

# RED BANNER

Voice of Democratic Movements in South & South-east Asia

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# Red Banner

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## Contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>Revolution:</b> On the Stage of the Indian Revolution,<br><i>Revolutionary Democracy</i>  | 3   |
| <b>Indian sub-continent:</b> Enacting a geographical India;<br>dialectics of domesticity and internationality in<br>suppressing rebellion, <i>Malem Ningthouja</i> | 24  |
| <b>Manipur:</b> Proxy war in Manipur, <i>CPDM</i>  | 44  |
| <b>Nepal:</b> Declaration of People's Movement-III<br>(Jana Aandolan-III)  | 59  |
| <b>Eastern Ghats:</b> In conversation with Ganapathy,<br>General Secretary of CPI (Maoist),<br><i>Jan Myrdal and Gautam Navlakha</i>                               | 64  |
| <b>Sri Lanka:</b> Plight of the Tamil War Victims<br>in Sri Lanka  | 87  |
| <b>Pakistan:</b> Ownership or Death, <i>Shaukat Chaudry</i>  | 100 |
| <b>Kalinganagar:</b> Anti displacement movement  | 105 |
| <b>War on People</b>   | 111 |
| <b>Human Rights</b>  | 121 |
| <b>Analysis:</b> Interview with Santosh Rana, <i>Biswajit Roy</i>  | 129 |

*Front cover:* Protestors fighting pitch battle with police during agitation against  
human rights violation by the government in Manipur, 2004

## Revolution

### On the Stage of the Indian Revolution

#### *Revolutionary Democracy*

*The following sketch attempts to cognise aspects of the Indian society and state. It argues that the colonial relationship between world capitalism and India has remained intact after 1947 not just in terms of the continuing and deepening dependency on international financial capital but also in terms of the successful efforts of imperialism to retard the development of heavy industry, of the production of machinery by machinery. Imperialism, moreover, has preserved the pronounced survivals of the pre-capitalist production relations of tribe, caste and feudalism which are retarding factors for the development of the productive forces in India. While the semi-colonial and semi-feudal character of the country remains intact a certain degree of industrial development has taken place at a snail's pace which has led to the development of a medium level of capitalist development. In such conditions the programmatic perspective of democratic revolution remains relevant until such time as the proletariat, led by a revolutionary Communist Party, secures the leadership of the agrarian struggles. 'Revolutionary Democracy' will welcome criticism and comments of this draft outline.*

Writing in 1949 the Soviet writer A.M. Dyakov argued that with the transfer of power in 1947 to the big Indian 'national' bourgeoisie and landlords that colonial dependence and the survivals of feudalism remained untouched.<sup>1</sup> Indian industry remained in the hands of British capitalism or in the hands of the big Indian bourgeoisie which was dependent on it. India had no machine-building industry which by production of the means of production could ensure the economic independence of the country. Britain supplied the equipment to enterprises in India. In fact, the economic links of India with Britain strengthened initially after 1947 and British capital was able to recoup its position which had been weakened during the course of the Second World War. The penetration of American capital into India also expanded into Indian industry. Utilising the financial difficulties of the new government the U.S. monopolies successfully demanded, as a condition for the granting of credits, that the Indian constitution guarantee immunity to foreign capital investments in case of

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the nationalisation of certain branches of industry. The new ruling classes of India ensured that the land reforms which were carried out did not terminate the feudal survivals which continued to dominate in the countryside. The agrarian question and the indebtedness of the peasantry to the moneylenders was not resolved. The ruling bloc concluded an alliance with British and American imperialism which was interested in the retention of the existing relationships within India as well as the relations of India with British and t.,S. imperialism.

Did a fundamental change take place in India after 1947 which enabled it to embark upon a path of independent capitalist development?

The starting point of an analysis is the examination of the social existence forms of labour-power which is the decisive criterion in characterising the mode of production. The basic forms of labour in history have been tribal, slave, serf, the 'free' wage labour of capitalism and the genuinely free associated labour of the socialist societies. Capitalist production is distinguished from other modes of production by the fact that the commodity is the dominant and determining feature of its products. This implies first and foremost that the labourer comes forward merely as a seller of commodities as a free wage labourer and that labour in general appears as wage-labour. The relation between capital and wage-labour determines the entire character of the mode of production. The second distinguishing feature of the capitalist mode of production is the production of surplus value, which is transformed into profits, as the direct aim and determining motive of production.<sup>2</sup> Marx stressed that the social function of the capitalist as manager and ruler of production is essentially different from the authority exercised on the basis of production by means of slaves and serfs as the capitalist is the personification of the conditions of labour in contrast to labour and not as political or theocratic rulers as under earlier modes of production.

In pre-capitalist societies the forms of labour are characterised by non-economic coercion. In these societies, and Marx specified the Asiatic peoples among whom this occurred on a large scale, the appropriation of surplus labour is 'not mediated by exchange, as is the case in capitalist society but its basis is the forcible domination of one section of society over the other. There is accordingly, direct slavery, serfdom, or political dependence'.<sup>3</sup> The dependent, labouring, castes of India have been subjected to non-economic coercion. Members of a caste, argued Marx, entered into relations imprisoned within certain definitions:

When we look at social relations which create an undeveloped system of exchange, of exchange values and of money, or which correspond

to an underdeveloped degree of these, then it is clear from the outset that the individuals in such a society, although their relations appear to be more personal, enter into connection with one another only as individuals imprisoned within a certain definition, as feudal lord and vassal, landlord and serf, etc or as members of a caste etc. or as members of an estate etc. In the money relation, in the developed system of exchange (and this semblance seduces the democrats), the ties of personal dependence, of distinctions of blood, education, etc. are in fact exploded, ripped up (at least personal ties all appear as *personal* relations), and individuals seem independent.<sup>4</sup>

India had firmly embarked on the path of capitalist development since the second half of the 19th century and by 1947 she belonged to the category of the more industrially developed colonies with a 'national' big bourgeoisie and a numerous proletariat.<sup>5</sup> The formation of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat implied a clear break with the division of labour which had been inherited from the caste system of the Asiatic mode of production. Bereft of the ownership of the means of production the modern industrial working class is composed of all the main social categories of the old society, the upper castes, the labouring castes of *sudras* and *ati-sudras*, the tribes. Because of the higher organic composition of capital in large-scale machine production the industrial working class creates greater surplus value and so is the most exploited class of Indian society. Numerous survivals of the pre-capitalist forms of labour continue to exist. As early as 1928 the Communist International had observed that the exploitation of Indian workers still bore the forms of semi-slavery.<sup>6</sup> E. Zhukov noted in 1947 that the caste system enabled Indian capitalists to pay almost 50% less wages in the areas of Bombay and Assam to the workers of the lower castes than to the unskilled labour of the higher castes.<sup>7</sup> Indian capitalists continue to pay lower wages to the lower castes and women: in the sandstone and marble quarries in Udaipur and Rasamand today women workers receive Rs. 18-22 as daily wages, a tribal worker is paid Rs. 28, a dalit worker Rs. 35, Jat and Guijar workers, Rs. 40, and Rajput workers are paid Rs. 45.<sup>8</sup> Work involving hard labour, such as the loading and hauling of coaltubs, tough physical condition such as working in the intense heat near blast furnaces, or 'unclean' labour such as the shelling and roasting of coir is allocated to adivasi and dalit labour.<sup>9</sup> There is a preponderance of the backward castes, dalits and adivasis in those sections of the working class marked by lower skills, lower wages, and contract work. These sections constitute the most oppressed sections of the Indian working class.

The Prussian path of development of attempted capitalism in agriculture formed a semi-feudal capitalism which maximises the retention of the survivals of pre-capitalist tribal, caste and feudal forms of labour. In tsarist Russia when the peasantry had been deprived of the land in 1861 in most cases this actually meant not the creation of a free labourer in capitalist production but a bonded tenant who was in fact a semi-serf or even almost a serf.<sup>10</sup> Non-economic coercion is utilised to subordinate the dependent castes in order to screw up the rate of surplus extraction. Dalit agricultural labourers pressing for the implementation of the legal minimum wage or the provision of house-sites have been subjected to upper-caste landlord violence and even burnt alive as in the Belchi and many other incidents. In Punjab which is often held up as an example of capitalist development in agriculture aside from the caste oppression of the *Mazhabi* Sikhs, the coercion and debt bondage of the tribals of Chota Nagpur, Bihar has been well documented.<sup>11</sup> Nocturnal confinement, floggings and beatings have been accompanied by measures of economic compulsion and bondage. The wages paid to tribal labour are far below those prescribed by the official minimum wages. Delayed payment of monthly wages is utilised to ensure a compliant labour-force which cannot easily shift employers. In Haryana and Punjab debt bondage is structured into the wage contract so that labour is paid in installments in a manner so as to compel it to incur usurious loans from employers against future wages.<sup>12</sup> Labourers may only transfer to another employer if the latter pays off the labourer's debts. The tendency to capitalist development promotes debt bondage as the desperate condition of rural labour is combined with a shift to cash payment.<sup>13</sup> In eastern India the survivals of pre-capitalist production relations are manifested in the form of *begar* and in the widespread prevalence of sharecropping,<sup>14</sup> characterised by Lenin as a 'direct survival of serfdom'.<sup>15</sup> Bonded labour continues to exist. The National Survey of the Incidence of Bonded Labour in 1981 estimated that some 2.6 million bonded labourers existed in the country and noted the elements of brutal force and social and economic compulsions which led to bondage. 61.5% of bonded labour belonged to the scheduled castes and 25.1% came from the scheduled tribes.<sup>16</sup> Higher figures for bonded labour have been given by the International Labour Organisation which in its report of 1993 estimated that five million adults and ten million children were working as bonded labour in the sectors of agriculture, quarrying, carpet weaving and domestic help.<sup>17</sup>

The Congress of the Peoples of the East held in Baku in 1920 suggested that even the establishment of the political independence of the colonial countries does not enable them to break out of the bounds of the colonial system because of the continued economic dependence on imperialism.

If the capitalist system is retained in Europe and Asia, the countries of the East which win freedom from political dependence upon the imperialist countries, being more backward industrially, inevitably remain in complete economic dependence on the latter, and, as before, serve as areas for the application of the finance capital of the European industrial countries.<sup>18</sup>

It flows from this that if the colonial countries are to become independent economically then they require to develop their productive basis by establishing big industry, and as imperialism seeks to retain its colonial system it cannot, in general, favour a policy of industrialisation. On this question the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928 argued as follows:

Real industrialisation of the colonial country, in particular the building up of a flourishing engineering industry, which might make possible the independent development of the productive forces of the country, is not accelerated, but on the contrary, is hindered by the metropolis. *This is the essence of its function of colonial enslavement: the colonial country is compelled to sacrifice the interests of its independent development and to play the part of an economic (agrarian-raw material) appendage to foreign capitalism.*<sup>19</sup>

Why did the Comintern in 1928 stress that only 'real industrialisation' 'might make possible' independent economic development in the colonial world? Marx emphasised in 'Capital' that the general conditions which were a requisite for the establishment of production by the industrial system were not just the revolutionisation of the mining of coal and iron, the metal industries and the means of transport, the especial technical basis for the mature factory system was that machinery was itself produced by machinery.<sup>20</sup> In the same vein Engels opined in his letter to Danielson of September 22, 1892 that 'industrial production nowadays means grande industrie, steam, electricity, self-acting mules, powerlooms, finally machines that produce machinery'.<sup>21</sup>

The problem of ensuring economic independence from world capitalism was also faced by the Soviet Union after 1917. In this context Stalin in 1926 distinguished between industrialisation and the development

of any kind of industry. He held that the centre of industrialisation was 'the development of heavy industry (fuel, metal, etc.), the development, in the last analysis, of the production of the means of production, the development of our machine building industry'. This alone could safeguard the USSR from being converted into an appendage of world capitalism. That was the reason why industrialisation could not be confined to any kind of industrial development such as light industry. Citing the example of India, Stalin noted that while industry was developing there the country did not produce the instruments and means of production which were imported from the metropolis: 'that is the specific method of imperialism - to develop industry in the colonies in such a way as to keep it tethered to the metropolitan country, to imperialism.'<sup>22</sup>

In the lengthy discussions on the colonial question at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern held in 1928 a number of speakers from Britain who were under the influence of the theoretical conceptions of M.N. Roy - Bennett, Rathbone, Rothstein and Palme Dutt - strongly argued that as a result of the 'industrialisation' in India under British auspices imperialism had developed the tendency to shift the centre of production to the colonies as a result of which it was not correct to assert that the colonial countries, including India, constituted an 'agrarian appendage' of imperialism. The Comintern rejected this view, characterising it as the theory of 'decolonisation', on the grounds that while a certain degree of industrial development was taking place in India, imperialism impeded industrialisation by not permitting the production of the means of production and by supporting the survivals of feudalism in the villages. It considered that only the revolution of the workers and peasants through the establishment of the democratic dictatorship could lead the colonial countries onto the road of independence and self-reliance; industrialisation was possible only by following the path of non-capitalist development.<sup>23</sup>

Does the experience of India after 1947 confirm or deny the Comintern understanding? Certainly sectors of the Indian bourgeoisie were aware of the centrality of production of the means of production in the process of economic development. This is clear from a secret note of 1953 by Jawaharlal Nehru to the Commerce and Industry Minister, T.T. Krishnachari, where he argued against the policy of readily purchasing plant and machinery from abroad when it could be manufactured in India:

*in regard to some machinery, we have no choice in the matter and we must order it from abroad, though even in such cases, except a very few, there is no reason why we should go on purchasing these articles from abroad and not try to make them at home. The usual outlook is that it is cheaper to get it from abroad than to make it here. This is false economy. Generally speaking, everything that is purchased from abroad is more expensive from the national point of view. Apart from expense, we have to develop these basic industries.<sup>24</sup>*

Similarly, P.C. Mahanobis, who played an important advisory role in drawing up the plans for industrial development in the 1950s maintained in the context of the Second Five Year Plan that it was necessary to develop heavy industry with all possible speed so that India should rapidly become free from having to import producers goods. The Third Five Year Plan stressed that self-reliance was an important part of development strategy.<sup>25</sup>

As the First Plan was primarily concerned with the development of agriculture and the Fourth and Fifth Plans were associated with a decline of industrial investment and output an examination of the framework of the Second Plan itself similar to the Third Plan, permits an evaluation of the project of industrialisation. The Draft Plan Frame of the Third Plan formed by P.C. Mahanobis suggested a programme of planned economic development which assigned 7% to 11% of the national income for investments, of which about one-fifth would be concentrated on the building of industries which would produce the means of production under the umbrella of the public sector. No nationalisation of industrial production was envisaged, but state activity in banking, insurance and trade was envisaged as possible subsidiary measures as were land reform and policies to benefit domestic industries which were designed to create employment.

