2014

The
Woes of
a Rich
Land and
a Poor
People

Modi's
more
of the
same

Defeat

OGH – Third
Phase

Stop Harassing
Kobad Ghandy!

Palestine
Iraq
Philippines
Afghanistan
Ukraine
US
Scotland

CPI (Maoist)
Message to
Italy
International
Conference

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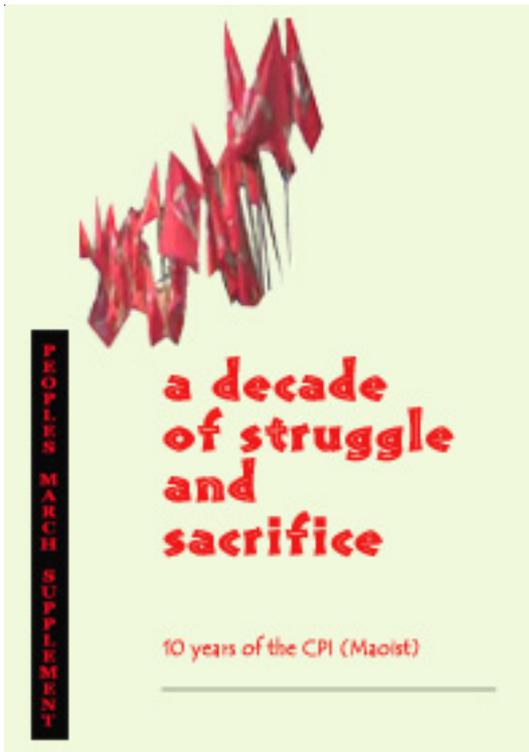
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editorial

Of Modi's haste and an anniversary

Modi is reputed to be a workaholic. He has proved that and even more. There has never been such a systematic opening up of the country to imperialism, so quickly and so widely, as seen in the few months he has been in office. Defence, insurance, resources — everything is up for sale. The man is in a hurry.

This wholesale sell-out is packaged as making India a powerful country. One would assume that this calls for developing the capacities of its people, of utilising its resources to become self-reliant. Modi and his RSS mentors have a totally different take. For them, 'making India' is 'make in India', an invitation for all imperialists and whoever has capital to come, exploit its labour and plunder its resources. There can be nothing more demonstrative of the comprador character of the Sangh Parivar, the hollowness of its nationalism, than this slogan. They will gladly sell their Bharat Mata to the highest bidder. Their aggressive Brahmanical Hindu fascism serves this aim. It props up an ugly chauvinism that hides the reality of dependence, divides the people and attacks all who resist.

While the extremities of the Sangh Parivar are particular to it, dependence on imperialism and the privileging of Brahmanic Hinduism are attributes common to all sections of the Indian ruling classes. The resolution to the situation the country finds itself in must be sought outside their system. That is where the second part of our title, the anniversary, comes in. It refers to the 10th anniversary of the CPI (Maoist). This is an important occasion. It marks a decade of the formation of a single directing centre for the Indian revolution through the merger of its two main streams. The new democratic revolution led by this party, carried forward through a protracted people's war waged by the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA), is the only way out for India. The future it holds up is already being concretised in the new society and new state being built in the guerrilla bases in Central and Eastern India. It is one in which the people are the masters of their destiny, their surroundings and the rich resources of the land. This is something that can truly claim to being made in India, with the blood and tears of its people.

It is no wonder then that this revolution becomes the biggest threat for the Indian ruling classes and the imperialists. Modi starts off from where Manmohan Singh's 'war on people' had reached, now with more brutal force, accompanied by the Sangh Parivar's fascism. Its true intentions are now more blatant — 27 battalions of para-military are being sent to Chhattisgarh alone to destroy people's power and their PLGA, in order to ensure that all obstacles to the plunder of resources are removed.

We must defend and strengthen this revolution, we must defend and strengthen the party leading it.

Unite, Fight Back and Defeat OGH – Third Phase

Political Commentator

“Modi and Co. do make a difference. Otherwise the imperialists and the Indian ruling classes would not have spent thousands of crores of rupees to bring them into power at this juncture. The agenda hasn't changed. But the pace has reached an unprecedented haste. The imperialists need to overcome their economic crisis quickly and the comprador ruling classes must collaborate with them more than ever before.”

The Sangh Parivar sponsored, Modi led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government that came to power by criticising several of UPA's policies is not only aggressively pursuing all the pro-imperialist and pro-corporate policies of UPA-1 and 2, but is also surpassing them, vying for the post of 'best comprador ever' from the imperialists. It is taking up aggressive moves to sell-out the country shamelessly in the name of developing it by bringing in as much FDI as possible (the goal being 100%) into several key sectors including defence, railways, insurance, banking, media and into those sectors that are still untouched directly due to resistance of the people and contradictions within the ruling classes. Hike in passenger and freight fares in railways, price hikes of daily commodities, petrol, diesel hikes and electricity cuts, transferring seven Telangana mandals to Andhra Pradesh against the will of the people, speeding up construction of the destructive Polavaram project as a national project, naked projection of Hindu chauvinism, saffronisation of education, attacks on dalits and targeting of Muslims in the name of 'communal riots' are just a few of its anti-people measures. These fascists passed several anti-people and treacherous bills during the first session of the parliament. They did all this with their so-called brute majority and declared that they would do whatever they wish.

Pro-capitalist (or anti-worker) amendments proposed in labour laws have, with a stroke of the pen, turned several illegalities in the working conditions in factories legal, making a mockery of all the hard won rights of the workers. The eight-hour workday, not making women work in night shifts and regulation of overtime and compensation for overtime work were all won through decades of class struggle against the capitalists. And now the NDA government is bent on turning the clock of history back by bringing in these amendments. The above amendments would seriously affect the physical and mental health of the workers, would lead to industrial accidents and have serious social impact too. In a

context where women working in BPOs are being targeted for sexual attacks when they commute to their work places at night and several researches have established that the health of women is seriously and irreparably affected due to night shifts, this kind of legality to making women work in the night shifts would not only affect their physical and mental health, create gynecological problems but also put them at much risk at the workplace and on their way to work.

The project of the UPA government to establish nuclear plants all over the country with imperialist investment could not make much headway. Faced with public pressure Manmohan Singh's government was forced to adopt some provisions by which foreign companies supplying equipment for nuclear plants would bear liability in case of accidents. The quantum was quite low compared to those fixed in imperialist countries. But even this was not acceptable to the US. During Modi's visit to the US he has accepted to make changes to suit its demands. The full nature of these steps and their implications are yet to be revealed. But we can be sure that it will slavishly set a miserably low price for Indian lives. Recently information has come out which indicates that more than 70 per cent of deaths in areas surrounding nuclear plants were caused by cancer. This shows the dangers the people are forced to face due to the reckless plans of the ruling classes to somehow boost power production. Under Modi this is going to get far worse. No wonder some people have euphemistically termed this government UPA-3; the continuity of the anti-people measures was too obvious to miss.

But Modi and Co. do make a difference. Otherwise the imperialists and the Indian ruling classes would not have spent thousands of crores of rupees to bring them into power at this juncture. The agenda hasn't changed. But the pace has reached an unprecedented haste. The imperialists need to overcome their economic crisis quickly and the comprador ruling classes must collaborate with them

more than ever before. For that they need to loot the natural wealth, markets and labour power of countries like India, for that they need to establish more control and for that they need to crush the resistance of the people. For that they need to wipe out the Maoists who are 'the biggest threat' to their loot of this country, who are in the forefront and leading the fight against them and building a new political power of the people and an alternative model of development with the aim of building our beloved country as a genuine independent, sovereign, self-reliant and federal democratic republic. The difference that No.1 traitors and fascists Modi and Co. could make would be in the scale of aggressiveness in pursuing these policies, the intensification of brutality that would be perpetrated on those who oppose them in any manner, in the overt acceleration of the saffron agenda and the speeding up of the sell-out of the country – all in the name of building a 'powerful India' and maintaining internal security and peace.

And this is all the more true in case of Operation Green Hunt (OGH), which is nothing but a war waged by the Indian ruling classes and its state on its own people. This brutal multi-pronged countrywide offensive on people's various resistances, particularly targeting the Maoist movement, has been raging unabated, since its launch in mid-2009 by the UPA-2 government till date. Preparations for OGH (War on People)-Third Phase are going on at a rapid pace.

All the Chief Ministers (CMs) of the States where Maoist movement is present made a beeline to the Prime Minister (PM) not only for funds for their States from the Centre, but also for reiterating their demands for more powers, funds, weapons, forces, vehicles and other paraphernalia. The Centre willingly obliged and promised more in a series of meetings conducted to deal with all kinds of 'terrorism', mainly Maoism. Like a feudal medieval lord home minister Rajnath Singh declared that he would be as happy as conducting a marriage if the security forces penetrate into the forests and kill the 'terrorists'! He announced that an integrated and comprehensive strategy to root out the Maoist movement in the country would be prepared.

On June 11, 2014 after a detailed review of the 'Left-wing extremism (LWE)' situation in Chhattisgarh with State Chief Minister Raman Singh, he promised around 10,000 additional paramilitary troops (10 battalions) within 3, 4 months, even while 37 battalions of CRPF, BSF, ITBP and SSB are already present. He also promised to send 2 technical battalions with nearly 2000 multi-skilled, engineering and technical personnel. Two more choppers would be inducted into the counter-'LWE' grid in

Chhattisgarh. The helicopters are for 'troop deployment or sending reinforcements when State forces plan to attack Maoists or 'an encounter is on'.

A six months campaign by joint Central and State forces was announced for all Maoist areas, starting with Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. Both these States witnessed maximum resistance of People's Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA) and the people to the corporate ventures. The focus of their offensive would be Chhattisgarh as it is one of the main strong areas of Maoist movement and at the centre of almost all the movement areas (AP, Telangana, Jharkhand, Odisha, Maharashtra and UP) The main focus in the third phase of OGH would be on the Maad areas in Bastar. Another feature of this phase would be engagement of huge numbers of forces during operations in all the main areas.

With BJP in power both at the Centre and the State the 'war on people' would be carried on more ruthlessly as a more centralised, coordinated, country-wide offensive. The specific feature of OGH under Modi regime is that all the Hindu communal fascist Sangh Parivar constituents would participate in it at various levels and in various spheres. The National Executive Council of ABVP giving a call to its rank and file to ensure that 'there are naxal free campuses' during its meet in Mangaluru in May is an indicator.

Maoists and all other fighting forces led by them are none other than the vanguard and organisations of the most oppressed people of our country and are comprised of none other than workers, peasants, students, youth, employees, intellectuals, middle class, dalits, adivasis, minorities and women who build the wealth of this country with their sweat and blood. They have chosen the path of struggle as they have been deprived of their *Jal, Jungle, Zameen, Izzat* and political rights and *Adhikar* and as their country is being enmeshed more and more in neocolonial ties by the Indian ruling classes with the prodding of the imperialists.

The CPI (Maoist) and the PLGA, RPCs, revolutionary mass organisations and masses led by it will go all out to defeat this round of fascist offensive of the Modi government just as they had defeated several previous counter-revolutionary campaigns. This will be done by waging war of self-defense utilising every single opportunity and mobilising and uniting all the fighting forces (revolutionary, democratic, patriotic) and the people vastly in this just people's war, now directed against the fascist and treacherous Modi government. All the revolutionary masses should unite more determinedly and support the PLGA to resist this round of fascist offensive launched as part of OGH-3rd phase. PM

100 days of Modi's sell-out 100 days of Brahmanic Hindu fascism 100 days of Modi's sell-out 100 days of Brahmanic Hindu fascism 100 days of Modi's sell-out 100 days of Brahmanic Hindu fascis

three years. According to the RBI only 7,459 bank branches could be opened in the past three years!

So what exactly is this scheme meant for? The plan to carry out transfer payments through Aadhar linked bank accounts is actually a scheme to cut down government subsidies and gather funds. This became evident in the linking of gas subsidies to the Aadhar card. Every household availing of subsidy had to pay the market price of gas to the delivery agency. The subsidy would be credited to their account later. Even if this was done promptly, what this really meant was an instant doubling of the cost they had to pay out for gas. Moreover, the total subsidy, though distributed over several accounts, actually added up to huge funds passed on to government owned banks. This could be used to augment their finances. Seeing the growing swell of discontent over the Aadhar-bank account linked gas subsidy scheme the UPA quickly suspended its implementation; elections were around the corner. Now that this 'threat' is over, Modi is free to carry on where the UPA left off.