In his analysis of the Draft Outline of the Second Plan of February, 1956, Oskar Lange, who served as an economic adviser to the Indian government in the 1950s, noted the departures from Mahanobis' original conception: The Plan abandoned the strategic lever of industrialisation and economic development as the construction of industries producing means of production. This was clear from the reduced allocations of investment in the basic producers goods industries, minerals and power. The portion of investments allocated to the basic industries was reduced from 20% to 11% and the absolute level reduced to 37%. The Second Plan was founded on a division of labour between the state sector which was



required to create the facilities in industry and minerals, steel, railway and electrical equipment, shipbuilding, coal and coke and the private sector which was to take charge of the manufacturing of machinery, chemicals and fertilisers. Lange concluded that the consequence of the Draft Outline of the Second Plan was that 'by reducing investment in industries producing means of production, the period of economic dependence on foreign countries and foreign capital is prolonged'.<sup>26</sup>

Despite a decade of industrial development by the end of the Third Five Year Plan production of the means of production did not in general get underway. The major exception to this was the production of heavy electrical equipment in India by the BHEL. India did not produce the means of production for heavy machinery proper i.e. mining, oil extraction and heavy engineering. These are imported from abroad.<sup>27</sup> Instead the general engineering industry produces textile equipment, machine tools, internal combustion engines, diesel engines and refrigerators.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the chemical industry has not engaged in extended reproduction but has been producing consumer items such as soap, matches, artificial fibres and pharmaceuticals.<sup>29</sup> Confirming this general picture the World Bank Report of 1984 which examined non-electrical industrial manufacturing observed that India did not supply complete economy size units i.e. turnkey projects in the fertiliser, petrochemical, petroleum refinery industries or in pulp and paper but was confined to the thermal power, cement and sugar industries.<sup>30</sup> Indian capitalists did not follow up the possibilities offered for the production of the means of production by the camp of Soviet neo-imperialism. Neither the USSR-aided programme for the development of mining machinery under the Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation at Durgapur, nor the project to produce steel plants every seven years under the Heavy Machine Building Plant at Ranchi, nor even the plan to utilise Czechoslovakian assistance to the Machine Tool Institute at Bangalore to help Hindustan Machine Tools to engage in machine tool production received the necessary encouragement and support for them to take off. Writing in the mid-1980s the Soviet economist A.I. Medovoy justifiably commented that even though private and state investment in large-scale industry had been considerable the industrialisation of India was still at the stage of building the basis of industry: the production of the means of production.<sup>31</sup>

Industrial development was carried out in financial and technical collaboration with imperialist concerns. A Reserve Bank of India survey of 1968 found that 82% of large enterprises had been set up in this manner.

Technical collaboration has been a cardinal instrument for expanding the grip of imperialism. India expended more in payment for technical assistance than on her total investments in industry. In place of a policy of self-reliance, industrial development between the years 1956 and 1969 was financed by foreign capital (See Tables 1 and 2 below). The working class and working peoples paid the cost of capitalist industrial development as capital was raised by indirect taxation and deficit financing. Moreover, a considerable portion of the surplus value produced by the working class was skimmed off by imperialism in the form of profits, royalties and interest on loans. Profits of foreign companies exceeded 1.7 billion Rupees in 1971-72 and increased to 2.5 billion Rupees by 1978-79. Between 1969-70 and 1976-77 transfers by foreign companies from India increased from 722.6 million Rupees to 1.2 billion. Between 1950 and 1979 India received 186.8 billion Rupees in loans, subsidies and food 'aid'. Some 67% of the external debt was to the United States and its international organisations, almost 12% to the U.K., and about 10% to Western Germany. By 1984 Indian indebtedness exceeded 25% of its national income with repayments and interest payment between 1950-51 to 1978-79 totalling 78.5 billion Rupees.<sup>32</sup> The index indicating the ratio of debt payments to earnings has soared over the last decades. Whereas the repayment co-efficient is considered to become a retarding factor for economic development after it exceeds 15-20%, statistics reveal that this has been exceeded in recent years (See Table 3.)

The liquidation of semi-feudalism was a pre-condition of successful productive economic development on capitalist lines. This required a thoroughgoing land reform of giving land to the tiller and an end to the agricultural debt of the peasantry. These measures would have facilitated the formation of a domestic market and cleared the way for a large-scale productive transformation. Were much measures carried out? In reality the survivals of feudalism were not abolished but carefully preserved. The end of the *zamindari* system in 1956-57 terminated the rights to the land of the *zamindars*, *taluqdars* and *jagirdars*, who were the intermediaries between the state and the producers. The *zamindars* lost sixty per cent of their lands which meant that land redistribution moderated the monopoly of the landlord capitalists, and the rich peasant tenants succeeded in buying ownership of the landlords' lands while the millions of middle and poor peasants were evicted from the land where they had been tillers of the soil to join the ranks of the agricultural labourers or become tenants of their former landlords. The entire burden of the

**Table 1: Net Foreign Aid and the Plans**  
 Source: A.N. Aggarwal *et al.*: 'Indian Economic Information Yearbook, 1990-91', New Delhi, 1991

| Plan period            | Gross aid utilised | Debt servicing |                  | Net aid | Net aid as % of total payment | Net as % of total payment |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------------|---------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
|                        |                    | Amortisation   | Interest payment |         |                               |                           |
| First plan (1951-56)   | 201.7              | 10.6           | 13.4             | 177.7   | 5.3                           | 4.7                       |
| Second Plan (1956-61)  | 1,430.4            | 55.2           | 64.2             | 1,311.0 | 19.2                          | 16.9                      |
| Third Plan (1961-66)   | 2,867.7            | 305.6          | 237.0            | 2,325.1 | 20.6                          | 18.3                      |
| Annual (1966-69)       | 3,145.7            | 606.6          | 375.9            | 2,162.2 | n.a.                          | 32.6                      |
| Fourth Plan (1969-74)  | 3,837.4            | 1,584.2        | 860.8            | 1,392.4 | 6.2                           | 5.6                       |
| Fifth Plan (1974-79)   | 5,821.9            | 2,539.4        | 1,236.0          | 1,946.5 | 3.1                           | 2.9                       |
| (1979-80)              | 1,138.6            | 503.6          | 296.9            | 337.9   | n.a.                          | 2.8                       |
| Sixth Plan (1980-85)   | 10,321.0           | 2,906.0        | 1,903.0          | 5,512.0 | 4.2                           | 3.2                       |
| Seventh Plan (1985-86) | 2,896.0            | 776.0          | 591.0            | 1,529.0 | 4.4                           | 4.6                       |
| (1986-87)              | 3,578.0            | 1,176.0        | 853.0            | 1,549.0 | 3.8                           | 3.9                       |
| (1987-88)              | 5,056.0            | 1,581.0        | 1,043.0          | 2,452.0 | 5.6                           | 5.6                       |
| (1988-89)              | 5,167.0            | 1,646.0        | 1,304.0          | 2,220.0 | 4.2                           | 4.4                       |

**Table 2: Financing of Plans: Domestic and External Sources**  
 Source: *Ibid.*

| Period       | Grand total Rs. Crores | Domestic sources |      | External sources |      |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------|------|------------------|------|
|              |                        | Total Rs. Crores | %    | Total Rs. Crores | %    |
| First Plan   | 1,960                  | 1,771            | 90.4 | 189              | 9.6  |
| Second Plan  | 4,672                  | 3,623            | 77.5 | 1,049            | 22.5 |
| Third Plan   | 8,577                  | 6,154            | 71.8 | 2,423            | 28.2 |
| Annual Plan  | 6,628                  | 4,218            | 63.6 | 2,410            | 36.4 |
| Fourth Plan  | 16,160                 | 14,073           | 87.1 | 2,087            | 12.9 |
| Fifth Plan   | 40,712                 | 35,503           | 87.2 | 5,209            | 12.8 |
| Sixth Plan   | 1,10,821               | 1,02,092         | 92.3 | 8,529            | 7.7  |
| Seventh Plan | 1,80,000               | 1,62,000         | 90.0 | 18,000           | 10.0 |



**Table 3: External Debt Servicing Key Indicators**

Source: 'Economic Survey 1994-95

| 1                             | 1989-90 |        | 1990-91 |        | 1991-92 |   | 1992-93 |   |
|-------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---|---------|---|
|                               | 2       | 3      | 4       | 5      | 6       | 7 | 8       | 9 |
| Period outstanding debt stock |         |        |         |        |         |   |         |   |
| US \$ billion                 | 75.90   | 83.96  | 85.33   | 89.99  |         |   |         |   |
| Rs. thousand crore            | 130.28  | 163.31 | 263.03  | 280.63 |         |   |         |   |
| Change in debt stock          |         |        |         |        |         |   |         |   |
| US \$ billion                 |         | 8.06   | 1.38    | 4.65   |         |   |         |   |
| Debt service payments         |         |        |         |        |         |   |         |   |
| US \$ billion                 | 7.60    | 8.23   | 8.13    | 8.09   |         |   |         |   |
| Total debt as:                |         |        |         |        |         |   |         |   |
| % of GDP                      | 28.5    | 30.5   | 41.1    | 39.9   |         |   |         |   |
| % of exports                  | 447.7   | 454.4  | 467.2   | 476.9  |         |   |         |   |
| Total debt service as:        |         |        |         |        |         |   |         |   |
| % of current receipts         | 31.8    | 32.3   | 29.8    | 30.3   |         |   |         |   |
| % of exports                  | 44.8    | 44.5   | 44.5    | 42.9   |         |   |         |   |

compensation of Rupees 670 crores which was given to the landlords was borne by the shoulders of the peasantry. Pronounced remnants of feudalism remained as the *zamindars* retained landlords for (fictitious) self-cultivation of the *sir*, *khudkasht*, or *bakasht* lands which came to some 64 million acres, subletting of lands continued at exorbitant rents, sharecropping continued in about 20% of the cultivated area of the country. In the *ryotwari* areas 'land reform' left the large landlords who had emerged under British rule and who enjoyed complete ownership rights and indulged in rackrenting of their tenants. Landlords were permitted the right of resumption and to evict their tenants on a mass-scale though a section of the tenants benefitted from a certain security of tenure and reduction in rent. Consistent land reform was not carried out. Under neither of the main tenure systems was land transferred to the tiller. Half of the agricultural labourers were thus left without any land whatsoever. Usury was strengthened in the period after the 'reform'. Between 1951-52 and 1961-62 the indebtedness of the cultivator increased from Rs. 954 crores to Rs. 1,332 crores, and doubled further between 1963-64 and 1974-75. Failure to solve the problem of agrarian indebtedness retarded the development of the productive forces. Credit facilities are cornered by landlords, traders and money-lenders so that the main creditor of 85% of the peasantry remains the money-lenders and the traders.<sup>33</sup> The calculated retention of the survivals of feudalism means the concomitant preservation of the money-lender in the credit operation and production of the mass of the peasantry. The proposal of the Sixth Five Year Plan to limit land rent was not enacted. Attempts to implement land ceiling legislation were permitted to remain on paper. Deprived of access to land as a policy of 'land to the tiller' was not operated the agricultural labourers found that minimum wage legislation was not acted upon, wages rates were low and paid partly in kind.

The adoption of the Prussian path of development in agriculture resulted in the establishment of semi-feudal capitalism marked by the failure to develop a productive capitalist agriculture. In the feudal heartlands of India the landlord-usurer nexus remains supreme so that surplus is appropriated through tenancy in terms of labour service and sharecropping. An examination of agricultural production in the period of the 'green revolution' between 1969-70 and 1983-84 reveals that in 5 out of 14 states the growth of agricultural production lags behind the corresponding growth of the rural population. In Bihar, a bastion of pre-capitalist survivals, the annual compound rate of growth of agricultural production has been

0.5% and the annual growth rate of the rural population is about 2%.<sup>34</sup> While the north-western region of Punjab, Haryana and Western U.P. have advanced at an impressive tempo, other areas such as Bihar, Orissa, Assam and rural Maharashtra have been sliding backwards over the century.<sup>35</sup> The development of capitalist agriculture in the north-west through capitalist investment in the new technology, hybrid seeds, canals and tubewells suitable in particular climate, soil and crop regimes raised productivity initially but after yield-raising technical change levelled off, investment flowed back into socially unproductive forms of investment or consumption. The over-all picture of agricultural stagnation remains unchanged.

The development of a certain degree of capitalism in agriculture has not led to a shift from rent to profit as the main form of surplus appropriation in the rural sector. Under conditions of capitalism in agriculture, profits regulate production and set the ceiling on rents so that the rate of rents is regulated by the functioning and realisation of capital, thereby expressing the hegemony of capital over other socio-economic structures. In Indian agriculture rent in land rather than profits regulate production. The village rich frequently receives a greater part of its income not from profits but from pre-capitalist rent and interests on loans which are greater than the profits from farms run on capitalist lines. When the surplus production is siphoned off by money-lenders, traders and landlords, the cost of production is not a consideration as the producer is producing for personal consumption in a semi-natural economy. Accumulation from agriculture which takes place on the basis of pre-capitalist structures gets concentrated in the hands of landowners, merchants, black-marketeers and usurers and is not utilised in production but in the sphere of parasitic consumption and in the sphere of trade, the black market, usury and rent exploitation. In this manner pre-capitalist accumulation expands at the expense of industrial capital.<sup>36</sup>

Economic development in India after 1947 suggests that the notions put forward at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928 have been vindicated. In the absence of the democratic dictatorship of the working class and working peoples, genuine industrialisation i.e. the 'production of machinery by machinery', and the end of the important survivals of feudalism and other pre-capitalist remnants has not taken place. India remains an agrarian country. Nehruvian 'socialism' proved incapable of following an independent path of capitalist development. Yet it is apparent that a certain degree of industrial development has taken place. How far has this led to significant economic change?

The Programme of the Communist International adopted in 1928 argued that as a result of the uneven development of capitalism there existed in the world a variety of types of capitalism which it schematically divided into three broad categories. First, the countries of highly developed capitalism such as the USA, Germany and Britain which had powerful productive forces with small-scale production reduced to relative insignificance. Second, the countries with a medium level of capitalism, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, the Balkan countries (Stalin included Russia prior to the revolution of February, 1917, in this category), which had numerous survivals of semi-feudal relations in agriculture. And third, the colonial and semi-colonial countries (China and India) and the dependent countries (Argentina, Brazil) which had the rudiments of and in some countries considerable developed industry with feudal medieval relationships or 'Asiatic mode of production' relations prevailing in their economy and political superstructures, and in which the principal industrial, commercial and banking enterprises, the principal means of transport, the large land landed estates, and plantations were concentrated in the hands of foreign imperialist groups.<sup>37</sup>

A comparison of steel production per capita establishes that India is behind the Russia of 1913 (See Tables 4, 5). Indian steel production which has increased from 2.77 kg. per head in 1950-51 to 15.88 kg. per head in 1990-91 lags behind the 26.4 kg. per capita produced in Russia in 1913 and approximates to the per head steel production of Yugoslavia of 1939 of 15 kg. (See Tables 4, 5).

**Table 4: Per Capita Steel Output, 1938 (in Kgs.)**

Source: 1-4, 'Poland A Handbook', Warsaw, 1977, p. 238; 5, Calculated from 'National Economy of the USSR, Statistical Returns', Moscow, 1957, pp. 17, 50;6-9, Nicolas Spulber, 'The Economics of Communist Eastern Europe', MIT, 1957, p. 374;10. 'Political Economy', Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, London, 1957, p. 305; 11, Calculated from ed. Liu Suinian and WuQungan, 'China's Socialist Economy', Beijing, 1986, pp. 479, 481.

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| <p><b>Advanced Capitalist</b><br/> <b>Countries:</b> (1) USA = 222, (2) UK = 221, (3) France = 151,<br/> (4) Japan = 91</p> <p><b>Medium Capitalist</b><br/> <b>Countries:</b> (5) Russia -1913 = 26.4, (6) Hungary = 72, (7) Poland = 54,<br/> (8) Yugoslavia -1939 = 15, (9) Rumania = 14</p> <p><b>Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries:</b> (10) India = 2.7, (11) China -1949 = 0.3</p> |
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**Table 5: India Per Capita Steel Output 1950-51 to 1990-91 (in Kgs.)**

Calculated from: *ed. A.N. Aggarwal et al: 'India Economic Information Year Book, 1992-93', New Delhi, 1993, p. 15*

| 1950-51 | 1960-61 | 1970-71 | 1980-81 | 1990-91 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2.77    | 5.43    | 8.35    | 9.85    | 15.88   |

This suggests that India in the half century after 1947 has effected a transition from being one of the more industrially advanced countries of the colonial world to the economic level of the more backward of the pre-Second World War Eastern European States as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal agrarian-raw material appendage of world capitalism. Stalin recognised the possibility of countries at a medium level of capitalist development being placed in a semi-colonial situation: he held that Russia before the February revolution of 1917 was a country of average level capitalist development.<sup>38</sup> He argued that it was the October Revolution 'which liberated Russia from her semi-colonial situation'.<sup>39</sup>

What is the stage of revolution in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country with a medium level of capitalist development?