The NDA has dressed it up with overdrafts, insurance cover and debit cards. But these come at a heavy cost. The interest rate will work out to nearly 14 per cent! Of this, 6 per cent is for the agents who will operate on behalf of the banks. In practice we will see money being taken out by these agents (most probably the rural exploiters or their henchmen) in the name of the poor account owner without their knowledge. The debt will weigh down on them leading to all of its consequences including bank seizures of property, while the agents will have the additional benefit of their share in the interest. Modi's advisers have cleverly planned for the inevitable deluge of defaults. 1 per cent of the interest is to go to a Credit Guarantee Fund (CGS) providing for defaults. The real purpose of the CGS is to avoid defaults showing up on the budget accounts of the government. Therefore it will be governed by a Financial Inclusion Fund (FIF) maintained by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). It is significant that transfer payments of subsidies are acknowledged

to be crucial for the operational viability of the present scheme. That alone would be sufficient to clarify its real purpose, identical to the earlier plans of the UPA.

This is not the first time that imperialist agencies and the Indian ruling classes are promoting the extension of the banking system to cover as many households as possible. That was one of the prominent rationales of bank nationalisation carried out by the Indira Gandhi regime in the late 1960s. In that period the thrust was on disbursing credit as widely as possible. Bankers were given targets of credit they had to hand out, with percentages prescribed for different sections. The reason for this largesse was not some sudden empathy for the peasantry. It was meant to facilitate the deeper penetration of bureaucrat capital into the rural sector. Credit was being given to promote the 'Green Revolution', to enable the peasantry to purchase the hybrid seeds, other inputs and machinery needed for its implementation. Loans to the rural and urban poor were doled out to entice them with promises of economic advance and trap them in reformism.

It is indeed symbolic of the present times that 'financial inclusion' is now meant to reduce government spending, to bolster bank finances, to load that burden onto the people. This goes with the current globalisation, liberalisation, and privatisation logic of imperialism. Unsurprisingly the RBI appointed Nachiket Mor Committee of 2013 on 'financial inclusion' proposed that the poor have to be pushed to the marketplace for their credit needs. That is exactly what is being done when they are forced to pay market prices for their ration, gas and other needs, and fobbed off with a promise of future reimbursement. PM

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In Bhitargaon village adjacent to Kanpur of Uttar Pradesh, an incident of theft by two youths was flared up in a premeditated manner to attack the Muslims of the village. In August this year, a police complaint was lodged by a Muslim family against two Hindu youths of the village for committing theft in their home. The police recovered the stolen material from the possession of the accused but did not take any further action against them. A rumour was then deliberately spread that the Muslims have killed the two of them. Led by the Hindu-fascist forces, a thousand-strong mob attacked the Muslim locality with sticks, bricks, and stones and burnt down 30 to 35 houses. Two Muslims including a wom-

an died in the conflagration, while others sustained serious burn injuries. The property of Muslims, including houses and shops were selectively destroyed.

The police, as usual, remained complicit in the crime. They did not try to protect the Muslims or take action against the perpetrators. The Muslims were so terrified that they did not lodge any complaint or FIR. The village has not experienced communal clashes or attacks on Muslims in the past. This attack is a part of the plan of the Hindu-fascist forces led by Modi, Amit Shah, Mohan Bhagwat and others to sharpen the communal divide and strengthen Hindutva organisations.

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In Kerala, the Congress-led UDF's police arrested some students for the 'crime' of caricaturing Modi. In Maharashtra the Congress-NCP government refused to take action against the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), student wing of the BJP, when it issued a written threat to the students of St Xavier's College, Mumbai, against inviting Sheetal Sathe – a singer of the Kabir Kala Manch, a cultural organisation, to their annual inter-collegiate youth festival. It chose to inform the students that police security wouldn't be available.

The Indian ruling classes need to promote Brahmanical Hinduism in order to cover up growing contradictions, divert the masses and consolidate their rule. But this is an extremely divisive ideology. Therefore it itself becomes a cause of intensifying contradictions. The ruling classes need this in a limited manner. Yet, on the whole, they and imperialism need stability to pursue their exploitative plans and ruthless suppression of the struggling forces. But there is always the danger of things going out of control. Though the RSS is the self-sworn hachetman of Brahmanism, it has no monopoly or total control over its articulation. This was seen in the wake of the Babri Masjid demolition when the sants paraded by the RSS immediately declared that India must proceed to implement Manu's dictates and antagonised the backward caste and dalit supporters of the Sangh. A recent example is the declaration by Dwarakapeeth Shankaracharya Swami Swaroopanand that the Saibaba of Shirdi, widely popular among Hindus, was a Muslim saint and not a god and so Hindus should not worship him. As much as the RSS tries to present a pan-Hindu image, one cutting above caste, its Brahmanic Hindu fascism inevitably promotes Brahmanic supremacy and its corollary the imposed inferiority of the oppressed castes. Even as Modi tries to sooth the antagonism of the Muslim minority by publicly acknowledging its patriotism, hoping to decieve it and dampen its opposition, the ideology guiding him must necessarily target them. More of its youth will inevitably be drawn to militant forms of resistance.

Thus there are several factors upsetting the plans of the Indian ruling classes and imperialism and causing instability. Modi regime will face internal contradictions as it proceeds. To the extent that revolutionary, progressive, democratic forces, persecuted religious minorities, dalits and adivasis succeed in uniting and putting up determined opposition to the aggressive push of Brahmanic Hindu fascism, these contradictions can be intensified and an upsurge of resistance can be brought about. **PM**

A foreign policy to contain China

The Indian ruling classes have been concerned by the growth of Chinese presence in South and South East Asia. They have been steadily engaged in countering this. The 'Look East' policy of the UPA was directed by this aim. But it wasn't as effective as planned. Coalition pressures limited its options. China could make inroads in Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The Indian ruling classes desire to rectify this under the Modi regime. It is planning to take major steps to strengthen Indian expansionist grip in South Asia. The flurry of diplomatic moves by the Modi government, official visits to Bhutan, Nepal, Japan, Myanmar, and Vietnam, the visit of the Australian Prime Minister were all guided by this plan. India's blocking of China's attempt to be the major shareholder in the proposed BRICS Bank too is part of it. The commonality in the views of both the major parties, the Congress and the BJP, in this matter was well demonstrated when both Modi and Pranab Mukherjee used the occasion of their respective visits to Japan and Vietnam to indirectly accuse China of expansionism and support their hosts. This long term strategic plan of the Indian ruling class accords with the strategic plans of US imperialism to further bolster Indian expansionism and use it as a counter-weight to China. On its own it is also keenly interested in gaining wider access to South and South East Asian markets and utilising the resources of these countries.

Despite the posturing of the Indian ruling classes vis a vis China, epitomised in Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj's claim that India's relation with China is one of 'cooperation and competition', the hard fact is that India is wary of getting into a conflict with China. Its defence capabilities are nowhere near that of China. Besides, over the years China has built infrastructure all along the Tibetan border and its interiors that make it possible to move and deploy large forces against India in a relatively short time. Though building matching infrastructure has been on the Indian agenda for long, it

is still lacking. Therefore, the moves of Delhi are more in the nature of probing and containment measures.

China's huge economic clout, strong ties with Pakistan and growing ties with Sri Lanka and Maldives are obstacles for the Modi regime's plans. China is also pushing into Nepal. There is the additional factor that the peoples of South Asian countries already experience India as an overbearing regional power, threatening their economies and sovereignty. The Sangh Parivar's grandiose Brahmanical Hindutva concept of an Akhand Bharat spanning many of these countries will only strengthen such negative feelings. They would welcome a certain amount of strengthening of Chinese presence since that would allow them some bargaining room with India. The Chinese rulers for their part have chosen to ignore all the inimical statements made by the Modi government. Its President, visiting India, stressed on China's economic capacities, its willingness to 'help India develop'. Much as this is slighting for the Indian ruling classes they need those billions of yuans. So Modi broke protocol and ran to Ahmedabad to welcome Xi Jinping. And while he was in New Delhi the Chinese army was deployed in advance positions along its border with India, in a not so subtle reminder of ground reality.

Another important plank of the Modi regime's foreign policy is that of getting into a closer relation of subordination with the US. Modi chose to qualify the US imperialists as India's 'natural ally'. In return it would like the US to put more pressure on Pakistan and promote its entry into the UN Security Council. But this does not mean that it will move away from the long standing policy of the Indian ruling classes to gain as much as possible by manoeuvring between imperialist powers. Modi's speech at the UN General Assembly where he cautioned against any single country deciding and acting on international issues and called for allowing all the countries (meaning Syria and Iran) in West Asia to be part of the coalition against the Islamic State, indicates this. However, within this, it will toe the US line more closely. **PM**

On 5 August, students of Dantewada district in southern Chhattisgarh brought out a rally protesting against the abysmal condition of their schools. Schools run by the government in the Dandakaranya region lack even the basic minimum facilities such as teaching tools and infrastructure. Teaching posts have been contractualised and the teachers are given inadequate remuneration. In such conditions, some teachers are reluctant to attend schools regularly in the interior areas of Bastar. In addition, many school buildings have been converted into permanent police camps for troops conducting anti-Maoist operations, forcing the students to attend classes under the open skies. Students of Dantewada raised their voice against these conditions and demanded that the government take immediate steps to provide the minimum conditions for a meaningful education. This is the real state of public education in the vast rural tracts of the country, mocking at the boastful claims of Narendra Modi to promote India as a hub of 'quality' education, computer-aided teaching and 'export of teachers' in his much-publicised 'Teacher's Day' speech of 5 September.

In July this year, BJP-ruled Rajasthan government passed a proposal to amend the Industrial Disputes Act 1947, Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and Factories Act, 1948. Accordingly, the Contract Labour Act would only be applicable in units employing 50 workers or more, instead of 20 as per the present law. The new amendments free the principal employer from any responsibility for violation of Contract Labour Act. Likewise, the new Factories Act keeps industrial units employing up to 20 workers and using electricity out of the Act instead of the previous 10 workers. Units not using power can employ up to 40 workers and still be outside the ambit of the Factories Act whereas previously any unit not using power had to register if it employed twenty labourers or more.

As per these amendments, up to 300 workers can be retrenched or a unit can be closed down without notifying the government, the present cap for which is hundred workers. The membership of 15% of the workforce was enough to form a recognised labour union. Now this would require the membership of 30% workers. At present, a union can be registered with the consent of seven persons. Now it is proposed to be raised to a hundred persons or ten percent workers of a unit. These anti-labour proposals represent the institutionalisation of 'hire and fire' policy. New rules such as the issuing of strike notice are introduced to reduce the possibility of strikes or facilitating their easier suppression.

Many of these changes are now going to be extended throughout the country by the Modi government. The union labour ministry

The attack on labour

issued a circular proposing amendments in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970; Factories Act, 1948; Apprentices Act, 1961 and The Trade Unions Act. These amendments will make existing right to higher wages for overtime redundant. A 12-hours workday instead of eight-hours is allowed. They make night shifts for women legal. Factory owners employing up to 300 workers can retrench workers easily without following any legal procedure. The Contract Labour Act would only apply to firms employing more than 50 persons instead of 20. The amendments will allow the principal employers to shirk their responsibility of adhering to the labour

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Language as a tool of fascism

Thinking aloud on the language issue an AIR compere says that if only Pandit Malaviya's demand that Hindi alone be made the link language was acceded in the Constituent Assembly, the persisting differentiation of an India and a Bharat would have been done away with long ago. That is an interesting thought, very revealing indeed. Assuming that this Bharat comprises all the Hindi speakers, where does that leave the millions of non-Hindi speakers, all of whom have their own languages and cultures? The vast bulk of them would not count in India, since that presumably is the land of English speakers. Neither there nor here, stuck in a limbo as non-citizens or rather as second class citizens — this in fact is the underlying thinking of the proponents of Hindi as THE language.

The next step is its association with Hinduism. Mohan Bhagwat, the RSS chief, argues that since the country is known as Hindustan there is nothing wrong in making/declaring it as a '*Hindu rashtra*'.

Take a closer look at his premise. Just who calls this country Hindustan? Certainly not by the peoples of the North Eastern States or those in the South. Which leaves us mainly with the Hindi speakers. Thus the circle is completed — Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan. Its core is the racist Brahmanic concept of the Aryans as the exalted and Aryavarta as the blessed land. All others are its minions.

Not only them, even the masses of the so-called Hindi speaking States too would be counted as second rate, because their mother tongues are different and the Hindi they speak is closely influenced by those vocabularies and intonations. The Hindi of the Mohan Bhagwats is heavily Sanskritised, so as to to remove all traces of its truly Hindustani (Urdu) and Persian/Arabic (by implication Islamic) associations. But this 'sanitisation' was not originally a RSS project. Its initiators were the 'secular', 'modern', Nehru and his Congress.

PM

Reining in the judiciary

The National Judicial Appointments Commission Bill 2014 along with the accompanying constitutional amendment bill, makes the subservience of the judiciary to the government so crude and blatant that if it comes into force, the carefully crafted fairytale of 'judicial independence' for popular consumption would become incredible even for the staunch believers of the liberal faith.

Since 1950, judicial appointments have been made by a collegium of four SC judges headed by the Chief Justice of India (CJI), who had the right to be 'consulted' by the government for making appointments and whose opinion was binding on the government. However, a SC judgment in 1981 held that the government could make the final decision. This was the period when Indira Gandhi was back in power with a clear majority and once again concentrating authoritarian power in her hands. The SC ruling gave the control of the government on judicial appointments a legal basis. A nine-member constitutional bench reversed this decision in 1993. Recommendations of the collegium and the CJI once again became binding upon the government. It could only send back some recommended names but could not turn down any of the proposed names. In this way, the direct control of the executive in judicial appointments was curtailed to some extent.

UPA government tabled a bill in the parliament to form a Judicial Commission for appointments in 2013, but it could not get the bill passed. Now its successor, the NDA, is completing the process. According to the new bill, the judicial commission would be comprised of the law minister and two

'eminent persons' appointed by a committee of the Prime Minister, the leader of the opposition and the CJI. There will only be three SC judges including the CJI in the commission. The procedure of the automatically appointing the senior-most SC judge as the CJI will no longer be applicable. If that judge is considered by the commission to be unsuitable, it can select any judge as CJI ignoring seniority. It will enjoy similar powers in the appointment of SC and High Court judges.

A section of advocates and the so-called civil society had been demanding an 'independent commission' for judicial appointments replacing the collegium, arguing that the overriding discretionary power of the CJI and a handful of senior judges made the process highly arbitrary. They expected that a judicial commission which would allow popular participation in the appointment of judges and provide equal opportunity for the oppressed sections of the society to enter higher judiciary. NDA has cleverly used this demand to make the judiciary even more dependent on the ruling dispensation. This step has prompted even liberal constitutionalists to express the looming threat of "a single party authoritarian state". This view, of course, emanates from the mistaken belief that the judiciary represents the aspirations of the people of the country and not the ruling classes or their political representatives.

After these bills become laws, Modi will have the authority to appoint SC and HC judges, and it is calculated that he would be able to appoint as many as 21 – or the large majority of SC judges – by 2019 when the next general elections will be held. The higher judiciary will be filled with the Sangh Parivar's people. The proposed commission will thus become another means by which the Modi government further centralises state power in its hands and advances its agenda of Brahmanic Hindu fascistisation of the state. PM

Breaking through the suppression of mass struggles, on 30 July 20,000 people marched in a rally at Bhairamgarh in Bijapur District, Chhattisgarh, protesting against the rape of an adivasi woman by the police. This large mobilisation of people was a response to the daily atrocities committed by the Indian state's armed forces on the adivasi villagers and against sexual violence on women in particular, including rape and molestation. During the fascist Salwa Judum and the subsequent Green Hunt Operation unleashed on the people of Dandakaranya over the last decade, hundreds of adivasi women have been subjected to rape and other extreme forms of physical assault by the paramilitary, police and vigilante forces. The people have a vivid memory of these atrocities and every new incident reminds them of the repressive nature of the state, evoking strong hatred and anger against the its mercenary goons in uniform. In spite of their protests, none of the rapists have been brought to book. Along with organising protests against the authorities and the troops, the people therefore are punishing these hated figures themselves through their people's war.

A devastating flood in Jhelum swept through Kashmir this monsoon, submerging three-fourths of Srinagar and adjoining areas on the banks of the river. This was the most destructive flood experienced by Kashmir in recent times, affecting people on both sides of Line of Control. More than two hundred have lost their lives while the devastation to livestock and property is of an unprecedented magnitude. They are yet to recover from the widespread devastation and are struggling to pick up their lives shaken by the deluge.

But the suffering and loss was neither unexpected nor unpredictable. The Indian government, which has been occupying Kashmir through its military force for more than six decades, and its puppet governments in Srinagar has been constructing railway lines and expressways, the embankments of which have damaged the natural drainage system of the valley and made large parts of it landlocked. The primary concern of Delhi is the swifter movement of troops across the Kashmir valley and the forceful 'integration' of the region with India through these mega projects. These had an adverse impact on the fragile ecosystem of the valley and its river system, creating the conditions for disaster.

The Flood Control Department and people's organisations alerted Jammu and Kashmir government in 2010 itself about the danger of floods and a plan for flood protection works with an estimated cost of 22,000 crores was drawn up. But an occupying force would hardly find any necessity or urgency to spend such an amount for the wellbeing of a subjugated nation and its people.

The floods that ravaged Kashmir this year therefore cannot be attributed to irrevocable natural causes such as excessive rain or termed a natural disaster. There have been similar heavy rainfall in the past

Kashmir: The politics of floods

too, but it did not result in devastating floods. The floods are a consequence of the security-centric policies of the Indian state pursued at the expense of the interests of the Kashmiri people.

The response of the Indian government to the Kashmiri people struggling to cope with the flood was nothing but apathy and disregard. There was no rescue or relief operation. The people were left to fend for themselves. They survived for days without safe drinking water, food, medicine and help from the government. In the face of such a grave situation, the Kashmiris depended on each other and people's organisations for help and assistance. They saw through the toughest hours and days of the floods entirely on their own, creating volunteer forces, collecting funds and relief material, evacuating the affected people, arranging food and medicine.

Seeing the growing anger of the people, the Modi government finally swung into action — moved more by political pressure rather than humanitarian concerns. The army which stood by idly in the direst time was now pressed into action and projected as the 'saviour' of Kashmir. In an obscene competition between Indian and Pakistani rulers, each offered the Kashmir, occupied by the other, aid. But the people of Kashmir have once again proved that they are capable of administering their affairs. The message is loud and clear: Kashmiris do not need any 'help' from the Indian state or its occupation army; what they need is the right to self-determination, the freedom to secede from India and to create their independent and sovereign national state.

Continued from page 8

laws and existing regulations related to labour and employment.

The previous UPA and NDA regimes as well as State governments of various parties have already made the labour laws toothless. The stranglehold of revisionist and reactionary trade unions on the organised labour force, combined with the rampant contractualisation of labour has made the country's labour movement subservient to the interests of the capitalists. Any organised struggle of the workers which erupts by countering these odds is met with brutal repression. As a result, the rights of the workers have remained mostly on paper while a

vast majority of them are forced to accept highly unfavourable terms of work with no hope of enjoying their legal rights.

The NDA government, riding on an unprecedented electoral victory made possible by the backing of foreign investors, MNCs and Indian big business, has shown all keenness to return them the favour. Modi had made a virtue out of suppressing labourers and their rights to attract investment to Gujarat. This Gujarat 'Model' of fascist repression is now being extended across the country under the banner of 'Make in India', i.e., inviting capital to exploit labour and resources without any limits. This is Modi's 'Fast Develop India'!

PM

An Appeal to the Naga Forces and the Naga People

(Following the colonial policy of Divide-and-Rule, the Indian government is once again planning to redeploy Naga paramilitary battalions in Dandakaranya as a part of its Operation Green Hunt. Naga forces were deployed for the first time in Chhattisgarh during Salwa Judum, but was withdrawn. One of the reasons for this withdrawal was the protest from the Naga people themselves. Following is an appeal by the DKSZC to the Naga forces and the Naga people. Given its significance, we are reproducing it here - PM)



Communist Party of India (Maoist)

Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee

Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) of Communist Party of India (Maoist) strongly opposes the decision by the Centre-State Governments to deploy Naga Jawans in the struggle areas of Dandakaranya. We appeal to Naga Jawans to oppose the implementation of this decision and not to come to Chhattisgarh as slaves in the service of Exploiters, raise their voices to oppose forceful deployment and express solidarity towards the Adivasi people of this region who are fighting for their very existence. We feel it is appropriate to make Naga Jawans know that the India's exploitative ruling classes and their representative - the Central Government - is the common enemy of Naga Nationality and India's exploited-oppressed masses. If forcefully sent to struggle areas in spite of your opposition, perform your duties passively. Do not commit atrocities on the people. During battles, lay down your arms. In all possible ways provide us with information.

We welcome the statements given by officers of Naga forces and the Naga State Congress unit in opposition to sending Naga forces to Chhattisgarh. It is well known that during the notorious militarized, well-organized, repressive fascist operation Salwa Judum too, Naga forces were sent to Chhattisgarh. Due to strong mass resistance by the struggling people of Dandakaranya and the heroic resistance by PLGA under the leadership of our party as well as due to the opposition by Naga people, families of Naga Jawans, Naga students and intellectuals, Naga agitators, civil rights organizations and activists, the Central and Naga State governments were forced to call back Naga forces from Chhattisgarh. During that time, many Naga Jawans lost their lives in people's war and also many of them got injured.

Now Naga forces are once again being used to intensify the Operation Green Hunt, which is a countrywide unjustified war on people, launched in 2009 to wipe out our Party, PLGA and people's democratic power organs - the Revolutionary Peoples' Committees. It is the conspiracy of the exploitative-ruling classes that on the one hand, since decades military might is being used by the Indian Government to annihilate Naga national liberation struggle, and on the other, it is using Naga forces to suppress Dandakaranya Adivasis who are fighting for their rights over Jal-Jungle-Jameen. This policy of Divide and Rule of the British colonialists is inherited by the Indian comprador ruling classes.

Our Party from the beginning is in wholehearted support of the right of self-determination including secession of the North Eastern nationalities. It strongly opposes Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA). After Modi-led BJP government came to power, it can be seen that the India's expansionist policy is being implemented aggressively. The implementation of the agenda of Akhand Bharat is going to be speeded-up either by taking suppressive measures or by attempting to crush national liberation struggles in South Asia. The need has arisen for all national liberation struggles of the North East to unite with India's New Democratic Revolutionary forces.

In the end, we appeal to the leading organisations of the Naga national liberation struggle and all North-Eastern national liberation struggles, civil rights activists, families of Naga Jawans - especially their mothers, friends and relatives, students and youth to wage a strong and militant mass agitations against the deployment of Naga forces in Chhattisgarh.

Gudsa Usendi

Spokesperson

Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee

Communist Party of India (Maoist)

25 September 2014

excerpts from

Message of CPI (Maoist) to the International Conference



**To all the delegates who have gathered in this Conference,
To all the parties, organisations and individuals who have
worked to organise it,
To the International Committee to support the people's war in
India that is leading this Conference,**

The news of your campaigns, its vivid images, are being taken to our ranks, PLGA combatants and revolutionary masses as widely as possible through our open and secret magazines and several other means. When they know that their sisters and brothers in far off lands stand up in militant solidarity with them, when they see images of protests before Indian embassies, of wall writings taking the message of their revolution to masses in those countries, their hearts swell with pride — we are not alone, our people are there, we are everywhere. Your acts have inspired us; they have made us more determined. We will strive our utmost to fulfil the confidence you have reposed in us. Our future, the future of the world revolution, the future of the world proletariat, oppressed nations and oppressed people is certainly bright but the path is a thorny, arduous and full of zigzags. The future of our enemies, the imperialists and their lackeys the world over, is dark and their doom is inevitable.

Warmest revolutionary greetings and heartfelt Lal Salam from the CPI (Maoist) and the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA), Revolutionary People's Committees (RPCs), Revolutionary Mass Organisations and revolutionary people of India, it leads.

We greet you especially with the joy of celebrating the momentous 10th anniversary of the foundation of our party and with deep appreciation of your organising this Conference in conjunction with these celebrations exactly in the condition of great turmoil in the world. The formation of the CPI (Maoist) which united the two major revolutionary streams in India realised a dream long cherished by the revolutionaries and masses. In its 10 years of its existence 2332 comrades, including members of the Politbureau, Central Committee, State, Region, District, Sub-zone, Area and Village level party committees, primary party members and many more of the PLGA and the United Front, have made the supreme sacrifice to fulfil the revolutionary tasks it had set itself. We pay homage to these martyrs, to the revolutionary masses who have willingly suffered loss of lives and unimaginable repression to participate and support the people's war, and to all those who laid down their lives for the great cause of communism throughout the world...

Comrades,

During the past decade a number of important developments have taken place at the international level. We wish to draw your attention to some salient features.