The Communist International at its Sixth Congress in 1928 recognised that the international proletarian revolution represented a combination of processes which varied in time and character: purely proletarian revolutions; revolutions of a bourgeois-democratic type which grow into proletarian revolutions; wars for national liberation; colonial revolutions. This was a result of the uneven development of capitalism which gave rise to various types of capitalism, to different stages of ripeness of capitalism in different countries, and to a variety of specific condition of the revolutionary process. These circumstances, it was argued, made it historically inevitable that the proletariat would come to power by a multiplicity of ways and degrees of rapidity and that a number of countries must pass through certain transitional stages leading to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In the countries of highly developed capitalism such as the USA, Germany and Britain it was clear that the fundamental political demand of the programme was the direct transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the economic sphere the demands would be the expropriation of the whole of large-scale industry; the organisation of a large number of state Soviet farms; a relatively small portion of the land to be transferred to the

peasantry; the rapid rate of socialist development and the collectivisation of peasant farming.

Regarding the countries of medium level of capitalism it was noted that they had numerous survivals of semi-feudal relationships in agriculture, and possessed to a certain extent the material pre-requisites for socialist construction but that the bourgeois-democratic reforms had not been completed. It was suggested programmatically that:

In some of these countries a process of more or less rapid development from bourgeois-democratic to socialist revolution is possible. In others, there may be types of proletarian revolution which will have a large number of bourgeois-democratic tasks to fulfil. Hence, in these countries the dictatorship of the proletariat may not come about at once, but in the process of transition from the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat; where the revolution develops directly as a proletarian revolution it is presumed that the proletariat exercises leadership over a broad agrarian peasant movement.<sup>40</sup>

The important role of the agrarian revolution was underlined for this category of countries and it was argued that in some instances it played a decisive role; in the process of the expropriation of large landed property a considerable part of the land would be given over to the peasantry; there would be a considerable volume of market relations after the revolution; the rate of socialist construction in the countryside, initially organising cooperatives, and later in productive co-operatives, would be relatively slow.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries such as India and China and in the dependent countries such as Argentina and Brazil it was considered that the principal task was the fight against feudalism and pre-capitalist forms of exploitation and the systematic development of the peasant agrarian revolution as well as the fight against foreign imperialism for national independence. The transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat in these countries would be possible only through a series of preparatory stages as the outcome of a whole period of transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into socialist revolution, while in the majority of cases successful socialist construction would be possible only if direct support was obtained from the countries in which the proletarian dictatorship had already been established.

Is it possible then for the revolution in a country such as India to undergo proletarian revolution which has a large number of bourgeois

tasks to carry out? To solve, as it were, the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in passing, as a by-product of the proletarian-socialist revolution?

This very question was raised in the discussions of the Comintern and the CPSU(b) in 1928 for a country of medium level capitalist development, Poland, which was more industrially developed than Russia of 1913, and which in 1928 was far more economically developed than contemporary India.

The Polish Communist, Ring, contested the view expressed in the Draft Programme of the Communist International that the countries of medium level of capitalist development such as Poland required to go through the stage of bourgeois-democratic revolution. Ring argued that such a stage was possible and necessary in Tsarist Russia because of the domination of the big landowners and the existence of semi-feudal relations in the countryside. In Russia three political factors corresponded to this situation: First, the Tsar personified a political order which corresponded to the domination of the landowning class; second, antagonism existed between the semi-feudal landlords and the liberal bourgeoisie; and, finally, that political homogeneity existed in the country, despite a certain economic differentiation, so that the peasantry as a whole could go with the revolution and could give it the character of a bourgeois-democratic revolution.

In contrast to Tsarist Russia, Ring argued, in Poland capitalist revolution had strongly developed in the countryside, that although the relics of feudalism still existed they were not as numerous as in Tsarist Russia and were on the wane. The political order in Poland was in harmony with the wishes and demands of the bourgeoisie. The social relations in the countryside, moreover, were not homogeneous in Poland, the capitalist landlords were fusing with the bourgeoisie; considerable social, economic and political differentiation existed in the peasantry and it was necessary to carry out an energetic struggle against the kulak upper strata of the peasantry. These social and economic conditions required a socialist revolution in Poland which had the task of completing the bourgeois revolution: from the beginning it would be opposed by the landlords and the whole bourgeoisie including the kulak-bourgeois upper strata of the peasantry. Ring was ready to accept that the socialist revolution would not lead at once to a full proletarian dictatorship but that it was possible that there might be initially an 'honest coalition' with the revolutionary peasant parties.<sup>41</sup>

Similar views existed evidently in the Central Committee of the CPSU(b). Stalin defended the draft programme of the Communist International for its three-fold classification of the countries outside the USSR, denying that Poland could be categorised as a highly developed capitalist country where the demand for socialist revolution was appropriate. He argued in the following terms:

Besides capitalistically developed countries, where the victory of the revolution will lead at once to the proletarian dictatorship, there are countries which are little developed capitalistically, where there are feudal survivals and a special agrarian problem of the anti-feudal type (Poland, Rumania, etc.), countries where the petty bourgeoisie, especially the peasantry, is bound to have a weighty word to say in the event of a revolutionary upheaval, and where the victory of the revolution in order to lead to a proletarian dictatorship, can and certainly will require certain intermediate stages, in the form, say, of a dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.<sup>42</sup>

The peasant question in a country of medium level of capitalist development where there was an agrarian question of the anti-feudal type precluded, then, the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship and the transition to socialism as the immediate stage. Stalin recalled that Lenin had objected to any underestimation of the role and importance of the petty-bourgeoisie, particularly of the peasantry: it was this which had led to Lenin opposing Trotsky who before the February revolution had not understood the importance of the peasant question, and had argued that the slogan of the moment was 'no tsar, but a worker's government'. Furthermore, it was the support of the vast masses of the petty-bourgeoisie in Russia immediately after the February revolution which led, not as had been anticipated by some, to the predominance of the proletariat but to the parties of the petty-bourgeoisie such as the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks. The proletarian dictatorship had been established in Russia as a result of the more or less rapid growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution.<sup>43</sup>

The need for democratic revolution is indicated by the domination of imperialism and the big Indian bourgeoisie dependent upon it which is engaged in an intensified offensive under the slogans of liberalisation and structural readjustment programmes; imperialism has to be combatted to establish the national independence of the country. Democratic revolution is required directed against: the survivals of feudalism which



engender the movements of the peasantry for land; the oppression of the nationalities which have given rise to the national liberation struggles of Kashmir and the North-East, the movements for the use of the national languages; the survivals of the caste-system by the movements of the oppressed castes; the exploitation of the tribal peoples; the denial of the rights of women; the widespread prevalence of religion and illiteracy. The formation of a revolutionary Communist Party of the proletariat, free of all revisionist trends, is the indispensable pre-condition for the working class to win the leadership of the democratic movements, particularly the agrarian struggles, which will facilitate the uninterrupted transition from the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry to the proletarian dictatorship and the socialist revolution.

#### **A programme of struggle for revolutionary democracy requires:**

1. Complete break with world imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism.
2. Democratisation of the political structure of India.
3. Recognition of the right of nations to secession and the formation of a voluntary alliance of democratic republics.
4. The protection of the rights of the minorities, the backward castes, the dalits, and the tribes.
5. The abolition of caste oppression.
6. The abolition of landlordism without compensation, distribution of land to the tiller and the abolition of agricultural debts.
7. Nationalisation of the main branches of industry, the establishment of the Eight Hour Day, the implementation of the minimum wage for all workers and employees, assistance to the unemployed and social insurance.
8. The establishment of friendly relations between India and her neighbours.

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## Indian sub-continent

# Enacting a geographical India; dialectics of domesticity and internationality in suppressing rebellion

*Malem Ningthouja*

### Introduction

*Now, it is a question of fact whether this village or that village or this little strip of territory is on their side or on our side. Normally, wherever there are relatively petty disputes, well, it does seem rather absurd for two great countries...immediately to rush at each other's throats to decide whether the two miles of territory are on this side or on that side, and especially two miles of territory in the high mountains, where nobody lives. But where national prestige and dignity is involved, it is not the two miles of territory, it is the nation's dignity and self-respect that becomes involved. And therefore this happens.*

An excerpt from the statement by Jawaharlal Nehru,  
Lok Sabha, September 4th, 1959<sup>1</sup>

This article deals with territorial nationalism espoused and articulated by the Indian State. The above excerpt is being referred to while carrying forward my argument that the articulation made by Nehru was an intricate power expression that was characteristically territorial expansionism. The articulation was embedded in what I would like to term *limit of power* exercised by Nehru and that such *limit of power* was manifested in the limit of territorial asset that the Indian state had possessed. In other words *power* corresponds to territorial limit and both reinforced to one another in setting each other's limit. In such circumstance *power* was exercised to establish control over territory through enacting the domains or official jargons such as *international* and *domestic*. Such domains / jargons were being enacted and articulated in order to strengthen the claim for nationhood of the territory and population that were being ruled upon by the dominant power players.

### Limit of power & limit of territory

There has been correlation between power<sup>2</sup> and territorial limit, i.e., the ability to exercise power to establish control over territory. Or one may put it in a simpler expression, i.e., power is manifested in territorial

possession. The kingdoms and republics of ancient India, the Mughals of medieval India, the British Indian Empire in the Indian subcontinent, the Ningthouja kingdom in Manipur and the Indian state in the post 1947 period had attempted to create or defend territorial boundary.<sup>3</sup> The extent of their respective territories had depended upon the limit of their power<sup>4</sup> In the statist parlance of the ruling State the absolute authority to govern a territory is presumed to be rested with the State by *de jure* or by *de facto* or combination of both. According to Leach "in the ideology of modern international politics all States are sovereign and every piece of the earth's surface must, by logical necessity, be the rightful legal possession of one and only one such State."<sup>5</sup> And since there could be no overlapping between the territories of two adjacent States; legitimacy to govern a territory is rested with the State that possess the territory. In other words territory cannot be extended beyond the *limit of power* to compete with other competing powers, i.e., external invasion or internal rebellion. According to Nehru the tests of sovereignty, i.e., power, autonomy and territorial possession, was the capacity for international relations and the capacity for declaring war.<sup>6</sup> According to him, logically, power, sovereignty and territorial independence were synonymous. "The future of Manipur obviously lies with the Union of India... Manipur can hardly be expected to defend itself unaided in case of troubles on the frontier. This business of defence must be shouldered by the Union."<sup>7</sup> Any State that was not strong enough or could not successfully fight back the tests of sovereignty waged upon it by the Indian State must become a part of India. Herein lies, power set the limit of territory.

Based on this understanding one may raise a question; does the territorial boundary or power remain constant or stable and uniform throughout for an established country without any time limit? The answer could be affirmative if the State is being constituted by the collective will of the people and that collective loyalty to the country remains stable. The answer would be negative if rebellion for separate nationhood remains beyond the power of the State to subdue with. Such situation is prevalent in context when a State merely inherited pre-existing colonial territories populated by population seemingly disloyal to the overarching State superstructure. In other words, if we agree with the understanding that modern States derived power from the 'collective' or 'sovereign' will of the constitutionally recognised citizens, then, power is relatively weak in those areas inhabited by people disloyal to the State enacted mechanical nationhood. The later constituted the periphery characterised by dialectic



of rebellion and counter-rebellion, i.e. fluctuation in power exercise of the governing State and potential disintegration of the State's territorial asset. Shifting away from further discussing the dialectics, I would like to argue that rebellion or aggression was a threat to the projected territorial integrity. The State may have to act upon to defend the integrity or open up the gates to invasion or accept defeat by allowing independence of the disloyal. Similarly, the disloyal or rebel may have to integrate with overarching State or accept defeat or continue to fight for liberation. What was ensued in rebellion or invasion and counter rebellion or counter-invasion is a tussle between confronting powers to set territorial limit. The argument is that geographical limit is set by the limit of power and *vice versa*. The Indian State in the second half of the twentieth century was a contending power attempting to expand and govern territory. How far it could succeed depend upon the magnitude of its power exercise.

### **Territorial obsession of the Indian rulers**

I have discussed elsewhere that the Nehru's *tryst with destiny*, a popular public speech delivered in 1947 where he embellished a primordial Indian nationhood, was a linguistic forgery in the continuous effort of inventing an Indian nationhood. Statist definition about India formulated by the Indian rulers would describe for an Indian nationhood. However, history informs us that contemporary India was a creation by the Indian State through adopting crisscrossing tactics of treaties, negotiations, bargaining, armed propaganda and policies that may altogether be clubbed under the generic term *carrot and stick policy*. India had never been homogenous and united as it is being portrait by the Indian nationalists. Protagonists of two theory for India (i.e., the Hindu and Muslim as two different nations), Mohammed Ali Jinnah had propounded that India of modern conception with its so called present geographical unity was entirely the creation of the British. According to him, "talk of Indian unity as one central constitutional government of this vast sub-continent is simply a myth."<sup>8</sup> While one may dupe Ali's understanding as an unfounded communal polemic and propaganda, the idea of invention of India reflected in Ali's writings cannot be refuted. Peter Robb argues for India that "(British) colonialism was important, not just as a stimulus, foil and opponent for Indians, but in its constructions of the state (and an identity)."<sup>9</sup> According to V.P. Menon, an arch-manoeuvrer of Indian integration,<sup>10</sup> "throughout her long and chequered history (India had) never achieved political homogeneity. From the earliest times, spasmodic attempts were made to

bring about her consolidation ... It must be emphasized that not even in the palmist days of the Hindu and Moghul empires did the entire country come under one political umbrella."<sup>11</sup> For him it was the Indian national leaders who had successfully founded an Indian nationhood by 1950s. The statement eulogises successful integration and acknowledges recent invention. Understanding India's Frontier Policy northeast would substantiate my argument about territorial expansionism and attempted invention of Indian nationhood.