The initial years of the last decade saw huge outpourings of the masses against globalisation policies that destroyed their lives and a strengthening of people's wars and armed liberation struggles. The ideology of the proletariat was more sharply posed through the establishment of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Its wider adoption strengthened the grounds for closer unity among Maoist forces, internationally and

in different countries. Stirrings of a new wave of revolution could be seen in the world. Mainly in response to this, imperialism, particularly US imperialism initiated and launched a massive, worldwide counter-revolutionary offensive, directed against the people. This was the main content of the so-called 'War on Terrorism' which all imperialists and reactionaries joined or supported. Wars of aggression against Afghanistan and Iraq, curtailment of democratic rights, attacks on people's struggles, growing fascistisation throughout the world, step up of suppressive campaigns against armed struggles, people's wars and Maoist parties — such were its main features. But the arrogance of US imperialism, the sole superpower soon got soundly rebuffed. The challenge was met. A worldwide struggle emerged against the war on Iraq and continued after the launch of the war. Powerful resistance in Iraq and Afghanistan bogged down the aggressors and upset their plans. Masses throughout the world refused to be cowed down and continued their struggles against the ravages of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation. People's wars continued to advance. As a result of all these factors, US imperialism was forced to change tactics within a few years. Bush was replaced with Obama. Talk of 'decades of war' was replaced with hurried plans for disengagement and withdrawal of troops. This is a stark indicator of the favourable situation that has emerged in the world. This period also saw a growth in the contention between imperialist powers as Russian imperialism began to assert itself in the context of the US getting bogged down.

As we all know, the global crisis of the imperialist system that broke out in 2008 has further ex-



acerbated the situation world over. In both imperialist and oppressed countries, millions took to the streets and fought pitched battles with reactionary state forces, workers seized factories, masses occupied squares and shut down governments. Students, youth, women, workers, immigrants, pensioners — all have come out in struggle. The heady days of the Arab Spring are still live in our memories. Several hated dictatorships were brought down by the persistent struggles of the people. This blooming of the masses didn't arrive at realising their aspirations for a genuine democracy, exploitation free system and people's rule. But it has stirred up these societies in a deep way. It gave hope to the world peoples. The results will surely appear.

This is the world today. It shows a situation of great potential for a powerful new wave of revolution. But there is another side to this, a bitter side, one of betrayal. Once again in the history of the international communist movement revisionism has blocked it from gaining the most of a favourable situation. The betrayal of the people's war in Nepal by the CPN (Maoist) leadership, particularly the Prachanda-Bhattarai clique, was the most damaging of its acts... From another end we see a liquidationist attack on our ideology that seeks to pull down the banners of MLM and replace it with the hollow claims of Avakianism. This has already destroyed some Maoist parties, who once had an honourable place in the ranks of the ICM. Both of these deviations have been confronted by the Maoists and the struggle continues. Efforts are on to consolidate Maoist parties and build new ones. But the loss is evident. There is a considerable drop in the subjective forces of world proletarian revolution, caused not by enemy suppression, but by the enemies emerging from within it.

Thus we see the contradiction, the glaring gap between the potential of the objective situation and the subjective capacities of the Maoist forces. This is what we must confront. All our activities must be directed to overcome it. This is the deepest need of the oppressed and exploited throughout the world, the demand of these times. As Mao would say, "We must seize the hour, seize the time" Our party believes that it is the need of the hour for the communist forces to strive to mobilise the broadest

The Woes of a Rich Land and a Poor People

- Uday

Along with the vast labouring masses as its strength, India has massive deposits of natural resources. The beloved people of our country are forced to live a life of poverty and destitution in the midst of abundant resources of *jal-jangal-zameen* (water, forest and land). Tens of crores worth of mineral resources are deposited within the country's landmass. It is the mineral resources of our country that are being used by the large multinational companies like Boeing and Toyota to produce their aeroplanes and vehicles. 90 percent of the total coal deposits and 80 percent of all other mineral deposits of the country are located in adivasi-inhabited areas. The high-rises adorning the skylines of the world's megacities like Beijing are being made of steel smelted from iron-ore procured from the mines of Bailadilla and other adivasi regions of the country. Chhattisgarh is the foremost among the mineral resource-rich States of India. 16 percent of the total coal and 10 percent of the total iron-available in the country is deposited in Chhattisgarh.

The share of adivasis in the total population of the country is not even nine percent but forty percent of the acquired land is theirs. This makes it clear that among the people who have been bulldozed by the governments for their large-scale projects in the name of 'development', the number of adivasis is the highest. All the mineral-rich areas of the country are, in fact, forest areas inhabited by the adivasis.

Waves of people's struggles against large industrial projects of the big corporate houses and multinational companies, against forcible acquisition of land for big dam and large mining projects are rising all over the country.

Adivasi areas in particular have become the centres of these struggles. In Chhattisgarh's Bastar, adivasi and non-adivasi masses are getting organised and carrying on struggles against mining projects in Chargaon, Raoghat, Budhiari, Kuwemari and Amdai, Mendki and Bodhghat dam projects, and industrial plants of the Tatas and Essars ... The people are storming heavens with the slogans of 'Rights over jal-jangal-zameen must belong to the adivasis and people' and 'We will sacrifice life but not land'. Precisely for this reason the government is trying to initiate these projects by deploying its armed forces. It is intent on displacing the people by making a mockery of the rights guaranteed by the constitution, the same constitution based on which it claims to draw its legitimacy to rule.

From the point of availability of mineral resources, Bastar within Chhattisgarh has an important place. Here minerals such as iron-ore, corundum, bauxite, tin, and uranium are found in abundance. It would not be an exaggeration to say that there is not a single ordinary stone in the hills of Bastar. Indravati, Pranahita, Sabari, Mendki ... Bastar is the land of life-giving perennial rivers and breath-taking waterfalls. It has rich lush-green forests that are full of Sal, Sagon, Saja, Bija and other valuable trees and life-saving medicinal herbs. The land is highly fertile. Madia, Muria, Halba, Dhurba, Bhatra, Oraon, Gond, Rajgond and other adivasi tribes, as well as the people of non-adivasi castes such as Raut, Kalar, Mahar, Marar, Panka, and Gando have inhabited this land for generations. The Indian constitution has given the adivasis the status of Scheduled Tribes. Earlier Bastar division was a single District. It is now divided into seven. Old Bastar was even bigger in size than the State of Kerala. It comes under the Fifth Schedule of the constitution. PESA (?) is in place here. Gram Sabhas (Village Councils) are given special powers.

The rich resources of Bastar have attracted the attention of the multinationals and big industrial houses for a long time. Governments have already concluded tens of MoUs (Memorandum of Understanding) with multinational corporates and big Indian industrial houses without taking the mandatory consent of the local people. They are blatantly violating the special constitutional rights enjoyed by adivasis. In 2005, Chhattisgarh government conducted secret MoUs with Tatas, Essar and Texas Power Generation (a US-based company). This was followed up in 2006 by conducting

another 35 MoUs with different corporate companies. The process of signing such agreements has not yet come to a halt. On the occasion of the State's formation day, Chhattisgarh government concluded MoUs with hundreds of companies worth tens of thousands of crores. But the contents and conditions agreed upon in these MoUs have not been revealed. Right to Information, transparency are simply ploys to deceive the people. Even the MLAs of the ruling party have not been informed about the terms and conditions of these MoUs.

Nearly one lakh acres of land will have to be forcibly acquired from adivasi peasants in order to implement all these projects proposed in the MoUs. To push through these MoUs, either fake Gram Sabhas are being organised or land is being acquired from the peasants without even going through such formalities as organising Gram Sabhas. This can be easily understood from the experience of Gram Sabhas in Hiranagar, Nagarnar, Lohandiguda and Bhansi.

Essar company is trying to acquire 1,483 acres of land from four villages including Dhurli, Bhansi and Kamalur to build a seven thousand crore steel plant with a capacity of 32 lakh tons. In the Gram Sabha that was conducted under the shadows of the police bayonets on 30 August 2006, the people bravely declared that they refused to give up their land. The same Essar company is flushing 80 lakh tons of crushed iron-ore every year from the hills of Bastar's Bailadilla to the port city of Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh on the eastern coast through a 267 kilometre long pipeline. For this reason alone, the waters of Sankhini-Dankini and Sabari rivers are being pumped into the Bay of Bengal through the pipeline since 2002 and thus are completely wasted. Because of this, not only is there a scarcity of water in the villages in and around Bailadilla but the groundwater level of entire Bastar region has gone down significantly. But Essar company's transportation cost of iron-ore has come down from Rs.300 per ton to Rs.80 per ton due to the replacement of road transport with that of sending iron slurry through its pipeline.

This is not all. Even the public sector NMDC (National Mineral Development Corporation) is planning to construct a pipeline of its own. If this plan materialises, the people of Bastar and all lives dependent on its water sources will be forced into a desperate search for water even to quench their thirst in the coming days. In the year 2000, NMDC in partnership with a multinational company called Romelt tried to build the Hiranar Steel Plant near Dantewada. However, due to strong protests by the local people the attempts of the company ended in failure. Later in 2001 the same project was shifted to Nagarnar. Located 14 kilometres away from Jagdalpur, the district headquarters of Bastar, 300 acres of land was forcefully acquired for the project at Nagarnar. Many nefarious methods were deployed to grab this land and hundreds of protesting peasants were sent to jail after implicating them in fabricated cases. The people defeated three attempts by the company management-administration-police combine to hold Gram Sabhas for acquir-

A proposed steel plant with an annual capacity of five lakh tons is being planned by the Tatas near Lohandiguda in Bastar district. Attempts to acquire 5,308 acres of fertile double-crop agricultural land from the peasants is going on. If Tata is successful, the very existence of ten villages like Bandaji Belar, Kumli, Chindpal will come to an end while twenty-five additional surrounding villages will gradually go out of existence. Twice the villagers passed resolutions through Gram Sabhas expressing their decisions not to give land. But the district collector, police officers, Tata management and its agents got together and organised a third Gram Sabha in which they got a resolution passed showing that the villagers have approved the project. In this fake Gram Sabha, policemen in civilian dress and goons and agents of Tata sat in the front rows posing as villagers and gave their approval. Tata management is busy in acquiring the land of the peasants through threats and intimidation using its agents and with the help of the police. But the people of Lohandiguda are standing firm on their slogan, 'We will give our life but not our land'.

ing consent. Democratic intellectuals like former DC of Bastar and former Chairman of National ST Commission and a friend of Bastar Dr. B. D. Sharma, Vandana Shiva, and others who had come in solidarity with the Nagarnar people's movement and to directly observe the proceedings of the Gram Sabha were stopped on their way, beaten up, humiliated and sent back. After forcibly acquiring the land of the people, boundary walls were erected on the land. Ten years have passed and even today the peasants have got neither any compensation nor have they been given any job as per their earlier promise. Nothing has happened there till now except the opening ceremony. Land was lost. Employment too did not materialise. The inhabitants of Nagarnar have become homeless, reduced to an itinerant existence, after being evicted from their own land.

No doubt, the policies of privatisation had been picking up steam even during the period of the Congress Ajit Jogi government. However, this has

been intensified ever since the BJP government of Raman Singh came to power. In 2004 itself a new industrial policy was declared. As per this policy, industrialists were given one concession after another. Industrialists who set up large factories in adivasi-dominated regions were exempted from paying electricity charges, manufacturing tax, sales tax, income tax, transportation costs, and other charges for seven to nine years. It was promised that industrial centres with all necessary infrastructural facilities including roads, electricity, communication, police station, and banks would be developed. In addition, the promise of acquiring and handing over any amount of land at any preferred location was also made. It was due to these freebies and gifts that the Tatas, Essar, Mittal, TPG and many others made their way to Bastar. The new mining policy gave importance to public-private partnership. After winning a second term in the elections, the Central and State governments made changes in the policy to fully encourage privatisation. Big capitalists like Tata, Jindal, Mittal, Essar, Nicco, Jaiswal, Lloyd were given leases of large mines located in Bastar.

The iron-ore available in the Bailadilla hills is of the world's best quality. 80 percent of the total iron-ore produced by NMDC comes from the mines of Bailadilla. This ore is exported mainly to Japan, Korea and China. An iron-ore deposit of 1,343 million tonnes still exists in these mines. Some of these deposits have been leased out to the Tata and Essar companies. Many other companies are making efforts to acquire such leases. During the opening of the Bailadilla mines, it was widely publicised that it would bring development to the local people, the unemployed youth would get jobs, Bastar would march forward through industrial development, and so on. But quite its opposite has taken place. Until production commenced, local adivasis were used as contract labourers for works like digging, construction of roads and buildings, and carrying construction material, as they provided a source of cheap labour force. Later when the contract workers initiated a struggle demanding permanent employment, the police opened indiscriminate fire on the protestors in which more than two dozen agitating workers were killed. All the worker's huts were consigned to flames. Most of them were forcibly dispersed and forced to settle here and there, while the remaining ones became completely destitute.