Indian rulers and nationalist protagonists were predetermined to retain under their possession territorial assets of the erstwhile British Indian Empire. The present Northeast comprised territorial asset, resource, market for the Indian bourgeoisies. For them the Northeast was an exotic sanctuary inhabited by mosaic of colourful communities with comparatively weak power. It was vulnerable and easy prey for expansionist adventurism. And the Indian state, in tune with British geo-political expansion<sup>12</sup> or frontier policy, had taken it for granted to govern it as Curzonian Scientific Frontier type asset for India.<sup>13</sup> While founding a Dominion of India on the ruins of British Indian Empire, the Indian national leaders by 1947 had carried out territorial expansion. If "the Indian rulers (after Britain's direct rule of India had) directed their attention to India's northern neighbours; the Himalayan kingdom of Kashmir, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet,"<sup>14</sup> then, India's territorial expansion in Manipur would be better revealed by contextualising it within the larger framework of India's geopolitics in Asia. In what may be termed *Obsession du territoire*<sup>15</sup> of the Indian ruling class, the Indian rulers had articulated for the legitimacy of territorial expansion on the pretext of British colonial treaties and Acts. In the words of Menon, "it was assumed that (integration) could be done by an adaptation of the Government of India Act of 1935 and that there was no necessity for a specific provision in the Indian Independence Bill for the accession of States."<sup>16</sup> Territorial expansion had to be carried out at any cost. And that "any state which did not come into the Constituent Assembly would be treated by the country as a hostile State. Such a state, he added, would have to bear the consequences of being so treated."<sup>17</sup> Resolution of the Constituent Assembly moved by Nehru on 13 December 1946, a resolution that was passed in the absence of representatives of princely states<sup>18</sup> had logically approved for further acquiring of or annexation of territory. The Constituent Assembly had adopted a special resolution on 21 December 1946 to include Bhutan and Sikkim within the Scope of a Negotiating Committee, obviously, for future expansion, e.g.,

keeping Bhutan under India's Sphere of Influence by the treaty of 1949 and annexation of Sikkim in 1975.<sup>19</sup>

### **Aggressive territorialism**

The expansionist project, though portrait in an apparently democratic type federation proposal was in no sense a proposal for voluntary federation and it was carried out in a very radical and hasty manner. The radical and hasty character was resented by Manipur State Durbar in 1939 on the ground that "the durbar has not been given any time to consider the Hydari Report and similar papers (all related to federation proposal). The durbar regrets that, in the very short time at its disposal it has not been able to study the question sufficiently thoroughly to give His Highness the Maharaja any advice as to whether it would be advisable to federation or not."<sup>20</sup> The hasty and drastic character would suggest that bringing into Indian ambit of the "Frontiers Groups"<sup>21</sup> either by negotiation or through use of force under any circumstance had been predetermined by the Indian National Congress. By 1946 the members of the Indian Constituent Assembly had started hovering into Manipur without prior information to the state authority.<sup>22</sup> Manipur was represented by a non-Manipuri twice only to the Indian Constituent Assembly merely to present credentials and sign the registration on 14 July 1947<sup>23</sup> and on 22 August 1949.<sup>24</sup> The representatives were by Himmat Singh K. Maheshwari and G.S. Guha respectively, i.e., India nominated non-Manipuris who were unfamiliar to the condition of Manipur. Any assertion by Manipur to defend its historical identity was condemned as "very harmful to the (Indian) nation and must be prevented."<sup>25</sup> The Indian national leaders were unhappy with any territorial power being rested with Manipur and had called for enacting laws that would allow all Indians to freely move in and around Manipur without any restriction.<sup>26</sup> They were worried that the people living in Naga Hills were "misguided by certain persons into thinking that, with the withdrawal of British authority, the country would go back to them... The fact that the Naga Hills have always been part of India, have never been anything like a State, has not been pointed out to them."<sup>27</sup> They were worried that if the then province of Assam had gone into the hands of somebody who was "not in favour of the whole of India, if Assam were in the hands of an adverse power, the whole of India would have gone too."<sup>28</sup> And when Sardar Patel had to take up "my bounden duty to work for the consolidation of freedom"<sup>29</sup> he had no time to seek for the consent of the "small fry"<sup>30</sup> such as Manipur to voluntarily integrate in the Dominion of

India but to use force and govern.<sup>31</sup> When the Constitution of India was finally adopted in 1950; Part I, Article 1, Clause No. 3 and Sub Clause No. C of the Indian constitution had logically sanctioned a framework for further expansion of territory. The practical implication of the provision for territorial expansion was revealed in the enforcement of the Acquired Territories (Merger) Act on 28 December 1960.<sup>32</sup> The Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958<sup>33</sup> and the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1961<sup>34</sup> were adopted with provisions to defend the geo-political interest of the Indian state. The strategic obsessive Indian State, in the name of 'national security' had, for strategic reason, placed pre-independent Manipur in the Part C status under the strict surveillance and militant rule of a Chief Commissioner.<sup>35</sup> Indian state had staged a drama and had prompted for rebellion. This strategic consideration was driven by geo-political interest in which Manipur happened to be one of the areas composing the vast belt of the mountainous regions where the Indian State had to construct a network of "communications for the movement of troops and provisioning of supplies in the event of attack from the north."<sup>36</sup> Manipur then was reduced into an objectified entity, i.e. one of the important five states where the Indian rulers were determined to exercise direct control for administrative reasons and strategic necessity.<sup>37</sup> "The present consecration of these British-made lines as heirlooms in the successor state's national heritages is an unexpected and unfortunate turn of History's wheel,"<sup>38</sup> as described by Arnold Toynbee in the context of India-China border war could be applied in the prevailing condition of war situation in Manipur invested by India in course of its territorial expansion.

### **Costly territorial wars**

My argument is that territorial expansion was not a peaceful process. Maintaining what the Indian State had termed *recalcitrant* frontier or defending disputed boundary had cost India much more than *hit and run* type of invasion. In order to accomplished geo-political project India, however, was compelled to invest heavily, huge money out of tax payers' coffer, in four conventional border wars<sup>39</sup> and in what it termed *counter-insurgency* operations. My understanding is that Manipur national question, counter insurgency in the Northeast, the four conventional border wars Pakistan and China, skirmish between Indian Border Security Forces and Bangladesh Rifles along the Indo-Bangladesh borderline, fencing along the Manipur-Myanmar border had to be understood better by interrelating them within the historical context of

territorial expansion adopted by the Indian State in its process of inventing an Indian nationhood. As I have mentioned, there is, however, a *limit of power* beyond which a state may not be in a position to expand its territory. According to Nehru “There are limits beyond which we cannot go, at least ‘for some years, and a spreading out *of* our army on distant frontiers would be bad *from* every military *or* strategic point *of* View.”<sup>40</sup> That was the limit, the borderline where India had to engage against counterclaim by a similarly expanding power. Had it not been for the *limit of power*, India had no hesitation in the subsequent expansion of territory that was continued as late as 1975. However, dispute arose where there was counterclaim. Rebellion became evident when the frontier imposed upon the seemingly governed population was being resisted. In both the cases the bargaining was for control over territory. Neville Maxwell argues, “... empires in their expansive phases push out their frontiers until they meet the resistance of a strong neighbour, or reach a physical barrier which makes a natural point of rest or until the driving force is exhausted.”<sup>41</sup> Nehru had admitted India’s expansive course when he said in 1950 that “India and China are two of the biggest countries of Asia bordering on each other and both with certain expansive tendencies, because of their vitality.”<sup>42</sup> Quarrel or dispute or skirmish or war over defending ‘national security’ or territory arose from the need to translate imagined zones into lines, and from the failure to agree on a method to share or distribution frontier. Lord Curzon had emphasised that frontier war was inevitable when states expanded to a point “at which the interests or ambitions of one state come into sharp and irreconcilable collision with those of another.”<sup>43</sup> In the words of Calvin, “nations continue to go to war, especially if negotiations yield no compromise, over issues that are strategically important to them.”<sup>44</sup> According to Mark Purcell, “the struggle is important because actors do not simply imagine national territory, they also struggle to *realize* that imagined territory in the physical landscape that surrounds them.”<sup>45</sup> Border wars, rebellion and rebellion are interrelated product of geo-politics that was bent on fixing the limit of territorial control. The geo-politics was aimed at strengthening territorial limit of domesticity, i.e., India defending its national territory. I shall elaborate it in the following paragraphs. While elaborating the argument I shall categorise the course of Indian State’s geopolitics into the domains of Internationality and Domesticity.

### **Enacting Internationality**

In the international domain or internationality India’s geopolitics towards its immediate neighbours; Myanmar, Bangladesh and China was a cycle of negotiation, exchanges, armed propaganda, conflict and fencing along the borderlines. Firstly, India had always tried to maintain good geo-political relationship with Myanmar. In its border making policy India had appeased Myanmar by forcibly ceding Manipur’s coveted Kabow Valley to Myanmar in 1953. However, despite of cultural link, common regional interest on several issues and economic co-operation between the two countries; India had repeatedly raised its concern over Burmese intrusion inside the territory of India. As a preventive measure India had carried out fencing in the Manipur-Myanmar borderline. Fencing was ongoing as late as 2003.<sup>46</sup> The eleventh Indo-Myanmar joint meeting held in October 2005 raised border issues and the two parties agreed to improve border relation.<sup>47</sup> Secondly, India-China armed propaganda over the controversial McMohan line in 1950s had culminated into an open war in 1962. Though India had continued to maintain that as per the India-China Resolution of 1962 Arunachal Pradesh was an integral part of India,<sup>48</sup> both the Chinese and Indian authorities continued to have differences in the perception of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Both sides continued in carrying out patrolling activities as per their respective perception of the alignment of the LAC.<sup>49</sup> However, provision of joint agreements such as Agreement on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the LAC in the India-China Border Areas (1993) and the Agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the LAC in the India-China Border Areas (1996) provided with institutional framework for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the India-China border areas. Thirdly, though India had supported Bangladesh independence in 1971, subsequent border relation between the two countries was marked by cycle of negotiation, agreement, exchanges and armed propaganda or skirmish. Perhaps, the Indo-Bangladesh Treaty of 1972 decided for an outright exchange of enclaves between India and Bangladesh.<sup>50</sup> The India - Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement of 1974<sup>51</sup> further endorsed the exchange. However, the process was comparatively delayed. As a result one hundred and eleven enclaves that the India claimed from Bangladesh and fifty one enclaves that Bangladesh claimed from India were yet to be exchanged as late as 2000.<sup>52</sup> On the other had India charged Bangladesh for what it termed unprovoked and unwarranted intrusion by the Bangladesh Rifles into India.<sup>53</sup> India, therefore, deployed primarily the

Border Security Force (BSF) along the India-Bangladesh border.<sup>54</sup> Besides the culture of routine flag march and extension of outposts by both sides, sporadic skirmish were reported from time to time. In the first half of the year 2000 five incidents of border clash between BSF and BDR were reported.<sup>55</sup> In the brief period lasting between July 13, 1998 and July 12, 2001 a total number of forty five BSF personnel were killed in the skirmish.<sup>56</sup> As a result two additional Battalions of Border Security Force were inducted to guard the border the same year. Steps were taken up for reduction of distance between outposts, intensification of patrolling along the border, construction of border roads, installation of more number of outpost towers and supplying of more surveillance equipment etc.<sup>57</sup> India at the same time approved for fencing the controversial areas along the borderline.<sup>58</sup> Budget for the construction of fencing along 736 km of Indo-Bangladesh Border in Tripura was sanctioned in June, 2000.<sup>59</sup> By the end of 2001 a total length of 854 km was fenced.<sup>60</sup> In the meanwhile, the two governments constituted two Joint Boundary Working Groups in 2001 to resolve all pending issues relating to implementation of the Land Boundary Agreement of 1974, including exchange of enclaves.<sup>61</sup> The first meeting of the JBWG was held in Dhaka from 2 to 4 July 2001.<sup>62</sup> The second meeting of the Joint Boundary Working Groups was held in New Delhi on 26 & 27 March 2002.<sup>63</sup> A cycle of negotiation, propaganda and skirmish was apparent. Sufficed it with the few examples, I shall shift the focus towards the ‘domestic.’

### Enacting domesticity

As I have mention earlier, India’s geopolitics was operative in the *domestic* domain. Primary investment in this domain was related to suppression of what the Indian state had termed insurgency or terrorism or ultra-nationalism or separatism and so on. The domestics are considered wild and it had to be tamed towards India’s liking. It had to be done through negotiation and placed under the constitutional order or wipe out completely by suppressing rebellion. In either of the approach, the sovereignty or might or of the Indian State was virtually superimposed and articulated. The logic is that the domestic should neither have the right to separation from the projected nationhood nor enjoy the legitimacy to revolt against the state beyond superimposed constitutional parameter. Therefore, a kind of rule of law, predetermined by the State as the only suitable format of governance, had to be superimposed and executed in the name of defending the nationhood or projected national territory. Governed by this logic of sovereignty an unconventional war, if not proxy

war, had been carried out within the *domestic* domain comprising Manipur and other regions of the Northeast. A cycle of armed propaganda, negotiation, agreement, packages, constituted an exceptional course of ‘domesticating’ the ‘wild domestics’ who were considered recalcitrant and disloyal to the Indian State. The power of the sovereign was felt, constitutional opportunities were consumed, negotiations were considered; and yet contradiction between the superstructure represented by the Indian State and the base represented by the rebelling population continued to remain somewhat unaddressed. Therefore Indian nation making process remained controversial and unfulfilled. The following paragraphs shall take up few cases in respect to India’s engagement with Manipur nationalism, Mizo nationalism and Naga nationalism.

**Manipur Experience:** Firstly, one may analyse India’s physical encounter with Manipur nationalism. It was considered that Independent Manipur that had its own constitution and democratically formed responsible government was forcibly annexed to the Indian Union on 15 October 1949. It was relegated to the position of Part C State status in 1950. It was upgraded to a 32-Member Territorial Council in 1950, further to Union Territory with 32-Member Legislative Assembly and furthermore to State status on 21 January 1992.<sup>64</sup> The linear process of upgrading the status of Manipur from annexation to statehood was just one side of the story of successful Indian integration trajectory. On the contrary to the narrative of successful integration there had been consistent revolt against the Indian regime in Manipur right from the beginning. Various parties in late 1940 had opposed to any kind of integration with what they considered other entities. King Bodhachandra on the eve of signing the controversial *Shillong Accord* had opposed it in the beginning of the deal. Whether he was genuinely opposing the proposed merger of Manipur with India or not was a different story. However, he had for few days refused to sign the document of merger on the ground that he would like to consult the elective representatives before any decision had been taken. The request was deliberately turned down by the representatives of the Indian State. There was nobody among the Indian representatives who would listen to his appeal that sovereignty of the Manipur was vested in the people and that it was in the fitness of things to hear the people’s voice and learn their sentiment so that the line of action might not in any case be unconstitutional. He expressed his desire to return to Manipur the next day (19 September) itself to expedite the matters.<sup>65</sup> On 19 September he



could not meet any representative of the Government of India but merely exchanged correspondence with the Governor of Assam expressing his sense of betrayal and reiterating his desire to go back to Manipur. The king was a totally broken man who spent his time weeping alone in the 'Redland' where he was kept under house arrest by what Nari Rustomji called, "protective guard to ensure that all should be well."<sup>66</sup> In that situation, according to Rustomji "the Maharaja was beside himself with emotion, now bursting into tears, now wrapped in sullen melancholy."<sup>67</sup> According to nationalist theoretician Bhogendro, "Sri Prakasa, who used to advise the king not to deviate from 'the path of a constitutional ruler' and invoked democratic principles, whenever this suited India's interests, told a shocked king to forget about the elected (representatives) and the responsible government in Manipur. He simply wanted the king to put his signature, by 20 September, on a prepared document ceding full and exclusive authority regarding the governance of Manipur to India."<sup>68</sup> On 19 September one Dasgupta, a Superintendent of Police in the Criminal Investigation Department, pleaded the king to sign the Accord on the ground that there was no option other than signing it as the Government of India had planned to install a new king for Manipur if in case king Budhachandra had refused to sign it.<sup>69</sup> Indian leaders had kept the king under house arrest and forced him to sign an Accord which ceded full and exclusive authority regarding governance of Manipur to India.<sup>70</sup> The *Shillong Accord* was signed on 21 September 1949 and Manipur administration was taken over following the imposition of the Manipur Administration Order on 15 October 1949. Following the eventful MAO, India had to resort to all forms of tactics to suppress parties who carried out Manipur liberation movement. In the early 50s it fought and suppressed Manipur Communist Party and Revolutionary Nationalist Party. In the early 1960s it confronted the Meetei State Committee and Revolutionary Government of Manipur. Both have died out without much legacy. However Indian state had to invest a lot till the end of the twentieth century in suppressing United National Liberation Front since 24 November 1964; Revolutionary Peoples' Front 25 February 1979;<sup>71</sup> Peoples' Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak since 9 October 1977; Kangleipak Communist Party since 13 April 1980, Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup since 25 May 1994,<sup>72</sup> United People's Party of Kangleipak since 6 November 2008. Conflict between nationalist parties and Indian State could never come to an end as the Indian State had offered for negotiation only within the framework of the Indian Constitution. The situation was different in the cases of Mizoram

and Nagaland which were clubbed under the then Assam province but were subsequently created into separated states.

**Mizoram experience:** Secondly, in the case of India's encounter with Mizo nationalism it would be appropriate to mention that the British government had created the Lushai Hills (Mizoram) as a separate district in Assam in 1898. It was declared a 'Backward Tract' and an 'Excluded Areas' under the Government of India Act 1919 and 1935 respectively. It was constituted into a Union Territory on 21 January 1972 and formally recognised as a state on 20 February 1987. Rebellion aimed at integration of Mizo people and liberation from India was carried out by Laldenga under the banner of Mizo National Front (MNF) that was formed on 22 October 1961. On December 21, 1961, the MNF declared its objective and rose in massive revolt in February 1966 more or less paralysing normal functioning of the government. The MNF issued a declaration of independence on 1 March 1966. Indian state suppressed it and kept the situation under strict control. The MNF regained forces and became active particularly from the year 1975. However, the Indian state had compelled the MNF to come to a negotiating table in 1984. An agreement called Mizo Accord was signed between MNF and the Union Government on 30 June 1986. Following the agreement the MNF laid down their arms in few weeks. A major breakthrough in the Indian integration policy was achieved with it. A simultaneous course of bargaining and suppression was carried out in dealing with parties that were demanding for the integration of Mizos under a single administration such as the Hmar People's Convention (HPC) since 1986, Zomi Reunification Organisation (since 1993), Hmar People's Convention-Democracy (HPCD, since 1995), Bru National Liberation Front (formed in 1997) and so on.

**Nagaland experience:** Thirdly, I shall focus on India's encounter with Naga nationalism. The British government had constituted a Naga Hills District in the then Assam province in 1866. By 1940s a large section of the Nagas living in the Tuensang Area had become politically conscious of Naga identity. In 1929 a delegation of the Naga Club submitted memorandum to the Simon Commission defending for their rights. In 1945, a Naga Hills District Council was formed. It was converted to Naga National Council (NNC) in 1946. NNC had rejected integration with the Dominion of India. However, in June 1947, an agreement known as the Nine Point Agreement was reached between Sir Akbar Hydari, the then Governor of

Assam and the NNC. The agreement envisaged considerable autonomy for the Naga people. The NCC however was dissatisfied with the outcome and held a referendum in May 1951, in which 99 per cent of the voters had supported independence for Nagaland (present day Tuensang Area). The referendum was not recognised by the Indian state. As a result NNC continued with its objectives and on 22 March 1956 formed a Naga Federal Government (NFG) and a Naga Federal Army (NFA). In the meanwhile the Indian state could motivate a moderate section and a Naga Peoples Convention (NPC) of various tribes was held in August 1957. As a response to the recommendation of the NPC the Indian state brought into existence the Naga Hills - Tuensang area (NHTA) on 1 December 1957. Furthermore, a Sixteen Point Agreement was signed between the NPC and the Indian state in July 1960. As an outcome of the agreement the State of Nagaland Act was passed by the Indian parliament in September 1962 and Nagaland state was inaugurated on 1 December 1963. In order to defuse conflict a Peace Mission was constituted under Shri Jai Prakash Narayan in April 1964. In response to the recommendation for a peaceful solution recommended by the Peace Mission, an agreement called Agreement for Suspension of Operations (AGSOP) was arrived at on 6 September 1964. Another agreement known as the Shillong Accord was signed on 11 November 1975. However, those who were dissatisfied with the agreement repudiated Phizo's leadership and formed the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) in 1980. Differences within NSCN culminated in the formation of NSCN (Isaac and Muivah faction) and NSCN (Khaplang faction) in 1988. The Indian state and NSCN-IM entered into a ceasefire agreement since 1 August 1997. Besides the NSCN (Khaplang), the Indian state had to engage with newly constituted armed parties such as the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Unification (NSCN-U) that was formed on 23 November 2007, United Naga People's Council (UNPC) that was formed on 30 April 2008 and so on.

### Mapping the Northeast

Mapping northeast within India's domesticity (as part of India) and internationality (as vulnerable border areas) was a crucial aspect of defending statist claim for Indian nationhood. Through such mapping the Indian State had institutionalised a policy similar to what Anderson had described for "so often in the 'nation-building' policies of the new states one sees a genuine popular nationalist enthusiasm and a systematic, even Machiavellian, instilling of nationalist ideology through the mass media,

the education system, administrative regulations, and so forth."<sup>73</sup> Indian context had revealed that intransigence attitude and territorial expansionism was camouflaged by institutionalised stereotypes. For instance there was continuous anthropomorphic depiction of 'India' in the format of a personified *mother India*. The personified *mother India* was identified with Indian nationhood or territorial integrity. An enfeebled, helplessly dehumanised and victimised *mother India* was being depicted and it was being shown as repeatedly encroached upon by enemies such as Inter Services Intelligence and its agents of Pakistan in Kashmir and other areas, People's Liberation Army of China in Arunachal Pradesh, Bangladesh Rifles of Bangladesh in Tripura, Military Intelligence of Myanmar in Manipur and so on. Unholy alliance of what it termed *home borne terrorists* and foreign mercenaries were being perceived and it was illustratively shown as creating unrest in the Kashmir and Northeast. Dignity and honour of the victimised *mother India* must be restored. The state of existence of *mother India* was shown as a *real state* of a collective self wherein an individual is being located. Any section of the citizen submitting to territorial encroachment by foreign enemies and terrorists would end up with forever lost of democratic right and national pride in their lifetime. *Mother India* had to be defended to assert individual pride and honour that was considered embedded in the collective national identity. It was the bounded duty of the children. The children must involve in resurrecting the masculinity and to restore masculinity inherent in the femininity of *mother India*.

War for justice and dignity must be carried out against invaders and terrorism. According to Nehru, such wars involved self-respect and dignity. On the other hand imagined landscapes depicting Indian nationhood encompassing the entire boundary of Kashmir and Northeast, fitted into primordial lineage, were widely circulated. According to Sardar Patel the northeast had been a frontier throughout the history of India. Himalayas had been an impenetrable marker of boundary throughout the history.<sup>74</sup> Subsequent Indian leaders had drawn on Hindu *Upanishads*, *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and several other literatures and articulated that "the striving of the Indian spirit was directed towards these Himalayan fastness."<sup>75</sup> The concept *Bharatavarsha*, an imagined landscape extending from the Himalayas to the seas, was identified with *mother India*. Cosmology for Assam and Manipur that had established Hindu connexion between these regions and other parts of India from time immemorial were circulated.<sup>76</sup> Agreements or treaties such as Shimla Convention of 1914,



Jammu & Kashmir Instrument of Accession of 26 October 1947, Tripura Merger Agreement of 9 September 1949, Manipur Merger Agreement of 21 September 1949, and Sikkim Referendum of 14 April of 1975 and so on were cited from time to time to articulate that these regions were inseparable valuable domestic assets. According to Neville Maxwell, Indian state had indulged in cartographic forgery to legitimise Indian territorial claims over the disputed areas. He argues that in the early 1950s Indian maps were being redrawn under Nehru's indignation and reproduced whereby internationally disputed areas located within Indian border. According to him the Indian maps reproduced in 1954 had shown Bhutan and Sikkim, which were independent, within India.<sup>77</sup> Suniti Kumar Ghosh asserts that "cartographic forgery initiated by Olaf Caroe was completed under Nehru in 1954."<sup>78</sup> But cartographic forgery was aimed at asserting territorial legitimacy and to mould public mind towards the claim. According to Anderson, "instantly recognizable, everywhere visible, the logo-map penetrated deep into the popular imagination, forming a powerful emblem for (nationalism) being born."<sup>79</sup> Mapping of boundaries or locating Manipur within India and all the instances that I have cited above constituted formalisation and ritualisation in an overall process of what Hobsbawm had termed "inventing tradition."<sup>80</sup>

As I have said, international border was a marker of the territorial limit of the domestic, i.e., nationhood. When international border wars were fought between two countries or empires domesticity of the opponent was preconceived and such war actually ended with marking of international borderline, i.e., setting the territorial extent of the domesticity. On the other hand, when rebellion and counter-rebellion were being carried out without formal international recognition for the cause of the rebel it was *de jure* domesticity. In such situation the offensive state carried out counter-rebellion from the political framework that would stress upon the perception that the rebels, which were presumed as operating in a domesticity, should always remain within domesticity. Until rebellion could achieve independence it continued *de facto* domesticity. In the Indian context, therefore, Manipur liberation war remained confined in India's domesticity. It continued to be handled domestically under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Whether there had been "cartographic forgery,"<sup>81</sup> "cloak for aggression"<sup>82</sup> and other forms of fair and foul initiatives to cover up Indian State's territorial expansionism was a procedural matter. What is interesting is that the statist narratives on Indian nationhood had found receptive resonance among "consumers"<sup>83</sup>

and that the imagined landscapes comprising of domesticity and internationality was recognised by the UN and other international platforms.

## Conclusion

*Domesticity* and *internationality* had reinforced one another in decoding Manipur and other rebelling regions from colonial status, i.e., *de jure* decolonization at the level of official terminology recognized by the UN. Manipur was not shown as an Indian colony. In other word India being an important role player in the UN, the UN had not accorded these regions with colonial status. Despite of continuous effort by liberation movement, the two decades of International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly for the period 1990 to 2010 had remained without meaningful application to the ongoing liberation movement. However, at the grass root the Indian State while enacting a geographical India virtually represented by a logo map comprising Manipur, Kashmir and other Northeastern states had been continuously engaged in war, including proxy war of pitting communities against communities, to suppress the liberation war and to defend the territorial interest of the Indian rulers. This prolonged war had far reaching adverse material implications upon the subjugated, oppressed and exploited people. The war for territory continues.

## Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Neville Maxwell, *India's China War*; Bombay, Jaico Publishing House, 1970.

<sup>2</sup> In my discussion I use the terms state, power and rebellion interchangeably.

<sup>3</sup> In modern political geography a frontier is a precisely defined line on the map (and on the ground), marking the exact division between two adjacent states; E. R. Leach,

'The Frontiers of Burma' in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*; Vol. 3, No. 1, Oct., 1960, Cambridge University Press, pp. 49-68

<sup>4</sup> 'The territories of Manipur have fluctuated at various times with the fortunes of their princes, frequently extending for three or four days' journey east beyond the Ningthee or Khyenwen river, and west to the plains of Cachar. Its present boundaries, as far as they have been fixed, are, on the west, the Jeeree river, from its sources to its confluence with the Barak, and from this point, south, to the mouth of the Chikoo or Tooyae, a nullah, which, flowing from lofty ranges bordering on the Tripurah country, falls into the Barak at the southern extremity of a range of

mountains, three sides of which are embraced by the tortuous course of this river; R.B. Pemberton, *The Eastern Frontier of India*, (first published in 1835); Delhi, Mittal Publications, 2000. p.20

<sup>5</sup> Leach, 'The Frontiers of Burma...', pp. 49-68

<sup>6</sup> V.P. Menon, *Integration of Indian States*; Madras, Orient Longman, 1985. p.87

<sup>7</sup> Nehru's Letter to Maharaja of Manipur 1947.

<sup>8</sup> *Nationalisms in conflict in India*.

<sup>9</sup> Peter Robb, 'The Colonial State and Constructions of Indian Identity: An Example on the Northeast Frontier in the 1880s' in *Modern Asian Studies*; Vol. 31, No. 2, May 1997, Cambridge University Press, pp. 245-283

<sup>10</sup> Rustomji, *Enchanted Frontier*, p.107

<sup>11</sup> Menon, *Integration of Indian States*, p. 1-3

<sup>12</sup> '... from 1911, Government of India embarked on a deliberate advance of the northeastern boundary. , which looked not only to bringing the tribal territory under 'loose political control' but also to annexing a salient of territory which the British had recognized to be China's ever since they reached Assam nearly ninety years before'; *India's China War*, p. 45

<sup>13</sup> Text of the 1907 Romanes Lecture on the subject of Frontier by Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Viceroy of India (1898-1905) and British Foreign Secretary (1919-24) (Henceforth Curzon's Frontier)

<sup>14</sup> Suniti Kumar Ghosh, *The Himalayan Adventure: India-China War of 1962- Causes and Consequences*; Mumbai, *Research Unit for Political Economy*, 2002.

<sup>15</sup> Ratner, 'Drawing a Better Line...

<sup>16</sup> Menon, *Integration of Indian States*, p.104

<sup>17</sup> Threat warning to States by Nehru on 18 August 1947;*Integration of Indian States*, p.78

<sup>18</sup> 'Where in the territories that now comprise British India, the territories that now form the Indian States, and such other parts of India as are outside British India and the States as well as such other territories as are willing to be constituted into the Independent Sovereign India, shall be a Union of them all': Statement of resolution, Friday, 13 Dec. 1946;*Constituent Assembly Debates*, Volume I.

<sup>19</sup> Statement of debate, Wednesday, 22 January, 1947; *Constituent Assembly Debates*, Volume II.

<sup>20</sup> To consider Federation Proposals; Manipur State Durbar Resolution No. 12, dated 12 July 1939.

<sup>21</sup> Such as Sikkim, Cooch Behar, Tripura, Manipur and Khasi States; Annexure A to the Presentation of Credentials and Signing of the Register, Tuesday, 27 January 1948; *Constituent Assembly Debates*, Volume VI.

<sup>22</sup> To consider Political Agent's Memo no 6393- GA dated 14-11-1946; Manipur State Darbar Resolution No. 10/20-11-1946.

<sup>23</sup> Debate of the Constituent Assembly, Monday, 14 July 1947.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, Monday, 22 August 1949.

<sup>25</sup> Statement of Shri Kishorimohan Tripathi (C. P. and Berar States) in the Constituent Assembly of India, Tuesday, 9 November, 1948; *Constituent Assembly Debates*, Volume VII.

<sup>26</sup> Statement of Shri Rohini Kumar Chaudhari in the Constituent Assembly, Thursday, 2 December 1948; *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Statement by Mr. Jaipal Singh in the Constituent Assembly of India, Wednesday, 30 July 1947; *ibid.*, Volume IV.

<sup>28</sup> Statement by Rev. J.J.M. Nichols Roy in the Constituent Assembly of India, Saturday, 19 November 1949; *ibid.*, Volume XI.

<sup>29</sup> Menon, *Integration of Indian States*, p. 93

<sup>30</sup> Rustomji, *Enchanted Frontier*, p.107

<sup>31</sup> 'Sardar simply inquired whether we had not a Brigadier in Shillong –and it was clear from the tone of his voice what he meant'; *ibid.*, p.109

<sup>32</sup> An Act to provide for the merger into the States of Assam, Punjab and West Bengal of certain territories acquired in pursuance of the agreements entered into between the Governments of India and Pakistan and for matters connected therewith.

<sup>33</sup> Article 4 (a) of the Act empowers the army to kill anyone on suspicion and Article 6 provided the Indian army with impunity except on the condition sanctioned by the Central Government; Act No. 28 of 1958, dated 11 September 1958.

<sup>34</sup> According to Article 2. (1) of the Act, 'Whoever by words either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation or otherwise, questions the territorial integrity or frontiers of India in a manner which is, or is likely to be, prejudicial to the interests of the safety or security of India, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with'; Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1961, Act No 23 of 1961, dated 17 May 1961.

<sup>35</sup> 'In view of its position as a border State and its underdeveloped character, it was decided to take over Manipur as a Chief Commissioner's Province'; *Integration of Indian States*, p.306.

<sup>36</sup> Nari Rustomji, *Imperilled Frontiers*(henceforth Rustomji, *Imperilled Frontiers*); Delhi,Oxford University Press, 1983. p.18

<sup>37</sup> Menon, *Integration of Indian States*, p. 297

<sup>38</sup> Arnold Toynbee, *Between Oxus and Jumna*; London, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 190

<sup>39</sup> Three wars with Pakistan in 1947, 1965 and 1999 over the disputed Kashmir; and one with China in 1962 over the disputed McMahon.

<sup>40</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru's Note on China and Tibet 1950.

<sup>41</sup> Maxwell, *India's China War*.