The demand for iron-ore and steel is continually increasing in the international market.

Opening of the Bailadilla mines have not led to development of Bastar's adivasis but to their destruction. The local people have been dispossessed and displaced, while the last four decades have brought immense profits to the foreign multinational companies. The price of iron-ore in the open market is Rs.5,800 per ton and up to Rs.10,000 per ton in the international market, whereas Bailadilla's iron-ore is being sold to Japan at a nominal price of Rs.160 per ton. The government's earning through royalty is less than Rs.50 per ton. In this way, Japan is grabbing huge mounds of iron-ore at a chicken feed cost of Rs.400 per ton. It is worth noting here that dozens of sponge-iron factories have closed down in Chhattisgarh due to lack of raw material. These 105 sponge-iron factories require 12 million tonnes of iron-ore every year, whereas NMDC is supplying them with only 3 million tonnes. This means that the government is not only overlooking the interests of the small and mid-level capitalists but in fact they are being forced into closure.

Their price is also increasing as a result. The amount of iron-ore mined every year in our country has doubled or tripled. The production of iron-ore in 1993-94 was 59 million tonnes, which grew to 154 tonnes by 2005-06. During the same period the production of bauxite has grown from 5 million tonnes to 12 million tonnes and that of coal from 267 million tonnes to 437 million tonnes. Foreign and domestic mining companies in partnership have entered into a fierce competition to acquire the right to exploit mining resources of the country. In order to facilitate their profit-making spree even further, the government has prepared and implemented a new mining policy.

The Raoghat hill range adjacent to the Maad range in Narayanpur district contains 732 million tonnes of iron-ore deposits. These hills are located 29 kilometres from Narayanpur town. SAIL (Steel Authority of India) is making attempts to start mining here since 1983. Till yesterday the government used to claim that these deposits are reserved for the Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP), but now it has been revealed that some of these reserves have been handed over to Tata, Jindal, Mittal, Essar, and Jaiswal Necco. The existence of twenty-three villages will be under threat due to the proposed mining of these hills. In addition, water sources, forests, crops – i.e., the environment of the area in its totality – will be irreparably damaged. According to environmentalists and weather experts, mining in Raoghat hills will adversely affect the Monsoons and there will be a considerable reduction of rainfall in Bastar. In spite of this, the government has given a go ahead and in 1996 the Ministry of Environment and Forest too have given its clearance. Since 1992 the

people of the area are in struggle to save these hills and the abodes of their revered goddesses, gods and ancestral domains. The efforts to start mining has again been intensified since 2007. Now the Modi government has decided to additionally deploy 20 battalions of para-military to ensure this.

The government is also propagating that BSP may get closed if it is not supplied with iron-ore from the mines of Raoghat hills due to non-availability of raw material, as the Dalli-Rajhara mines are getting empty. But this is not true. The present situation has come about due to the indiscriminate exploitation of the Dalli-Rajhara mines. If proper plans and methods were to be adopted, it is still possible to extract and supply ore from these mines for decades. As a result of increased mechanisation to replace labour and rapacious mining, Dalli-Rajhara town is today becoming desolate. Why can't iron-ore be supplied to BSP and the sponge-iron factories from Bailadilla? The government policy of depriving small and

medium capitalists as well as public sector units like BSP from iron-ore in order to ensure super-profits to foreign capitalists is completely unjust. Uninterrupted supply of iron-ore to BSP as well as small and medium capitalists must be ensured by stopping supply to Japan, China and Korea. In such a situation there will be no need to open up the Raoghat hills for mining and the adivasi masses will also be spared from forced displacement. The owners of sponge-iron factories have put forward the demand of setting aside ten percent of the iron-ore produced in Bailadilla for their exclusive use. This demand needs to be further expanded and strengthened.

Close by Raoghat hills, 21.8 million tonnes of iron-ore deposits have been located in the Chargaon hills, adjacent to it is a deposit of 15.6 million tonnes in Metta Bodili, whereas Ahladi has 12.8 million tonnes of iron-ore deposits. All these have been leased to Jaiswal's Necco and other mining companies. 35.8 million tonnes of iron-ore deposited in the belly of Amdai Metta (Chote Dongar) hill situated in the middle of the Maad has also been handed over to Jaiswal's Necco. In Budhiari Maad and Kuwemari hills of Kanker district, precious deposits of bauxite has been located. The people of

these places have been vociferously opposing the attempts to start mining works there since 1990. Tens of millions of iron-ore deposits have also been found in the hills around the villages of Khandgaon,

... where the people are their own masters

With the participation and support of the vast masses of the oppressed people of this country, the PLGA led by the CPI (Maoist) is ploughing up the land to clear out anti-people and obsolete relations, structures and institutions. Together with the masses, it plants and builds a new political power, a new social order. These now exist at the primary level as Revolutionary People's Committees (popularly known as Krantikari Janatana Sarkars, Krantikari Jan Committees or Viplava Praja Committees) in the guerrilla bases of Central and Eastern India. These centres of new political power are as yet mere specs in this vast land. But they already make possible a meaningful life, vibrant with the strength of cooperation, collectivity, rich in values of humane care and concern. They realise the centuries old dream of the exploited to be their own masters. They ensure land to the peasantry. They allow the adivasis to foster the new while nurturing their distinctiveness. They enable the dalits to live a life of dignity. They create space for women by supporting their struggle for liberation. The RPC addresses all aspects of the people's lives through its defence, finance, agriculture, trade and industry, judicial, education and culture, health and social welfare, forest protection and public relations departments. On the basis of 'Land to the Tiller' forest lands were distributed by the RPC to all those who have no land or have scant land. Indiscriminate felling of forests and the robbing of valuable timber by the government and the timber mafia was stopped. Instead of people felling trees according to their will and wish for their agricultural and domestic needs, RPCs are striving to fulfil the needs of the people and are regularising the felling of trees. Ban was imposed on pouring poison in river water to catch fish and catching birds which come to water sources in summer. Ban was imposed on hunting which is carried for commercial purposes to sell the meat. Thus preservation of wildlife is encouraged.

Boria Tibu, and Roseli in Manpur area of Rajnandgaon district which is adjacent to Bastar. In Andhi Mohla situated nearby, there are rich deposits of uranium. On the western side of Bastar that comes under Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district are located large deposits of minerals. Maharashtra government has concluded MoUs with many mining companies to exploit the resources of Surjarh, Besewada, Damkondwadi, Jhandepar, Bande, Gundujur, Mohandi, Masheli, Puruhurmetta, Korepalli and other places. Overall one can say that large corporations like Tata, Essar, Arcelar Mittal, Jindal Steel, De Beers, BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto, Vedanta, Lloyds and many others are hell bent on implementing their plans related to big mines and big industries in order to reap super-

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Another Massacre of Palestinians by Zionist Israel

bhaskar

With the support of the world people, Palestinians will definitely teach these mass murderers a lesson befitting their crimes. Fascist and reactionary forces can attain an upper hand and domination over the oppressed masses temporarily by using aggressive wars and white terror, but they will certainly be humbled and smashed by people's just and heroic resistance. Nothing short of an independent and sovereign Palestine that includes all the Palestinian territories forcibly occupied by Israel over the decades can bring the Intifada to an end. This calls for a determined armed struggle to destroy the Zionist state and the building of the necessary organisations that can lead and carry out this struggle consistently till the very end.

After a few years of relative calm, Israel carried out another brutal military onslaught on Palestine beginning July this year, leading to the death of more than two thousand Palestinians and widespread displacement and destruction, affecting lakhs of Gaza inhabitants. Three Israeli youth were found murdered by unidentified persons in the last week of June this year. Israeli government lost no time in accusing Hamas for the killings. Though there was no evidence to show Hamas's involvement and the organisation denied having any role, Israeli rulers used the incident to drum up fervent anti-Palestinian hysteria among the Jewish population. This resulted in the kidnap and murder of 16 years old Palestinian youth Mohammad Abu Khadder on 2nd July, who was burnt alive by his Jewish abductors.

Palestinians perceived this as a blatant act of revenge killing provoked by Israeli ruling class. They held large militant protests against the murder demanding the punishment of the culprits. Faced with mounting Palestinian protests, Israeli PM Benyamin Netanyahu had to declare that his government was committed to bring Abu Khadder's killers to justice. At the same time, however, Israel came down heavily on Palestinian protestors, beating up and arresting them. Earlier, Netanyahu used the kidnaping as an excuse for an attack on the entire Hamas leadership in the West Bank. Israeli soldiers arrested 419 Palestinians, including 335 affiliated with Hamas, and killed six Palestinians, also searching thousands of locations and confiscating \$350,000. Israel also conducted dozens of attacks in Gaza, killing 5 Hamas members. Protesting against Khadder's brutal murder and continued arrests, Hamas launched crude rockets into Israel. Such missile strikes are significant more for their symbolic value in depicting Palestinian resistance than for their lethal power, much like the stones and crude bombs with which Palestinians confront heavily armed Israeli soldiers and tanks. The rockets caused no loss of life and negligible damage to Israeli property. Yet, using this as a pretext and invoking the ludicrous excuse of "right to self-defence", Israel declared that Palestinians would have to pay a heavy price for it.

Israeli air strikes on Gaza began on 8th July, killing more than fifty Palestinians on the first day itself. By 18th July, Israel amassed tanks, heavy artillery and thirty thousand troops on the Israel-Gaza border and commenced ground operations accompanied by continuous air strikes. Israel declared that its objective would be to kill Palestinian 'terrorists', destroy their capability to launch rockets into Israel and demolish the 'secret tunnels' connecting Gaza and Israel. By the time the assault ended in August, more than two



thousand Palestinians lost their lives, while tens of thousands were injured and a large number lost everything, including their houses, forcing them into relief camps. Parts of Gaza have been demolished in the bombardment. 88 Israelis were also killed, demonstrating the highly asymmetrical and one-sided nature of the conflict.

While nearly all of the Israelis killed were soldiers, more than ninety percent of the Palestinians killed were civilians, including a large number of women, children and the elderly. Israel targeted and killed them deliberately. It bombed residential areas, schools, hospitals, mosques, old-age homes, child-care centres, marketplaces, warehouses storing essential commodities, power stations, water facilities, ambulances and other civic amenities, including institutions run by the UN and other international agencies — places that can hardly qualify as ‘legitimate military targets’. In one such instance, seven Palestinian children who were playing outdoors were killed on 16 July. They were first attacked by Israeli aircrafts and then shelled by the navy. Its planes bombed Gaza’s largest hospital Al Shifa, which was the eighth hospital to be targeted by Israel. In this way Israel has sought to drown the indomitable Palestinian liberation struggle in pools of blood.

Historical roots of Palestine liberation struggle

The unresolved conflict between Palestine and Israel is a creation of British colonialism. Britain occupied Palestine in 1917, which ended the Ot-

toman rule in Palestine. The same year Britain made a commitment to the powerful lobby of the Zionist bourgeoisie that it would facilitate the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. British colonial government therefore encouraged large-scale Jewish settlements disregarding the vociferous opposition of the Palestinian people. Jewish migration into Palestine continued during the post-War period, reaching its peak during the Second World War. Britain encouraged thousands of Jewish refugees fleeing fascist persecution in Europe to make their way into Palestine, as it did not wish them to settle down within its boundaries. Similar was the position of other Western countries. Refused entry into these countries, lakhs of Jews poured into Palestine.

As a result of the imperialist-aided immigration, Jewish population that numbered 85,000 or about ten percent of the total population of Palestine in 1914 grew to 1.9 million or 35 percent by 1947. Aided by the Jewish National Fund, a special corpus to finance Jews for buying land, the immigrants aggressively bought agricultural land from Syrian, Lebanese and later, Palestinian landowners. Palestinian peasants working on such land as tenants were evicted by the new owners.