<sup>42</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru's Note on China and Tibet 1950 in Durga Das, ed., *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, 1945-50; Volume 10. pp. 173

<sup>43</sup> Curzon's Frontier.

<sup>44</sup> Calvin James Barnard, *The China-India Border War*, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 1984.  
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1984/CJB.htm>, on 9 September 2009.

<sup>45</sup> Mark Purcell, 'A place for the copts: imagined territory and spatial conflict in Egypt' in *Cultural Geographies*, DOI: 10.1177/096746089800500403, 1998, reproduced in

<http://www.sagepublications.com>, accessed in January 2009.

<sup>46</sup> Fencing on Myanmar Border, Lok Sabha; Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No 275, to be answered on 22 July 2003.

<sup>47</sup> Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1076, to be answered on 29 November 2005.

<sup>48</sup> The Minister of External Affairs' Statement on Reported statement made by the Ambassador of China on Arunachal Pradesh, submission by Members; Lok Sabha Synopsis of Debates, (Proceedings other than Questions & Answers) Friday, 24 November 2006.

<sup>49</sup> Chinese Intrusion in Arunachal Pradesh; Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 840, to be answered on 23 November 2000.

<sup>50</sup> Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No 1680, to be answered on 28 November 2001.

<sup>51</sup> Exchange of Enclaves between India and Bangladesh; Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No 972, to be answered on 01 March 2000.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Border Clash with Bangladesh; Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1422, to be answered on 31 July 2001.

<sup>54</sup> Lok Sabha, Starred Question No 31, to be answered on 24 July 2001.

<sup>55</sup> Border Clash with Bangladesh; Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1422, to be answered on 31 July 2001.

<sup>56</sup> Lok Sabha, Starred Question No 31, to be answered on 24 July 2001.

<sup>57</sup> Fencing on Tripura Bangladesh Border; Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3490, to be answered on 20 March 2001.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No 275, to be answered on 24 July 2001.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 4637, to be answered on 19 December 2001.

<sup>61</sup> Lok Sabha Starred Question No 155, to be answered on 30 July 2003.

<sup>62</sup> Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No 4637, to be answered on 19 December 2001.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, No 4579, to be answered on 18 December 2002.

<sup>64</sup> *Political History of Manipur* (15-07-1947 to 02-03-2000); Delhi, Manipur Information Centre, 2002.

<sup>65</sup> Bhogendro Singh, 'Manipur the right of self-determination, a summary' (n.d.).

<sup>66</sup> Rustomji, *Enchanted Frontiers*, p.109

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Singh, 'Manipur the right of self-determination...'

<sup>69</sup> Anandamohan Singh, *Shillong 1949*; Imphal, M. Akshayakumar Singh, 2005. p. 38

<sup>70</sup> Singh, 'Manipur the right of self-determination...'

<sup>71</sup> Phanjaobam Tarapot, *Bleeding Manipur*; Delhi, Har Anand Publications, 2003. p.180

<sup>72</sup> Tarapt, *Bleeding Manipur*, p. 181.

<sup>73</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p.113, 114

<sup>74</sup> Sardar Patel's Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, Dated 7 November, 1950.

<sup>75</sup> Maxwell, *India*

's *China War*, p. 127

<sup>76</sup> Amalendu Guha,

'The Indian National Question: A Conceptual Frame,' in *Economic and Political Weekly*; Vol. 17, No. 31, Jul. 31, 1982), pp. PE2-PE12

<sup>77</sup> Maxwell, *India's China War*, p. 83

<sup>78</sup> Ghosh, *The Himalayan Adventure ...*:

<sup>79</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 175

<sup>80</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition*; Cambridge (reprinted) 1996. p. 4

<sup>81</sup> Ghosh, *The Himalayan Adventure*

<sup>82</sup> Maxwell, *India's China War*, p. 109

<sup>83</sup> Kosaku Yoshino, ed. *Consuming Ethnicity and nationalism*; Hawaii University of Hawaii, 1999.

### Proxy war in Manipur

#### *Campaign for Peace & Democracy (Manipur)*

Present Manipur occupying geographical area of 22,327 sq. Km lies in the latitude range of 23°83" and 25°68" (North) and in the longitude range of 93°03" to 94°78" (East). It became a part of India following the imposition of the Manipur Administration Order on 15 October 1949 as per the provisions of a controversial 'Annexation' stamped upon on 21 September 1949 at Shillong in present day Meghalaya state.

For administrative purpose Manipur is demarcated into nine administrative districts viz, Bishnupur, Chandel, Churachandpur, Imphal East, Imphal West, Senapati, Tamenglong, Thoubal and Ukhrul Districts. The communities inhabiting Manipur that have constituted the political community of Manipur comprise of the Aimol, Anal, Angami, Any Kuki tribes, Any Mizo (Lushai) tribes, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Hmar, Kabui, Kacha naga, Kharam, Koirao, Koirang, Kom, Lamgang, Mao, Maram, Maring, Meetei / Meitei, Meetei Panggal, Monsang, Moyon, Paite, Poumai, Purum, Ralte, Sema, Simte, Suhte, Tangkhul, Tarao, Thadou, Vaiphei and Zou recognised communities. Other than the Meeteis and Meetei Panggals, the rest are being psychologically grouped into Naga, Kuki, Paite and other lesser known nomenclatures. While some of the communities are dominant in some of the administrative areas, long lime interaction and demographic intermixing had created a situation where none of the communities is in absolute possession of any administrative district.

While the Meeteis and Meetei Panggals are not being included in the tribal list but logically considered to have attained the stage of stable community, the rest of the communities are being officially recognised as tribe although upper and middle classes sections within the tribes have progressed beyond the stage of tribalism. Characteristically, therefore, the political community of Manipur is a composition of stable community, tribes and transient sections of population who have progressed beyond tribalism but continued to identify with either of the tribes on the basis of lineage & blood relation. Collective co-existence of communities had been threatened from time to time as a result of chauvinism & exclusivist claims asserted by sections of populations using respectively designed communal banners, e.g., (a) the *Zale'n-gam* assertion by certain sections of the Kukis in Manipur is aimed at carving out Chandel and

Churachandpur districts, Sadar Hills (in Senapati District) and vast tracts in Ukhrul, Tamenglong and Senapati Districts to form an exclusive Kuki land; and (b) the *Nagalim* assertion by certain sections of the Nagas in Manipur is aimed at carving out Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul Districts to form an exclusive land of the projected Nagas. This trend is being considered as serious challenge to intercommunity coexistence and maintenance of intercommunity *status quo* in certain administrative districts.

Against such backdrop the question of territorial integrity of Manipur has been both an emotive as well as one that has logical foundation developed over time. Over the last few decades the Chandel, Churachandpur, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul districts which comprised about 90% of the entire geographical area whereupon only about 30% of the entire population were inhabiting had become an epicentre of exclusivist claims and counter claims over control of resource and territory. This tendency had been mixed up with secessionist policies articulated by upper class and middle class sections amongst the tribes. Since community boundaries do not correspond to the existing administrative districts, the attempt to justify exclusivist claim had necessarily encouraged community cleansing *pogrom* in the disputed districts. It had led to prolonged communal clash between the Kuki and Nagas in 1992-1996. The *Nagalim* assertion had also contributed towards the grooming up of counterproductive communal tension between certain section of the Nagas and sections of the Meeteis, Meetei Panggals, Kukis and other numerically minority communities who had perceived a threat to their integrity conscience and economic livelihood.

At present the National Socialist Council of Nagalim- Isaac Muivah faction (NSCN-IM) is being considered a threat to the integrity of Manipur. Perhaps, the NSCN-IM, a militant organisation that had come into existence in 1988 had developed its base among the Nagas in Manipur. Since 1997 the NSCN-IM had entered into a process of ceasefire with the Government of India. Those who did not subscribe to the NSCN-IM ideology or opposed to *Nagalim* assertion had perceived communal clash in the activity of the later and were worried for disintegration of Manipur if NSCN-IM would not be banned in Manipur. They, therefore, had opposed extension of the ceasefire into Manipur. In 2001 there was widespread protest against the provision of the Bangkok Agreement between GoI and NSCN-IM that had recognised the ceasefire without territorial limit, thereby, covering Manipur. The protest had lasted for several weeks, killed more



than a dozen of agitators, destroyed public buildings & institutions and the normal functioning of civil administration was totally paralysed. To diffuse the tense situation the GoI had unilaterally deleted the three words 'without territorial limit' from the clause of the provisions of the ceasefire agreement. The deletion had provoked the sentiment of the NSCN-IM supporters and there had been widespread communal interpretation of the issue.

Territorial integrity question remained an unresolved issue and there had been tension and unrest from time to time centred on this issue. It arose again towards a threatening culmination in May 2010 when the Home Ministry Government of India, *vide* wireless message No. VI-23014/128/2010-VS, dated 29 April 2010 had issued an instruction upon the Government of Manipur to prepare with security measures to allow the general secretary of NSCN-IM Mr. Th. Muivah to visit his birth place in Ukhrul Distric and to attend public meetings in Ukhrul and Senapati Districts in Manipur. The GoM had however decided to ban the entry of Muivah on the ground that the later's visit would create communal tension. Supporters of Muivah however had welcomed the Home Ministry instruction and had protested the ban to the entry of Muivah to Manipur. The GoM from 2 May onwards had deployed security forces at the Mao Gate in Senapati District, i.e., the border entry point, to prevent Muivah from entering into Manipur. On 6 May the Mao Gate area had witnessed a public rally organised in protest against the ban imposed on Muivah. The protest was turned into a mob uprising and there was police repression or *vice versa*. Two students were shot down by the police and there were casualties on both sides. In the meanwhile protest against the proposed visit of Muivah became widespread in the valley districts; viz. Bishnupur, Imphal East, Imphal West and Thoubal Districts. Manipur as a whole was once again engulfed by unrest for several weeks. There were loss of lives, repressions and casualties, destruction of properties, breakdown of administration in several areas, economic blockades of varying degrees, scarcity of goods, price rise, starvation, communal assertion and other counterproductive trends.

When the unrest had been on the rise CPDM had published two press statements focussing on the issue. It had condemned the Mao Gate firing incident of 6 May 2010 perpetrated by the state forces. The statement had contextualised the firing incident within the overall process of pre-existing notorious trend of state repression upon civil rights movements in Manipur. CPDM had expressed condolence for those who had been

killed and had demanded for a judicial inquiry into the incident of firing to address the grievances of the families of the victims. CPDM had not only expressed reasons for welcoming Muivah to Manipur but also had explained its reservation to those who protest Muivah's visit to Manipur. Since the whole issue was interlinked with nationality question, CPDM had reiterated its assertion for voluntary unionism of communities where each community is a stakeholder in the collective polity, economy, culture and other common platforms as the only practical solution to bring peaceful co-existence. CPDM strongly believes that neither the territorial integrity of India nor the territorial integrity of Manipur could be defended by military barricades without the support of the people who inhabit the territory. Any section of the Manipur population who would seek for armed intervention to defend the territorial integrity of Manipur from dissenting politics is merely imitating the brutal mechanistic approach adopted by the Indian state while attempting to defend territory of the Indian empire. However, there was reactionary retaliation against CPDM for making comments on the question of territorial integrity. Prominent volunteers of CPDM were being questioned and their family members were being threatened at gun points to revoke the statement and to make public confession. The two press statements of CPDM are being reproduced here for wider political debate towards better understanding of Manipur and for arriving at a solution towards peace, development and unity of the subjugated, oppressed and exploited people of Manipur.

## I Be united on Muivah

CPDM statement, 5 May 2010

The proposed visit of the General Secretary of NSCN-IM to Manipur from 3 to 10 May 2010 has invoked severe unrest and tension in Manipur. The MHA had earlier acknowledged the proposed visit and had shown green signal. However, with the subsequent rise of opposition the MHA have changed the signal colour to red. Preventive measure to ban entry of Muivah to Manipur is being stage managed by the Manipur government on the border areas of Senapati and Ukhrul Districts. Whereas Naga based civil societies have sought for the entry of Muivah to Manipur several non-Naga based civil societies have strongly boycotted to it. Supporters to Muivah's visit have imposed economic blockades to Manipur

and other forms of protest. The situation may turn out to be violent and may culminate into communal conflict if not handled in an amicable manner. CPDM, in its press statement, dated 6 May 2010, would like to share thought about its interpretation and ideological stand point on the issue.

### **Legality or illegality of Muivah's visit to Manipur**

The GoI and NSCN-IM are under certain formal agreements and, therefore, legality or illegality within the framework of India's law regarding the general secretary of NSCN-IM Thuingaleng Muivah's proposed visit to Manipur is being preconditioned by the provisions of the agreement. Many are being kept in the dark about terms of references mentioned in such agreement between GoI and NSCN-IM; and yet the lifting of ban imposed upon NSCN-IM would logically imply for Muivah's right to freely move in any areas where the Indian constitution is being practically enforced. Manipur being strictly bound by the Indian laws, if the law grants, Muivah has the right to enjoy all the rights that are being enjoyed by every Indian citizen. No citizen of Manipur who is loyal to the Indian constitution has legal legitimacy to boycott Muivah from either entering into Manipur or carrying out his activity on the basis of adherence to the norms and prescriptions within the framework of the Indian law.

### **We would like to encourage Muivah to visit Manipur for the following reasons:**

(1) Muivah was grown up in Manipur and he had missed Manipur for several years. He is a human being who loves to visit his home, meet his relatives and dear ones. We would not oppose anyone visiting his home on humanitarian ground.

(2) Muivah should be allowed to visit his base areas and deal with the ugly trend of class formation and class contradiction not only among the ranks and files of his cadres but also among the Naga population that had posed a serious challenge to peace & democracy. He should also be given a chance to study and rethink if his proclaimed Christian Socialism would be able to bring practical solution to the communal crisis among the communities constituting the overarching Nagahood.

(3) Muivah should be allowed to visit every part of Manipur and interact with various sections of the people and be an eye witness to internal dynamics that had been fast developing towards a stage of interdependence and interaction among co-existing communities. Should an exclusive Nagalim be possible against the objective realities of internal

and external dynamics have to be decided on the basis of objective realities, and he must be allowed to see it.

(4) Since the Naga question in Manipur directly or indirectly invokes sentiment and would have material impact upon other communities, it can only be resolved through understanding and cooperation among co-existing communities. If Muivah represents Naga politics he is the legitimate person to broaden the horizon of campaign for support among the Meeteis (including the Meetei Panggal), Kukis / Thadous, Paites, and other communities who do not subscribe to his political ideology. He should be allowed to speak to the Manipur public and at the same time he must also respond to several questions in public appearance.

### **We have reservations with the protest against Muivah's visit to Manipur for the following reasons:**

(1) The territorial integrity of Manipur cannot be disintegrated as long as material condition of co-existence founded on the practical basis of interdependent mode of production and distribution among the people cutting across community & administrative boundaries prevails above mechanical divisive politics. Territorial area could be expanded or reduced or fluctuating or totally extinct or newly emerged depending upon the changing material relation among communities. The material relation that forges psychological unity among communities would promote voluntary unionism and it is the precondition for territorial integrity. Right of self determination of other communities and rights of secession have to be recognised on the condition that such secessionist claim is not chauvinistic and territorial secession do not affect the physical survival and economic livelihood of co-existing communities.

(2) If the fear for Muivah's visit to Manipur is based on the illusion that he would be able to disintegrate Manipur along communal lines then the whole articulation about 2000 years integrity of Manipur became self-defeating. Leaders are not to become effective upon a community of people by sheer articulation of idealism. No political rhetoric or propaganda could permanently divide people nor disintegrate territory if the material relation among co-existing communities is based on economic cohesion and other socio-cultural bonding.

(3) Neither durable peace could be established by imposing a version of territorial integrity nor could chauvinistic approach achieve a practical peaceful solution to any integrity question. An open confrontation with communal organization renders the politics of opposition communal.