In 1948, Britain transferred power to the Zionists while ending its colonial rule in Palestine, as they considered the Jewish upper classes to be more faithful allies than the Palestinian nationalists. The UN under the aegis of the imperialists proposed to

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Iraq:

Another round of US intervention

When the US led a coalition to invade Iraq, topple the Saddam regime and destroy it as a country, it was expecting to fulfil its mission without much difficulty. Fierce resistance soon disproved this. The US tried to get out by adopting the tactics of stoking sectarian violence among the Iraqis and buying the allegiance of Sunni tribal chiefs by allowing them to carve out their own domains of power. Iraq was effectively divided into a majority Shia region, a Sunni region and Kurd region. The Iraqi government and its army propped up by the US became a formal entity. These steps allowed the Obama regime and its allies to withdraw a large part of the occupation troops, and thus appease public opinion in their countries. The Iraq invasion (and the Afghanistan occupation) proved to be quite costly in a strategic sense since it led to the US getting tied up and the ascendance of Russian imperialism. Yet the US rulers never gave up their plans to restructure the Arab scene — breaking up countries refusing to toe its line and reforming others to suit its current interests. The outbreak of the Arab Spring and emergence of mass movements against dictatorial regimes was sought to be utilised for this. After succeeding in Libya it turned to Syria. The so-called liberation struggle in Syria soon became a staging ground for the regrouping and strengthening of Sunni Islamist armed organisations. Those forces like the 'Free Syrian Army' supposed to be secular were sidelined. But Russian imperialist backing and Iranian support to the Assad regime blocked its plans. Once it became clear that their plans for taking over/breaking up Syria was not going to be realised soon, the US and its allies started to slow down their efforts.

The Islamic State (earlier Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) got a new life in these circumstances. Its origins lie in the Islamist resistance that emerged in Iraq in the wake of the US invasion. Initially allied with the Al-Qaida, it later broke away. US intervention in Syria through various insurgent groups gave it space and the weaponry to become a formidable force. It controls large parts of Syria's northern territory and over one-third of Iraq, including big cities. The IS easily overran positions guarded by the Iraqi army

propped up by the US and captured heavy arms. Thus fortified it started to move into Kurd controlled areas. The US immediately started bombing of IS forces. This stands in sharp contrast to its slow response to the Maliki government's repeated calls for US armed intervention. For all the loud propaganda about the cruelties of the IS, the US didn't act till he stepped down. It was cynically using the IS onslaught to enforce its demand for a government change in Baghdad. This is supposedly seen as a means of resolving the estrangement between the Shias, Sunnis and Kurds. Since this sectarian enmity was fomented and stoked by the US the real aim behind the replacement of Maliki with Haider al-Abadi must be something else, like, perhaps, controlling Iranian influence in Baghdad.

The IS has announced an Islamic Caliphate, and declared itself as the sole, legitimate, Islamic state. All other Muslim countries are to come under it. Obviously this is unacceptable to the ruling classes of those countries. Though all claim to follow the universalist teachings of Islam, each one of these compradors have their own interests. The bigger and richer ones, like Saudi Arabia, actively try to dominate over others, functioning as a regional gendarme fulfilling US dictates. Though Saudi funds have flowed to build up the IS it is now in the forefront of the US orchestrated alliance directed to suppress it. Apart from Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar have joined the 40 country coalition. The US has refused to

Philippines: Reports from war fronts

Facing 'Oplan Bayanihan' a counter-revolutionary suppression and annihilation launched by the Aquino regime under the direct guidance of the US, the New People's Army (NPA) led by the Communist Party of Philippines has inflicted losses on the enemy. 'Ang Bayang' of September 7 reports that the enemy suffered three casualties (two killed and one wounded) in an ambush by a unit of NPA in Himamaylan City, Negros Occidental on July 17. The NPA likewise seized two M16s and two bandoliers full of ammunition. Meanwhile, in Sorsogon, the NPA launched a punitive action against the intelligence network of the enemy on July 3, killing Domingo Tisoy, alias Buyong, a rabid agent employed by the 96th MICO. In Panay the NPA seized 13 firearms of various caliber in military actions launched from June to August to resist intensified attacks by the enemy supported by two helicopter gunships. The NPA met the fierce enemy attacks head on. Six soldiers were killed and eight others wounded in these firefights. The police and military suffered up to seven casualties after a series of harassment operations by the NPA in the towns of Tampakan, T'boli and Lake Sebu in South Cotabato on August 15, 16 and 21. The NPA regional command in Far South Mindanao. the NPA released a video on the two enemy troopers arrested by Red fighters at the public market in Barangay Buntunon, Impasugong, Bukidnon on August 22. Seized from the soldiers were two cal .45 pistols and ammunition for an M203 grenade launcher and an M16 rifle.

(*Ang Bayan* can be accessed at www.philippinerevolution.net)

The Scottish vote

The independence referendum in Scotland was a significant political event that will have widespread and long lasting ramifications. The vote ended in a 55/45 division against independence. Yet 45 percent rooting for independence is substantial. If not for the big promises of more devolution of power to Scotland, coupled with threats of financial instability and a long wait to get into the European Union, the result might well have tilted in favour of independence. As of now, the proponents of Scottish independence have interpreted the result as a step forward rather than a defeat. The Scottish issue, and the broader national question in Britain is going to remain live. The devolution package promised to Scotland has drawn demands for identical measures from English politicians and the Welsh. The wider fall out of the referendum was immediately seen in Europe, where a number of national people have been in struggle since long for independence. Catalonia, in Spain, has declared a referendum on its separation from Spain, to be held on the 9th of November. The Spanish rulers are refusing to allow it to happen. The Spanish Constitution demands Central acquiescence as a pre-condition. But a blocking of the referendum will only help to inflame Catalonian feelings even more. Over the years, Scotland, Catalonia and other nations have achieved greater autonomy and rights. Yet the yearning for independence has not dampened. Other than national sentiments, and grievances of the people, this is also driven by the economic interests of capitalists of the concerned nations who see greater opportunities for growth if they gain full independence. This need not work out as they wish. In the present world situation, it is more likely that they will be incorporated as junior partners, despite being imperialist countries. However, this would be better for the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples since their separation would weaken some major imperialist powers. Within these nations, the clouding up of the basic class issue by the national question would end, allowing a sharpening of focus on the need for a socialist revolution

allow any formal role for Iran despite its tacit acceptance of Iranian support against the IS. The measures adopted against the IS also includes a major role for the US in building up and training the anti-Assad 'Free Syrian Army'. On the whole, the course of events indicate a devious attempt by the US to turn the IS advance to its advantage, pull into shape a formal coalition of Arab countries, backed by its imperialist allies and ensure the implementation of its long standing plan to reorganise the boundaries of West Asia. Once the IS is contained the US plans to swing this force against Assad and later Iran.

Despite the coalition, the possibilities of the US getting caught in another bind are quite high. The IS positions resonate among a large section of the masses in the Arab countries who hate their rulers. This will give a new boost to militant organisations already attacking these regimes and greatly increase instability. While a certain amount of shaking up suits the US plans, it could well spin out of control, compelling a direct role for its forces and also giving opportunities for other imperialist powers. Already Russian imperialism has reopened military ties with Iraq. It used the initial inactivity of the US to support Maliki as an opportunity to fly in fighter planes into Baghdad. The greater co-operation between the US aided Iraqi Kurds and the Kurdish armed organisations in Turkey and Syria is another

potential flash point. Turkey, a member of the NATO, has been brutally suppressing the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). But the US now remains silent as its stooge Barzani joins the PKK in alliance against the IS, though formally the PKK is declared by it as a 'terrorist' organisation. The huge flow of Kurdish refugees into Turkey is already a major concern for the Erdogan regime in Istanbul. Overall, more intensification of contradictions and conflicts can be expected for quite some time.

The imperialist media is screaming aloud about the cruelties of the IS, focussed on the beheading of two journalists. Such acts are condemnable. Yet they are far outweighed by the brutal acts of the US and its allies in their various wars of invasion. The root cause of sectarian strife in West Asia is the imperialist system. Starting from its colonial subjugation and the arbitrary drawing of borders to suit the division of territory by different imperialist powers the seeds were sown to keep the people divided. There have been periods where the masses united, overcoming divisions, and fought against the oppressors. The working class and the Communist parties were decisive in these developments. The role played by the organised workers in the Arab Spring, in Egypt and Tunisia, demonstrates that this potential still exists. They have still a long way to go to carry out their vanguard tasks, but that is the only resolution. **PM**

Drama of Democracy in War-ravaged Afghanistan

The so-called democratic elections to the Afghan parliament were conducted under the shadow of imperialist guns in June this year, amidst calls of boycott issued by the Taliban, Maoists and other forces. Widespread abstention by the Afghan people from the poll process was reported. The anti-imperialist armed resistance movement carried out active boycott by conducting several attacks on the US forces as well as the Afghan Army trained by them. Neither these elections nor the president propped up through this process has any credibility in the eyes of the Afghan masses as it was merely a drama enacted by the US and its allies to install another comprador ruler in Kabul to replace the outgoing Hamid Karzai. Elections are meaningless also for the 6.3 lakh Afghans living in refugee camps in desperate situation.

Initially, Abdullah Abdullah was leading. Then in a sudden reversal the Afghan Election Commission declared that the present finance minister Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, was on his way to victory by a landslide margin. His adversary, finance minister in Karzai's first government Abdullah Abdullah, rejected the polls as rigged and refused to accept the results. His clamour was so loud and persistent that it threatened to expose the farcical nature of the poll process itself.

The US hoped that these elections would smoothly install their henchman, the former World Bank employee Ahmadzai, in Kabul. But the bickering for power forced John Kerry run to the country to rein in the two men. A compromise was reached after veiled threats by Kerry and Obama of withholding US aid unless the infighting stopped. In no time both camps fell in line, as they can ill afford to bite the hand that feeds them. Any regime propped up in the country has to be totally dependent on the imperialists, as 90 percent of the GDP of Afghanistan (\$34 billion) comes from western military spending and foreign aid. An agreement was reached to form a 'national unity government' accommodating both the warring factions of the Afghan comprador classes. A recounting of votes was done by transporting ballot boxes from different regions to Kabul in NATO planes. Subsequently, Ahmadzai was sworn in as the president on 29 September with Abdullah as prime minister and the inclusion of many Abdullah nominees as ministers. The US is trying to portray this as a united 'national' Afghan government by reconciling its Pashtun and Tajik allies represented by Ahmadzai and Abdullah respec-

tively. But the division of powers means that the patch up won't be lasting long.

Both Ahmadzai and Abdullah are proven US compradors, the former even holding an US citizenship. Present Afghan president Hamid Karzai refused to ratify the Bilateral Security Agreement with the US, arguing that Afghan sovereignty was compromised by the agreement which allows the continued stationing of US troops in the country. But the US is in no mood to vacate its Afghan base, which is geo-strategically crucial for meeting any challenge from Russia, China and Iran. Even if the NATO forces leave Afghanistan by the end of 2014, ten thousand US troop would continue to 'assist' Afghan government and its forces as per the Strategic Partnership Agreement of May 2012. The newly installed government led by Ahmadzai would continue to be an instrument of repressing the Afghan people and crushing their aspiration for national liberation. **EM**

More deadly than Ebola

Ebola is a deadly disease. But it isn't the main culprit in the death of more than three thousand in West African countries. Years of fierce civil wars, destruction of infrastructure, cutting down of government services, stark poverty and malnourishment of millions in obscene contrast to the millions amassed by the comprador rulers and war lords — all of these have led to the disease spreading as an epidemic. All of them are rooted in the contention and manoeuvres of imperialist powers to ensure their grip in this resource rich region of the continent and contain the entry of new forces. Under the pretence of humanitarian aid in this dire time, these inhuman monsters and their transnational corporates who trade in death, explore the possibility of profiting from medicines that can save lives. Compare the immediate channelling of billions of dollars for military aims by the imperialists to the tardy progress in the mass production of medicines that can cure Ebola. That will show you the real culprit, the main disease afflicting the whole world, not just West Africa.

Ukraine:

One More Theatre of Growing Inter-Imperialist Contention

Ukraine has become the stage for sharpening inter-imperialist contradiction between US-led Western powers and Russia. Ukraine's dependence on Russia has continued after the break up of the USSR. The Russian bourgeoisie dominates its market and enriches itself by pumping natural gas to European Union (EU) through pipes laid across Ukraine. The US, however, is averse to the Russia's economic ties with EU. Severing the Ukrainian link that connects Russia and EU is crucial for US geo-strategic interests. Hence it moves to control Ukraine through indirect means. The US is also keen to expand the NATO into Ukraine. Russian imperialism considers this as an encroachment in its 'sphere of influence' and an attempt at military encirclement.