Campaign for protest would generate communal sentiment, would organize people along communal lines and illustrates reservation to the possibility of dialogue and consensus. Such open confrontation would act as surrogate to the articulation of dichotomy theory and the entire episodes of protest would be summed up in constituting a history of communal confrontation.

### **Safety valve policy of the government centred on Muivah**

However, the sequences of events such as the Union Minister of Home Affairs' instruction to the DGP of Manipur to arrange security for Muivah's visit, the programme list of Muivah's public meeting delivered by the MHA, MHA's advice to Muivah to cancel his trip to Manipur; the Manipur state cabinet decisions, deployment of forces, flag marches, imposition of curfews and other preventive measures in Senapati and Ukhrul districts to prevent Muivah from visiting Manipur; all these sequences of overlapping events which have created communal unrest in Manipur seemed to be a fallout of well prepared political manoeuvring aimed at dividing public opinion on the issue of territorial integrity or disintegration, invoking communal sentiment, diverting attention from the burning economic issues, and also to win sympathy and trust for Manipur police and Ibobi government from amongst certain sections of the residents in the valley districts hitherto indifferent towards Ibobi government and state terrorism.

### **Who have benefitted from the economic blockades and who are the losers?**

Economic blockades on the national highways and setting ablaze of stranded goods laden trucks have benefitted the material interest of the blockade supporters. It does not affect the economy of the entrepreneurs and the upper class in Manipur. The truck owners would receive compensation from the insurance company or increase the price of fare to recover the loss; the business entrepreneurs at varying levels would increase the retail price of the goods; the corrupt government servants, contractors, political leaders, doctors, lawyers and so on would have means to increase their income. But the majority of peasants and workers at the receiving end who have no means to increase their income are the worst affected section in course of artificial price rise due to blockades and destruction of goods. Therefore the political economy of blockades and destruction of consumer goods has class implication and it is characteristically anti-poor.

### **Who have benefitted from the ongoing security built up at the border?**

Over the last few years the moral legitimacy of the SPF Government under the leadership of Okram Ibobi have been seriously challenged and shattered beyond recovery. State terrorism, economic crisis, displacement policies, corruption, and administrative failure have generated a situation of unrest. Severe forms of protests have been carried out by various sections against the government. Coincidentally most of the powerful populist protests were urban based and largely organised in the thickly populated valley districts of Manipur dominantly inhabited by those who believe in defending the territorial integrity of Manipur. Since the integrity question is both imaginative and emotive Ibobi seemed to have instrumentalise the issue of integrity in order to divert public attention. He colluded with the central government in building up security measures in the Senapati and Ukhrul areas on the pretext of preventing Muivah from entering into Manipur. The flag march, frisking of civilian & Assam Rifles vehicles by Manipur Police Commandos, and their bunkers were being telecast in local TV channels. Such staged managed plot could have visual-psychological impact upon majority of the population who are motivated to take side with him on the issue of integrity. All these were aimed at recovering the image of the Manipur Police Commandos and depiction of Ibobi's own image as a patriot who would dare to confront with central government in defending Manipur. Is he campaigning in advance for the proposed general election in 2012?

### **Who have benefitted from the communal campaigns and who are the losers?**

Communal campaigns would culminate in the creation of communal leaders and strengthen their narrow politics. Subsequent counterproductive and sectarian campaigns could lead to communal clash. Over the last 18 years some of the events that are being technically referred to as Naga-Kuki conflict 1992-96, Meetei-Meetei Panggal conflict 1993, Kuki-Paite conflict in 1997-98, Moreh Killing of 2007, Meetei-Naga tension since 1997 and so on had shown to us that all those events had killed civilians, displaced several marginal peasants, destroyed properties, and created tension and unrest. Communal leaders had not target the oppressive & exploitative system towards a revolutionary change. They are either sponsored by the state or part of the ruling class or worked in collusion with the ruling class to fulfil their self interest. All that the communal leaders do is undermining of the growth of class consciousness

by articulating communal propaganda. They carry out psychological propaganda against other communities, charged other communities as responsible for unrest and poverty, and they asserted themselves to the level of communal leader to gain power and material benefit in the name of community growth. Conflicts are being hatched up by communal protagonists and its price is being heavily paid by the vulnerable sections that would never benefit from communal politics. Does the communal leaders has any clear cut political-economic programmes to adequately address the issue of subjugation, oppression and exploitation of lower class community members by the ruling class in their respective communities? The ruling class of all communities are common in character and their overall reactionary policy irrespective of communal boundaries perpetuates class rule.

#### **What is the role of the Indian state and who has succumbed to its policy?**

Sixty two (62) years of imposition of Indian capitalist path of development in Manipur have contributed not only in the rise of communalism but also geometrical rise in the number of IDPs, proletariat and marginal cultivators who may statistically be grouped in the category of below poverty line. Whereas class consciousness that could have united the democratic forces against class rulers is being deliberately withhold from being articulated, leaders who benefitted from perpetuating class rule within communities are negating historical materialism but articulating projected sovereignty and territorial integrity of their concerned communities in such a way that such articulations are mixed up with communal stereotyping and created a situation of unrest among co-existing communities from time to time. While the Indian state have been colonial in character; the political economy of the rebelling national chauvinists as apparent in economic blockades, extortions or taxation along highways and from comprador bourgeoisie, community cleansing and terror in varied forms which have adverse impact upon the physical survival and economic livelihood of people who live by daily physical labour or who are at the vulnerable areas is symptomatic of bourgeois nationalism. Making of Muivah into either a heroic or devilish icon centred on his proposed visit to Manipur would be the handiwork of communal protagonists of either sides who aimed at promoting class rulers by raising communal banner to temporarily divert attention from class question. Such politics could merely sidetrack the fundamental issues of impoverishment, insecurity, displacement of the peasants and workers who constituted the majority of

the bulk of the subjugated, exploited and oppressed sections in Manipur. We condemn it.

#### **To the workers and peasants of Manipur**

The bulk of the peasants and workers in Manipur who are subjugated, oppressed and exploited have nothing to gain from the politics centred on Muivah. Blind belief in communal propaganda would create communal wedge among your class and this would strengthen the pre-existing slavery and impoverishment that is being superimposed upon you. Let Muivah come and go as per he wishes. If he is the friend of workers and peasants he would definitely call for unity of the subjugated and oppressed cutting across community boundaries. If he is a part of the ruling class he is like any other comprador bourgeoisie who would enjoy a big material share from the Indian bourgeoisie at your expense. Do not believe in the commandos to protect you as it constitutes the backbone that defends the corrupt system that subjugates you. Do not believe in the bourgeoisie political leaders who are always double standard in dealing with your cause. They enjoy power and their class policy ruins your livelihood in the long run. But your future lies in the unity of the nationalities under your leadership against any form of colonial regime and exploitation. Unless you fight against the existing ruling system for a democratic change there can be no peace, development and unity. Fight for your respective democratic rights would be victorious only when there is unity of the subjugated, oppressed and exploited within and beyond your community boundary.

**Long live democracy**

## **II Find a democratic solution**

CPDM statement, 7 May 2010

#### **On condolence**

6 May 2010 was not the first instance in the history of the Mao people to have lost precious souls in the attempt to express their political aspiration. Comrade Irabot of Manipur, a Meetei communist, on 17 October 1948 had noted that in the revolutionary movement of the Mao people three of them had been killed in an attempt by the ruling government to arrest the then leader of Mao people Mr. Daiho. History of people is largely a history of political struggle where many had sacrificed lives while in

political action. Whether it was 18 June 2001 or 6 May 2010, we have had noticed lost of lives. At the receiving ends the victimised families could never be compensated. But as a symbol of glory or defeat, the names of those who had laid down their lives for political cause live much longer in their respective communities than the actual lifespan of a human being. They will be remembered!

CPDM expresses condolence for Mr. Loshua, Mr. Chakho and Mr. Lokho who were killed in police firing at Mao Gate on 6th May 2010. The loss of a son, friend, relative and citizen can never be compensated and yet we demand the Government of India and progressive forces in Manipur to address the concern of the victimised families with whatever material relief and means available to them. The reported injury of several others in state repression under whatever pretext fully shows that situation in Manipur have become volatile on the issue of Muivah's entry in Manipur and we acknowledge that unwanted bloodshed had taken place in the process of kowtowing a particular restive section of the Manipur population. The Government of India must pay for hospital & medical charges of those who have suffered casualty and are under medical treatment either in Nagaland or Manipur hospitals. The entire medication period of an injured victim must be officially recognised as labour time and the economic concern of such victims should be addressed through monetary allowance at the rate of minimum daily wage per head. From legal perspective, we demand a free and fair judicial probe into the immediate incident that had led to the firing and book the culprits responsible for it.

### **On terrorism**

CPDM takes serious note of the ever increasing security tight up unleashed by the state in several parts of Manipur on the pretext of defusing the ongoing tension in Manipur. Hitherto unnoticed police barricades are being installed, regular flag march and frisking are being carried out, and free movement of persons is being restricted to the much inconvenience of the ordinary citizens in Senapati and Ukhrul districts. Similar trend of security tight up is being noticed in the urban areas in Imphal and other adjoining valley districts. We express our apprehension that the trigger happy state forces and the unruly auxiliary recruits in the format of VDF would at any point of time went out of control and create terrors that could have wide ranging implication towards misrepresenting facts and spreading of communal rumours in any form. We would like to appeal them to refrain from terror activities that would lead to branding them as either communal

forces in uniform or agent of India's divisive policy. While these forces are being deployed in Imphal to prevent public gathering or obstruct general strike directed against Muivah's visit to Manipur; they must not exceed in exercising brutality to the scale of creating disturbance to the market, particularly affecting the economic livelihood of tribal street vendors from the outskirts of the valley districts and widow street vendors who are the sole bread winners of their respective families as their husbands were killed either in gun battle or in fake encounters.

### **On economic blockade**

CPDM is aware of the economic underdevelopment that the present Manipur had been undergoing through ever since the imposition of colonial laissez faire in 1891 and which have been continued till today. In the year 2005 out of the total number of 356193 households living in Manipur 115600 households were living at the Below Poverty Line. At present Manipur is dependent on import of commodity and money for survival. Apart from industrial products, other basic consumption products such as food grains, pulses, vegetables, fruits, edible oil, milk and dairy products, medicines, snacks, liquor, poultry products, fish and almost all varieties of consumer goods of day-to-day usage are being dependent on import. In such a situation imposition of prolonged economic blockades along National Highways by any section of agitating population of Manipur or by neighbouring Nagaland as a form of political bargaining would be genocidal on the part of the people of Manipur. A negative response to it by imposing counter-economic blockade along inland transit routes leading to the hill districts of Manipur would be equally counterproductive. Business entrepreneurs are taking advantage of the economic blockade and everywhere in Manipur prices of daily staples goods have grown up at an exorbitant scale. The prices of rice had been doubled up, petrol had been increased above 120 Rs per litre and hospitals are postponing routine surgical operation on ground of deficient supply of oxygen and medicines. While the famine type alarming situation in the valley is being reported in the media the plight of the situation in the interior rural areas and hills must have been worst. We, therefore, appealed to the Government of India and the contending civil societies to find out the most effective democratic means to put an end to economic blockade that cuts off the economic lifeline of an entire population or any section of population on the pretext of political agitation.

### **On rumour**

CPDM acknowledges the spread of rumours of various types that could only contribute in communal stereotyping and exasperation of the situation. Yesterday, there was a rumour about 20 labourers belonging to Meetei community being detained at Shirui areas by the Tangkhul people of that area. We have confirmation from the Naga People's Human Rights Movement that such thing had not occurred at all. It seems that about four persons were detained by the Assam Rifles near Shirui on ground of suspicion. According NPMHR, those detained were being interrogated and released after verification. Another rumour was articulated at the press meet held at Constitution Club on 6 May 2010. One of the MLAs present there had said that all the securities from the Imphal Valley were being deployed in the Naga areas to the extent that there was no security forces left in Imphal to guard the Banks and control the public meeting planned by the United Committee Manipur. The statement of the MLA was wrong. The Banks in Imphal had been guarded by the CRPF and all those deployed in Mao areas belonged to the Manipur Police, Manipur Rifles and Indian Reserved Battalion. Contrary to the rumour, the newspaper this morning had reported that the Manipur Police had disrupted the proposed public meeting called by the UCM and at the same time security measures had been beefed up in the valley districts to prevent 48 hours general strike that was called by the All Manipur United Clubs Organisation.

Another rumour was widespread among certain section of Manipur students in Delhi. In the evening a team of Nagas were being led by the Naga Students Union Delhi to meet the Residence Commissioner of Manipur at Manipur Bhavan. The purpose of the meeting was aimed at seeking for an official explanation about the situation prevailing in Manipur. However, the event was being misrepresented as Nagas storming to destroy the Manipur Bhavan. CPDM had its own interpretation about it and had circulated clarification on the matter to that section of misunderstood students who were moved by the rumour. Firstly, the Manipur Bhavan is a site of power and symbol of state authority. Any group or community of Manipur have the right to approach it for any official matter. Secondly, we have noticed in Manipur a tradition of destroying public property such as official buildings and government institutions as a form protest. The confrontation between the state and a section of the agitating population and destruction of state symbol representing the entire population may not necessarily be perceived as communal directed against any particular

community. Thirdly, the Manipur Bhavan area is deemed a restricted zone and always manned by security forces. Whenever a crowd of agitating students would gather around it there was reinforcement of Delhi Police to defend the Bhavan. The possibility of destruction of Bhavan by a small crowd is out of question. Therefore, whatever rumour that was being conveyed to us, was simply a miscalculation. We, therefore, appealed to all concerned citizens not to circulate rumour that may hurt feelings and please do not create communal rumours merely to create confusion and tension. Our future lies in unity and struggle towards a durable peace. Communal rumour can never defend community. Your rumour can cost you.

### **On Minority & Security**

Security is the prime concern of every human being. We all want to be secured and defended. However the ongoing unrest is seemed to have caused insecurity to several sections of the population in varying ways. We are being reported that psychological fear of communal onslaught that would affect lives and properties is being dominantly perceived by those who were minorities in any part of the state. Any reactionary person or collective could spread communal propaganda and ignite communal clash by way of targeting a minority section anywhere. Whether it would be Meetei or Naga or Kuki or any other communities; each one is dominant in certain areas and minority in certain areas. The sense of inferiority and fear of communal onslaught could be perceived by the minorities where they are always vulnerable due to lack of adequate security arrangements or defense mechanism. CPDM, therefore, appealed to the union Government of India, state governments of Nagaland and Manipur and other democratic forces to ensure security of the minorities vis-à-vis potential psychological and physical threats by dominant communities in any part of the two states in course of the ongoing unrest. CPDM at the same time appealed to all that the civil societies who are engaged in the ongoing unrest to ensure security for the minority communities cutting. We have seen barbarian onslaughts during the Kuki-Naga clash 1992-96, Meetei-Panggal Clash 1993, Kuki-Paite clash 1997-98. Every community is a loser in it. Let us not allow it to happen again.

### **On Muivah's Visit**

CPDM in its press release Ref No: 20100505 CPDM/ PR had expressed clear stand on Th. Muivah's visit to Manipur. We are being

confirmed by the civil societies in Delhi that it was the Government of India that had planned Muivah's visit to Manipur. However, the proposed visit has been differently responded by different sections of the population and had become a matter of unrest in Manipur. The brutality of repression and immediate negative impact of unrest are being felt by those who welcome or oppose Muivah's visit to Manipur. Since the unrest have reached to the extent of losing lives, infliction of casualties and artificial famine of goods, we charged upon the Government of India as fully responsible for mishandling of the situation. We strongly feel that browbeating to one another and labelling charges to one another among the contending civil societies would merely consume time and labour and these can never restore a durable peaceful existence. We, therefore, appealed to the Government of India to clearly analyse the situation, create a common platform for all and invite all the contending forces towards a meaningful dialogue for a peaceful and practical solution.