Ukraine came into limelight with 'protests' in Kiev demanding the entry of Ukraine into EU. The Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich was deposed through a coup in February this year for preferring economic agreements with Russia. This led to the enthronement of the US stooge Petro Poroshenko as the Ukrainian president. His government started taking repressive measures against the Russian minority, ending the status of Russian as a second language.

Facing the possibility of loosing the Sevastopol port, where its Black Sea fleet is anchored, to the NATO, Russia utilised the long standing demand

for separation in Crimea. It supported the decision of the Russian-speaking majority in Crimea to secede from Ukraine and merge with Russia. Backed by popular support, Crimea was annexed by Russia in March. This met with vociferous opposition from Kiev and its American and Western backers, who accused Russia of violating the country's territorial integrity. But it was a cue for the Russian-speaking minority nationality of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions to rebel. They overthrew Ukrainian state power, renamed their place 'Novorussia', formed a government supported by a militia and declared their willingness for Russian integration. Russia has been hesitant to annex Donetsk, lest it precipitate direct military confrontation with NATO. At present it is keen for a diplomatic solution. The West has constantly accused Putin of harbouring the ambition to recreate the Russian Empire by annexing neighbouring countries, while Russia has accused the US in particular of following imperialist policies in Eastern Europe.

The Ukrainian army used heavy artillery and air-power against East Ukrainians. In spite of this, it suffered a series of spectacular defeats at the hands of its voluntary army. This forced Kiev to reluctantly agree to a ceasefire in early September. However, the civil war continues to smoulder in eastern Ukraine centring round Donetsk, without any sign of an early resolution. **PM**

Ferguson Police in the Missouri State of the US killed Michael Brown on 9 August, once again bringing to the fore the racist oppression faced by the Black people in the country on a daily basis. The Blacks responded with widespread militant protests in Ferguson City. They brought out large rallies and fought pitched battles against the armed police with stones and Molotov cocktails. Night curfew was imposed in several places to suppress the explosion of mass fury. According to the police youth from other parts of the country travelled to Ferguson to join the militant protest. Over a hundred protestors were arrested and demonstrations broken up with police assaults. But the voice of the anti-racist resistance was too loud to be submerged by the police actions of Obama, the much-touted first coloured president of the US. Obama, who was blissfully holidaying in Massachusetts without caring for the demands of the Black protestors, was forced to order an FBI investigation into the killing of Brown and the subsequent attack on demonstrators who were on the streets demanding justice. Operation Ghetto Storm, a documenting project (www.operationghettostorm.org), records that a Black person is killed every 28 hours by the police in the US. However, the white supremacist perpetrators of these murders are rarely punished in the racist ruling dispensation in the US. Only 10 police officers and 16 security guards/vigilantes were charged for the 313 killed in 2012. Unemployment among the Blacks is the highest, and so is the proportion of the poor and destitute. They constitute a disproportionately large section of prisoners in the US, numbering above a million. Political leaders like Mumia Abu Jamal who fought for the rights of the Blacks continue to be incarcerated for decades, while the racist murderers of the Blacks roam free with impunity.

The Murder of Blacks in the US Continues

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...**The Woes of a Rich Land**

profits. The government wants to go ahead with these projects by using the power of its police and parliamentary forces. All of this are being done in the name of development.

Dalli-Raoghat-Jagdapur railway line is being planned and constructed for facilitating the cheap extraction of mineral resources. This line is being constructed solely for the purpose of conveying the raw material extracted from the mines of north Bastar owned by large public and private corporations to the outside market. One can easily understand the reality behind Dalli-Raoghat railway line by finding out what benefits the Bailadilla-Vishakhapatnam line has brought to the Bastar adivasi masses in all these years. This railway line was constructed for transporting iron-ore, but the people were deceived into accepting the project as the need for improving passenger connectivity was foregrounded at that time. The truth is that more than twenty-four freight trains carrying iron-ore runs from Bailadilla to Vishakhapatnam every day whereas only a single passenger train runs between the two places.

Plans are afoot to build a dam on the Mendki River which will provide water for carrying the produce of Raoghat mines through pipelines. One who is familiar with the tragedy of Taperu can well imagine the fate that awaits Mendki if this plan were to be executed. The red waters of the rivers streaming out of mining areas are not even fit for the consumption of cattle and wild animals, let alone for human beings or for other purposes.

A multipurpose large dam at Bodhghat is being proposed on the Indravati River in order to supply water and electricity to the industries of big capitalists, which will submerge hundreds of villages covering 32 panchayat areas. Around 70,000 people, predominantly adivasis, will be displaced. The very existence of the famous Chitrakoot waterfall, known as the Niagara of Bastar, will be wiped out. This proposed project chalked out in 1971 was put in the cold storage in 1991 due to people's protests. In the context of an increasing number of MoUs, attempts are being made to revive this project. In the wake of people's militant and heated opposition, Bodhghat dam project is now being talked about in subdued voices. Attempts are being presently made to construct a 50 megawatt power plant which has been strongly opposed by the people.

Along with the indiscriminate exploitation of mineral resources, the displacement of adivasis and the clearing of forests is going on without any restraint. Four crore people of the country have been displaced due to big dams and mining projects since 1947. Only twenty-five percent of the people have been provided with rehabilitation facilities. That too merely for namesake. In the last twenty years, 75,000 acres of land for mining projects and 2,50,000 acres of land for industrial projects has been forcibly acquired from the masses and handed over to the corporates. The share of adivasis in the total

India is a signatory to the UN declaration on the rights of the tribal people that was passed and issued by its General Assembly on 13 September 2007. According to the article 25 of this declaration, the indigenous tribal people of a locality has the right to maintain, develop and pass on to the future generations the material and spiritual ways of life specific to them. Article 30 of the same declaration further provides that no military activity can be undertaken in their land without their consent and permission. The Indian government assured the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in one of its meetings and even signed a pledge that it will honour the rights of the adivasi people in their lands. The Fifth Schedule of the Indian constitution applies to Bastar. Without the permission of the gram sabhas, neither the government nor any other entity can acquire the land of the adivasis. All of these binding obligations have been violated by the Central governments, whether Congress led UPA or BJP led NDA and the State governments in Chhattisgarh. Resources are gifted to multinationals and Indian corporates at dirt cheap rates. Land is seized from adivasis without their permission. Army, para military and police camps are setup in violation of international treaties ratified by India and its own constitution. Miles away from 'development', the Maadia adivasis of 'Abhui' Maad are facing the most serious threat of being dispossessed of their land, displaced and wiped out of existence by the establishment of an army jungle warfare training center. Their unique and peculiar way of life, their unique economic life, the spirit of collectiveness that permeates every pore of their being, their rich culture, their songs and dance, dress and costumes, their language — all are on the brink of becoming extinct.

population of the country is not even nine percent but forty percent of the acquired land is theirs. This makes it clear that among the people who have been bulldozed by the governments for their large-scale projects in the name of 'development', the number of adivasis is the highest. All the mineral-rich areas of the country are, in fact, forest areas inhabited by the adivasis. Waves of people's struggles against large industrial projects of the big corporate houses and multinational companies, against forcible acquisition of land for big dam and large mining projects are rising all over the country. Adivasi areas in particular have become the centres of these struggles. In Chhattisgarh's Bastar, adivasi and non-advansi masses are getting organised and carrying on struggles against mining projects in Chargaon, Raoghat, Budhiari, Kuwemari and Amdai, Mendki and Bodhghat dam projects, and industrial plants of the Tatas and Essars.. The people are storming heavens with the slogans of 'Rights over *jal-jangal-zameen* must belong to the adivasis and people' and 'We will sacrifice life but not land'. Precisely for this reason the government is trying to initiate these projects by deploying its armed forces. It is intent on displacing the people by making a mockery of the rights guaranteed by the constitution, the same constitution based on which it claims to draw its legitimacy to rule.

Repression on these people's movements is being intensified by setting-up police stations and camps. A new police camp has been opened at Bandaji in order to facilitate the acquisition of land for Tata's steel plant. New police stations have been proposed at Harrakoder and Kudur to speed up the construction of Bodhghat dam and power plants. However, the people have declared in clear terms by writing a petition to the collector that they do not need any police station. 5,000 BSF jawans are deployed to open the Raoghat mines and construct the Dalli-Raoghat railway line. A police station has been set-up at Chargaon to initiate mining operations there. A draft report prepared by the Central Rural Development ministry in 2009 clearly stated that the initial financiers of Salwa Judum indeed were the Tatas and Essar. The report also revealed that these companies were keen to occupy 644 villages displaced by Salwa Judum.

Development does not mean big factories, big mines, multi-purpose dams. Development is not synonymous with ultra-modern cars, multi-lane roads, skyscrapers, mobile towers and railways. Development means fulfilling the basic needs of the majority of people. To equip the people with food, clothes, shelter, healthcare, education, employment, safe drinking water, irrigation facilities. The development of a handful of moneybags cannot be the development of the State or the country. A State or a country means its people.

In order to cover up the plunder of resources and destruction of the adivasis' way of life and the environment, the destructiveness of so-called development, the armed forces and big corporates run Civic Action Programmes. Accordingly, they are organising sports meets and marathon races for the youths and students, health camps for the people and are building hospitals and schools. In Lohandiguda, Tata is distributing t-shirts with their brand name embossed on it. Attempts are continued to displace the people by throwing a few crumbs in the form of distributing a few computers in schools, some stipend and scholarships for students. They are being shown the bait of jobs. All the paramilitary forces including CRPF, BSF, ITBP and even the Indian army is conducting Civic Action Programme. As per this programme, the forces are distributing medicines, utensils, agricultural implements, pencil, pen, copies, underwear, bicycle and sports equipments among some people in some villages. The plan funds allocated under the Scheduled Castes and Tribes Special Component are increasingly channelised through such Civic Action programmes conducted by the Indian state's armed forces. The armed forces are also separately allocated hundreds of crores of rupees for conducting these programmes. It is not possible to resolve the basic problems of the masses through distribution of freebies, whether by the government forces or the big corporates. When the resources will be used in the interest of the whole people, only then will the woes of the poor people of this rich land come to an end.

Bastar belongs to the people of Bastar. They have the rights over its *jal-jangal-zameen*. Development of Bastar does not mean the development of multinational corporations and big capitalists. Large mines, big dams do not represent the development of Bastar. Only when the Bastar people's rights over the resources of Bastar is established, will it be possible to talk about the all-round development of Bastar. The indiscriminate exploitation of Bastar's resources must be stopped. These resources must be preserved for the future generations. Air and water pollution, i.e., environmental pollution, must be stopped. Adivasi ways of life, cultural and linguistic uniqueness and diversity must be protected. Only through a militant mass movement can we defend the existence and identity of Bastar.

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... Another Massacre

divide the territory between the Jewish state of Israel and a Palestinian Arab state. Palestinians rejected this proposal outright, declaring that they must not be forced to pay with more than half of their territory for the crimes committed by Europe against the Jews. They demanded the establishment of an independent Palestine state on the basis of right to self-determination with its territory of 1917 restored. The Jews, however, accepted the UN plan and formed the state of Israel in May 1948.

Not remaining content at the territory it received through the UN-mandated partition, the Israeli state immediately launched a general military offensive on the Palestinian people to acquire more territory. They killed thousands of Palestinians, including the massacre of 256 of them in the village of Deir Yassin in April 1948, which became emblematic of Israeli aggressiveness. The persecution of Palestinians resulted in their forced outmigration from Israel-occupied territories. As a result of the terror and mayhem spread by Israeli armed forces, seven out of thirteen lakh Palestinians had to move out of their homes.

By the mid-twentieth century, though Jews were less than one-third of Palestine's total population, they held 77 percent of its territory. Jordan and Egypt occupied the rest of 33 percent, the former controlling West Bank while the latter captured Gaza. The dismemberment of Palestine was complete and its people were scattered as refugees over many countries. After the Arab-Israel war in 1967, Israel occupied East Jerusalem as well as West Bank and Gaza, and systematically settled them with Jewish population by uprooting Palestinian residents. Though subsequent Palestinian-Israeli accords allowed limited 'autonomy' to the Palestinian people of West Bank and Gaza, and although Israel withdrew its troops and settlements from parts of Gaza and some West Bank cities in 2005, the territory has remained firmly under

Though Palestinian-Israeli accords allowed limited 'autonomy' to the Palestinian people of West Bank and Gaza, and although Israel withdrew its troops and settlements from parts of Gaza and some West Bank cities in 2005, the territory has remained firmly under the occupation of Israel.

While nearly all of the Israelis killed were soldiers, more than ninety percent of the Palestinians killed were civilians, including a large number of women, children and the elderly. Israel targeted and killed them deliberately. It bombed residential areas, schools, hospitals, mosques, old-age homes, child-care centres, marketplaces, warehouses storing essential commodities, power stations, water facilities, ambulances and other civic amenities, including institutions run by the UN and other international agencies -- places that can hardly qualify as 'legitimate military targets'.

the occupation of Israel. More than half of the total Palestinian population today are forced to live in exile as refugees in Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and other Arab countries, while those in Israel face daily persecution and oppression.

The Context of the Present Israeli Aggression

This latest Israeli onslaught comes in the backdrop of the recent understanding reached by Hamas and Al-Fatah to form a united national government encompassing West Bank and Gaza. The formation of this government exposed Israeli refusal to join talks leading to Palestinian statehood, by arguing that disunity between Hamas and Al-Fatah made such talks meaningless. Despite the fact that such a Palestinian state would still be nominal, and under Israeli control, the Zionists couldn't accept it. Over years they have steadily encroached remaining Palestinian territory, allowing new Jewish immigrants to build settlements.

Nine days after the swearing in of the unity government, on June 11th, the Israeli Defence Force made a raid on Gaza in which they killed a 10 year old boy on a bicycle. The Israeli government responded to the unity government by preventing civil servants in Gaza from moving from the Hamas payroll to that of the Ramallah government and by tightening siege round Gaza's borders. With total onslaught launched on July 8th Israel sought to destroy any basis for Palestinian unity. Fatah's existing cooperation agreements with Israeli security obliged them to cooperate with the crackdown on Hamas in West Bank that was supposedly a 'hunt for kidnappers', which obviously led to suspicion and mis-

trust between the two parties.

The massacre was carried out in full view of the so-called international community and with complete disregard for international laws or rules of combat. Indeed, being one of the main props of US imperialism in West Asia, Israel has the support of the US and European imperialist powers who have no compunctions about the ruthless slaughter of Gaza's Arab population as long as their economic and geo-strategic interests in the region are guaranteed. US Senate instead voted unanimously in support of Israeli aggression against Gaza while condemning "the unprovoked rocket fire at Israel" by Hamas and calling on "Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to dissolve the unity governing arrangement with Hamas and condemn the attacks on Israel." The US echoed Israeli warmongers when it accused Hamas of rocket attacks and condoned the massacre of Palestinians by declaring that Israel has the 'right to defend itself'. In its tacit approval of the Israeli attack, John Kerry, Secretary of State of the US, the world's self-appointed gendarme, stated that permanent peace can prevail in the region only if Hamas lays down its arms, thereby implying a complete surrender of the liberation struggle and the disarming of the Palestinian oppressed masses. No wonder Hamas rejected this 'suggestion'.

There is nothing new in the hypocrisy of the world's foremost imperialist power which advocated military invasion in Libya and Syria in the name of 'protecting innocent civilians' but approves of its ally Israel's massacre of unarmed Palestinian men, women and children by their thousands. European imperialist countries and Japan too have chosen a similar approach by taking cue from the US. Russia adopted a wait-and-watch policy since it perceives no benefit in taking a firm stand in support of Palestine as opposed to its stand on Syria and Ukraine. The UN, being a puppet of the imperialist powers, has displayed its utter spinelessness by confining itself to issuing hollow statements expressing 'concern' about the violence and the 'humanitarian crisis' in Gaza, and appealing to the international community to merely "think about it"! This was done while the UNHRC was pointing out the possibility of Israel committing war crimes in Gaza, a fact which is as clear as daylight for anyone who cares to see. According to UNICEF, one Palestinian child was being killed every hour on an average during the Israeli onslaught. Yet, no effective action came from the so-called world powers, the UN, NATO or the Arab League to stop this invasion or restrain

Israel. Turkey, Egypt and the Arab rulers subservient to the US have not effectively opposed Israel's aggression since they wish to see Hamas crushed or weakened by the war. In this way, through their inaction they have all become complicit in the genocide in Gaza. Hamas has rightly accused the 'international community' of doing nothing to restrain Israel from carrying out massacres day in and day out with impunity.

Despite devastating Gaza and murdering Palestinians in the thousands, the Zionists could not achieve their declared war aims. Hamas still remains armed. The economic blockade of Gaza had to be lifted. The only success gained by Israel seems to be the disruption of the new found unity between the Al Fatah and Hamas. It remains a matter of judgement whether this should be attributed more to Israeli aggression or to the spinelessness of the Al Fatah leadership.

Role of Indian ruling classes

The BJP-led Indian government has continued its pro-Israel policy that has been pursued more blatantly since the early 1990s. Forced to respond by the protests from different democratic voices and Muslim organisations of the country, Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj declared in parliament that the government will continue to support the Palestinian cause while strengthening its ties with Israel at the same time. This is tantamount to an open support of Israel's aggressive war and a betrayal of the people of Palestine. Though the Congress complained about NDA government's unwillingness to condemn Israel's actions, it was during Congress rule that regular diplomatic and economic relations were established with Israel and it was allowed to open an embassy in the country. Subsequently, India has developed close ties with Israel, becoming the largest importer of Israeli military equipment. Joint military exercises, training of the Indian army and police, sharing of intelligence and expertise in combating 'Islamic terrorism' and Maoism is being regularly carried out by the two countries.

Therefore, there is hardly any fundamental difference in view among various Indian ruling-class parties when it comes to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The Indian rulers have long abandoned their facade of supporting national liberation struggles of the oppressed nationalities, the Palestinian struggle being one of the most long-standing among them. Indian ruling classes in general, and its Hindu-fascist faction represented by BJP in particular, find close ideological affinity with the expansionist, chauvinist and anti-Muslim policy of their Israeli

counterparts. The Indian state which suppresses the nationalities of Kashmir, Nagalim, Manipur and Asom with brute military force while pursuing an expansionist policy towards its South Asian neighbours can only be an ally of Israel, and not of the Palestinians fighting for freedom. Indeed, by indirectly standing by Zionist Israel and refusing to sever their ties with it, the Indian ruling classes too have become accomplices in the massacre of Palestinians.

Contrary to the reactionary Indian ruling classes, the people of the country have historically stood in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance and have staunchly opposed Israel. The oppressed peoples of India closely identify with the struggle of Palestine as it is a reminder of their own anti-colonial movement. Once again, the existence of Palestinian nation is under threat from Israeli aggression. Once again, it is time to reaffirm our solidarity with Palestine's struggle for freedom that refuses to succumb or surrender in spite of overwhelming losses and extreme odds staked against it. Successive Israeli rulers have thought that they would capture Palestine and kill its fighting spirit through massacres. Ehud Olmert, Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon nurtured such delusions and now it is the turn of Netanyahu.

With the support of the world people, Palestinians will definitely teach these mass murderers a lesson befitting their crimes. Fascist and reactionary forces can attain an upper hand and domination over the oppressed masses temporarily by using aggressive wars and white terror, but they will certainly be humbled and smashed by people's just and heroic resistance. Nothing short of an independent and sovereign Palestine that includes all the Palestinian territories forcibly occupied by Israel over the decades can bring the Intifada to an end. This calls for a determined armed struggle to destroy the Zionist state and the building of the necessary organisations that can lead and carry out this struggle consistently till the very end. Utilising armed force as a pressure tool rather than as a weapon of total liberation has been a feature of the Palestinian liberation struggle since long. Inaugurated by the Al-Fatah after it gave up its revolutionary aims, it has been continued by Hamas. The recent unity government it helped form, one ministered solely by technocrats in order to get imperialist acceptance, was the latest example. The recent massacre carried out by the Zionists, the latest one but by no means the last, is yet another reminder that accommodation with the genocidal Israeli state is an impossibility. Its destruction is the minimum needed for a true solution to the Palestinian issue.

PM

Convicting corruption

J. Jayalithaa and her accomplices have been convicted for corruption - after 18 long years. She thus joins a growing list of politicians who have been put in jail for corruption and subsequently lost their positions. Corruption is now a major issue in Indian polity. Intellectuals and opinion makers, of the ruling classes and otherwise, continuously speak about it. The corporate media and compradors went into an overdrive to promote Anna Hazare's crusade against corruption. The message they sought to project was that corruption is the main cause for all the ills afflicting India. Meanwhile, they were busy bribing ministers and officials for coal blocks and making profits by printing/broadcasting paid news. The people are neither surprised by such contradictions or stories of the crores amassed. They are disgusted and angry with the way public funds are looted. But they know well enough that no amount of convictions are going to end it. When crores of rupees are spent on elections, and big notes, saris and what not are handed out for votes, their instincts tell them that many more crores are being targeted as returns. The sudden turn in fortunes of those elected, even if it is to a measly Panchayat seat, proves them right. Corruption is sanctified and legalised through the election process. One sees huge increases in candidates' assets, declared every five years while filing nominations. No questions are asked about the source of these riches, of how they can possibly come from a MP or MLA salary. Corruption is a big issue, it is so big that Supreme Court judges who vigorously defended recommending corrupt fellow judges to higher posts, have to ritually lament about growing corruption in the judiciary on the eve of their retirement.

Corruption is the normal working of the system. It is inherent to any exploitative system, and particularly where bureaucrat capitalism thrives. The agents of this capitalism, nurtured by imperialism and tied to feudalism, wax and wane in proportion to their relation to positions in the state apparatus. More often than not, the conflicts between them, to get more and worst the opponent, bring out scandalous stories of the crores paid out for favours. Any system must have some rules, even when embezzlement is part of its normal working. Therefore, once in a while, a big story breaks out, cases are charged and eventually some big shot also gets convicted. In recent years, with huge amounts flowing around impelled by liberalisation and privatisation, the scale of corruption has soared. The ruling classes are forced to restore some 'thieves' order', if all of them are to survive. This explains the slew of exposures of corruption and convictions. Things have come to such a pass that bureaucrat capitalism is now pressed to formally distance itself from its own working by naming it 'crony capitalism', a term that explains nothing but obscures quite a lot.

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... **Message of CPI (Maoist)**

possible anti-imperialist, democratic and revolutionary forces to strengthen the campaign to end OGH and with a view to build a broad worldwide anti-imperialist front that is in process. And the further strengthening of the unity of communist forces world over would lead to stronger support for the Indian Revolution too.

In the present situation, the objective potential of the world situation is far outstripping the subjective capacities of the individual parties. Yet much can be done to win over a large section to the cause of communism through their united effort. The recent years have seen collective activities in the form of joint May Day statements, seminars on important developments, conferences of Maoist parties for summing up experiences of international organisation and strengthening the struggle against neo-revisionism, joint forums such as the International Support Committee organising this Conference and the solidarity activities it has initiated. We have welcomed these efforts and continue to support them. We must now explore the possibilities of making the closer ties born out of these activities and growing unity of thinking on ideological, political issues the basis for further advance.

Just as the Indian revolution serves the world proletarian revolution so too is its future vitally linked to how best the Maoists throughout the world can make the most of the world situation and advance world revolution. We take confidence from the burning desire for revolution expressed in the proceedings of the Hamburg Conference, seen in its motto that advancing the revolution in our respective countries is the best way of expressing solidarity to similar revolutions in other countries.

Our party which carries forward the legacy of Naxalbari had always considered the new democratic revolution that we are waging in India as an integral part of the world socialist revolution, the party a vanguard contingent of the world proletariat. The invaluable and incredible sacrifices that are being done by the people and comrades in our revolution are also an integral part of the great sacrifices done by innumerable beloved martyrs of world socialist revolution in each and every country.

Finally, before we conclude, we wish to speak about the great efforts you are doing in support of the people's war in India. The news of your campaigns, its vivid images, are being taken to our ranks, PLGA combatants and revolutionary masses as widely as possible through our open and secret magazines and several other means. When they know that their sisters and brothers in far off lands stand up in militant solidarity with them, when they see images of protests before Indian embassies, of wall writings taking the message of their revolution to masses in those countries, their hearts swell with pride — we are not alone, our people are there, we are everywhere. Your acts have inspired us; they have made us more determined. We will strive our utmost to fulfil the confidence you have reposed in us. Our future, the future of the world revolution, the future of the world proletariat, oppressed nations and oppressed people is certainly bright but the path is a thorny, arduous and full of zigzags. The future of our enemies, the imperialists and their lackeys the world over, is dark and their doom is inevitable.

**with revolutionary greetings,
Central Committee,
Communist Party of India (Maoist)
10 September 2014**

(the complete message can be viewed at icspwi.wordpress.com and bannedthought.com)

Press Release**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 prostate 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 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, Pareshda, 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,
Spokesperson,
Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)**

August 28, 2014