**Long Live Democracy**

## Nepal

### **Declaration of People's Movement-III (Jana Aandolan-III)**

*Appeal Made in the Name of the People by Com. Prachanda,  
Chairman, Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) On 26 April  
2010*

The historic responsibility to accomplish the peace process into a logical end and write the new People's Federal Constitution from the Constituent Assembly based on the Foundation of the People's War, the 12-Point Understanding and the 19-day-long People's Movement is at the brink of serious risk at the moment. Soon after the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) was established as the most popular and the largest party of Nepal by the historic election of the Constituent Assembly, the reactionary and the static forces not willing any changes in the country, started hatching conspiracies against the peace process and the constitution making. The first instance of the conspiracy came out by breaching of Comprehensive Peace Accord to proceed by 'consensus' until the new Constitution was made by the Constituent Assembly. It went against the notion and the spirit of the Interim Constitution. Instead of the path of 'consensus', the conspiracy rather chose the path of so called 'majority' rule.

From the very beginning, against the clear mandate of the people provided by the election of the Constituent Assembly, big obstructions were created for four months even to form the first republican government. After the establishment of the Maoist led government also, innumerable hurdles were conspired in addressing and institutionalizing the plans for changes envisioned by the Maoists. Conspiracies remained rampant against the conduction of the normal process for the establishment of sustainable peace and writing of the new constitution. Not satisfied by all anomalies, the reactionary and the static forces, hatching conspiracies against the changes, brought the President at the forefront and hammered at the basic spirit and the value of the Interim Constitution finally. They killed the motto of the guiding principle of 'consensus'. Neglecting the mandate of the people provided by the election of the Constituent Assembly and the value of the international practice of the popular vote, a very unnatural alliance was formed in the House. Against Nepal's national pride, self-respect and glory, and against democratic values and norms, the self-



surrendering and foreign-dependant as well as extreme rightist government was formed.

Opposing all these conspiracies and illicit planning, at the very time of the President's killing of the civil supremacy at mid-night, our party in clear words, had tabled in the Legislative Parliament that the act of the dirty game of the formation of the so called government was illogical in matter and spirit. The unimagined step was based on the ill calculated strategy to disrupt the peace process and make the Constituent Assembly defunct finally. The very time we had also clarified that they were misleading the people by spreading the imaginary and hypothetical rumor that the Maoists were capturing the State Power, side by side, they were also igniting our party to push to another conflict. We had clearly identified and brought to the people the ill intended strategy of the new and unholy alliance.

The political scenario of the last one-year and the current situation of the country prove that our party's observation, analysis and conclusion of that time was correct. Proving that the reactionaries' intentions and strategies were wrong, and being strongly committed to the peace process and constitution making, our party, Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) is marching ahead as a responsible party. It is well known to all that remaining firmly within the democratic norms and framework, without flowing to any unwanted provocation, and rather peacefully enhancing one step after another, our party was and is conducting strong opposition programs since last one-year. It is also not hidden from all that the focal points of all of our opposition campaigns were based on the major slogans like: 'Form the Joint National Government to Guarantee Peace and Constitution'. Similarly, it is also crystal clear to anybody that our party remained always very active among the people, categorically giving the slogans in favor of the National Sovereignty, Civil Supremacy, Peace, Constitution and Joint National Government.

In parallel to these actions, our party also continued dialogues to other parties to seek for the political solutions by 'consensus'. Our party was very careful and sympathetic not to disrupt the constitution making process. Things are to be remembered here that we applied very liberal and careful policies not to hamper into the day-to-day life of the people, while conducting the opposition campaigns against the government during the last-one-year-movements focusing in peaceful demonstrations, sit-in programs, *gherao* and conduct mass meetings. We also would like to clarify here that at the last part of the solution seeking efforts, at the

special request of the one of the key leaders of the peace process and the constitution making late Girija Prasad Koirala, we agreed upon the formation of the High Level Political Mechanism (HLPM). It was all to end the state of political deadlock and help establish sustainable peace and succeed in the making of the new Constitution of the country we sat together with the others in the HLPM. We would like to clarify the very liberal and positive role our party played at this juncture.

Unfortunately, it was clearly visible then that the HLPM, to some people, even while Girija was living, was not a high level political problem solving forum but rather it was a high-level conspiracy forum. This psychological tendency is being witnessed within the pro-government political parties even after the death of Girija Prasad Koirala today. They, time and again, neglected and lingered the dates intentionally at the call of the meetings of the HLPM from our side. Finally, at the last sitting, we proposed from our party side to review and implement firmly all agreements and understandings guided by the 12-point-understanding and ask the present government to resign to open the door for the formation of the Joint National Government. But the proposal of our party was rejected directly by the pro-government parties, which demonstrated their ill intention to make also the HLPM defunct and just as a toy only.

This government is very unpopular, because, it has not been represented by the elected -people. Instead, its composition is made of the individuals, who were clearly rejected by the people during the last election of the Constituent Assembly. It is as clear as the day light that this government has been realized as the most corrupt, unfit, anti-people and anti-nationalist in the history of Nepal. This government, in place of good governance, is offering to the people -inflation, corruption, crime, chain of uncontrolled terrors, total law-less-ness and rampant anarchy in the country. The people are compelled to live a fearful and unsecured life in every step.

Country's trade and industry sector is crippled and it is at the stagnant and ruining state. The flow of national capital to the foreign land has been so worse that the whole national economy is passing through a cycle of grave crisis.

The government pretends to be uninformed of such grave situation of the country and the people. It allows and encourages free opportunities for the rampant corruption. This government carries out a 'single agenda' and that is 'anyhow save the power chair'. Therefore, this government has been proved to be ludicrous to peace and democracy.



As a proof to any independent analyst, it has been well observed by the people of Nepal and the world very openly that with respect to the printing of the Machine Readable Passport (MRP), the government has gambled the country's sovereignty and national security in terms of international norms and the consecutive orders of the Legislative Parliament. Even though the government was compelled to take its decision back by the strong pressure of the people and the Supreme Court, the government did not bother to resign on the morality ground. Rather shamelessly like a drawing man, it is trying to catch the straw by trying to implement its hateful old decision by hook and crook. What could be more shameful instance than this?

Considering seriously on the above timeframe, situation and the background of the events in general, our party has come to the conclusion that to guarantee the protection of the national sovereignty, civil supremacy, peace and the constitution; the extensive pressure and intervention from the different communities of the societies has been obligatory. The experience of the last-one –year has taught us that the means of a normal opposition and dialogue does not pave any stone and have impact to the present puppet government running from the remote control.

Therefore, for the preservation of the national sovereignty, peace and constitution, our party with firm determination has come to the conclusion to go ahead hand-in-hand with the true democratic and nationalist forces making extensive joint alliances/fronts for the huge mass demonstrations in the capital and in the different parts of the country on the International Labor Day of May1, 2010. We would like to specially highlight in this appeal here that this mass demonstration will be as per the democratic norms and values, totally peaceful. Thousands of volunteers have been prepared to regulate the mass demonstration peacefully. We totally reject the allegations of the false propaganda of the government that we are giving so called 'military training' in their terminology. In fact it is a normal volunteers training to manage the mass demonstration peacefully indeed.

The puppet government is scared of the diverse opinions and strong voices of the people. It is so scared that even by the news of the preparation of our peaceful mass demonstration, the government has started its ill intended false propaganda and it has started the strategies of massive suppression of the peaceful demonstration. From the government's wrong propaganda and preparation of the brutal suppression, it is clear that the government wants to push the country to the bloody conflict further.

From our side, we have practically proved our strong commitment to peace and multi-party democracy as we promised. Therefore, our party is strongly opposing the false propaganda raised by the government from the very beginning of its formation and we will do so also in the future. We would also like to clearly warn the government that if it tries to stop our peaceful demonstration using unnecessary force or any violent means of suppression is applied, in such case, the government must be responsible for any sort of consequences.

Even until the huge mass demonstration of May 1, 2010 also, if necessary environment of 'consensus' for the guarantee of peace and constitution is not carried out, our party has decided to organize indefinite political strikes all over the country from May 2, 2010 onwards. We also like to reveal the truth that the political strike is not our interest but it is the only alternative left with us to fulfill the historic necessity of maintaining peace and writing the new constitution. It should be also understood in such a way that these political strikes also represent as a part of the revolution of the people but peaceful. If the government tries to intervene it with violent means, we repeat, the government itself will be responsible for the outcome.

Side by side, we also would like to clarify that even during the protests and strikes also, the door for making the environment of 'consensus' and dialogue will be open with us.

We appeal to the people of all classes and communities for their strong support, cooperation and participation to the People's Movement and make it successful as soon as possible. The General Strike (Market, Transportation, Educational Institutions, Factories, etc. all total strike) has been the historical necessity for accomplishing the pious task of maintaining peace and making the new Constitution.

We appeal the people not to believe in the false government sponsored propaganda. For the noble cause of peace and constitution, let's take this huge protest as 'Jana-Aandolan-III' - the 'People's Movement-III'. We extend our heartfelt appeal to the people that by the massive participation in the huge demonstrations; let's make this Movement a grand success.

The centers of the demonstrations will be the country's major cities and specially the capital Kathmandu. Therefore, to make this historic People's Movement highly successful, we appeal to the Newar and other communities of the capital for their extensive participation in the demonstrations.

## Eastern Ghats

### **In conversation with Ganapathy, General Secretary of CPI (Maoist)**

*Jan Myrdal and Gautam Navlakha  
January 2010*

#### **Note from the authors:**

*Far inside the jungles of the Eastern Ghats we met the general secretary of the CPI (Maoists) Ganapathy aka Mupalla Laxman Rao. After welcoming us and inquiring from us whether we, in particular Jan Myrdal, faced any problem having to travel the rough terrain, the interview began. Following is the summary of the interview with him. We have retained the interview in the form in which it was given, read and approved by him with some minor language changes. In particular we draw attention of readers to the General Secretary laying down concisely his party's stance on the issue of talks in light of the disinformation spread by the Union Minister of Home P Chidambaram that CPI(Maoist) had "scoffed" at the Indian Government's offer for talks. Indeed he told us: "To put concisely the main demands that the party has placed in front of the government [of India] for any kind of talks are 1) All-out war has to be withdrawn; 2) For any kind of democratic work, the ban on the Party and Mass Organizations have to be lifted; 3) Illegal detention and torture of comrades had to be stopped and they be immediately released. If these demands are met, then the same leaders who are released from jails would lead and represent the Party in the talks." However, we consider the full text of the interview of importance for all those who want to know more about the policies of the party which the Government of India considers its main internal security threat.*

**Q: How do you envisage the linking of this struggle with a general struggle in India in terms of class ? Chairman Mao after 1935 took the Long March to Yenan created a base for national level and part of which was the united front with the Chiang Kai-Sheik. Thereby it became the main national power in China. How do you envisage becoming to a national power in India?**

A: In China, in which condition Long March to Yenan took-place and created a base and a part of it formation of a United Front with Chiang Kai-Sheik for national level is different to our present situation of New Democratic Revolution (NDR) of India. Chinese revolution had took-place in first half of the 20th century. Since then several significant changes have occurred in the world. Those are, firstly emergence of a Socialist Camp and its subsequent down fall, secondly downfall of colonialism and emergence of neocolonialism, thirdly emergence of so-called parliamentary system as the common political system throughout the world, fourthly, a long gap emerged in the revolutionary upsurge after success of revolutions in Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos in spite of some upsurges and significant struggles in several countries. If we look into the entire world history, after emergence of working class on the globe, it is confronting with the bourgeoisie class and all other reactionary forces and seized power from them in Paris for a short-while and then in Russian, China and several European countries for a long time and shocked the entire globe. In this trajectory, there were various ups and downs in the World Socialist Revolution but nonetheless the struggle continuous. It is like waves at times and it slowed down, but it never ceased. So we have to see any revolution of a country in the light of historical context.

In relation to our revolution, first of all I would like to introduce our history in a short account to understand the present condition correctly. Our unified Party, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) was formed on 21st September 2004 by merging two Maoist revolutionary streams of India, the Communist Party of India (Marxist Leninist) [CPI (ML)] and Maoist Communist Centre (MCC). Our great beloved fore-founder leaders and teachers, Comrades Charu Mazumdar (CM) and Kanhai Chatterji (KC) who led an ideological and political struggle ceaselessly for a long time against revisionism and modern revisionism of Communist Party of India and CPI (Marxist). Through this struggle only backbone of the revisionist parties' had broken down which resulted in a breakthrough in the Indian communist movement. By the result of this great struggle in all spheres by comrade CM and other genuine Maoists, the great Naxalbari armed peasant uprising broke-out like a Spring-Thunder. Then a new history began. Then onwards our two great leaders upheld the red banner of Naxalbari and lead the New Democratic Revolution. The revolutionary movement

spread like prairie-fire to almost all parts of the country in a different scale. During this revolutionary course in a short period two Parties, CPI(ML) and MCC were founded on 22nd April 1969 and 20th October 1969 under the direct leadership of comrades CM and KC respectively. Due to several historical reasons we failed to form a unified Maoist Party at that juncture itself. But our basic ideological and political line, path and strategy of the revolution, and several other basic positions on important questions which we confronted at the same time were basically same.

The Indian ruling classes unleashed a reign of terror on all revolutionary movements starting with the Naxalbari armed agrarian uprising. At the end of 1972, after the arrest and martyrdom of comrade CM and even prior to it we lost a large number of leaders and cadres in the hands of the enemy. Due to these losses we suffered a countrywide setback. Prior to the martyrdom of comrade CM, intensive internal political and ideological struggle started against right arch-opportunist clique SNS and others in 1971 itself. Party had disintegrated into several groupings due to our serious tactical mistakes, state terror, severe losses, lack of proper leadership and negative effect of two line struggle within the Communist Party of China. Since 1972 July to 1980 our Party, the CPI(ML) was dominated by several splinters most of them lead by right and left-adventurist leadership and disarray spread over. But on the other side, under the leadership of MCC armed agrarian revolutionary peasant struggle in Kanksha took-place and it suffered a setback in a short period due to state terror but steadily expanded to Bihar, and to some extent to Assam and Tripura.

We uphold basic ideological and political line of a genuine Maoist Party, learned lessons from practice, seriously engaged in the class struggle and firmly stood for correct positions on several ideological and political questions which confronted in the country and international arena. Due to these positions only from CPI(ML) Stream, on 1978 the CPI(ML)-Party Unity(PU) and on 22nd April 1980 CPI(People's War)(PW) emerged. Due to this only once again we, MCC, PW and PU Parties build armed agrarian revolutionary movement in different parts of the country, particularly Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. We strengthened our Party, revolutionary mass movement and armed struggle considerably in 1980s and 1990s which culminated in the great unity and formation of our new party in September 2004. Since 1977 a large number of genuine Maoist forces had merged and

consolidated in the CPI(ML)[PW], MCCI and CPI(ML)-PU and also still this process is continuing to some extent after the formation of the new Party. But in this period most of the right and left Maoist groups had been gradually disintegrated and disappeared and some of the right groups still exist even though they are weak. Still a tiny section of Maoist forces exist but they are suffering from sectarianism for a long time. We opine that our struggle within the CPI and CPM is an integral part of the great struggle conducted in the International Communist Movement headed by the Communist Party of China under the direct leadership of comrade Mao. We also opine that the internal struggle with in the CPI(ML) which took-place for several years is connected directly or indirectly with the internal struggle of the CPC even before and after Mao's demise. Modern revisionist Deng clique which usurped power in China damaged much not only to our Party and revolution but also to the world revolution. We firmly stick to Mao Thought and opposed Deng clique and Lin Piao clique. Our experience clearly shows that Indian revolution had influenced a lot with the positive and negative developments of International Communist Movement(ICM).

We, the Indian Maoist Party has traverse through a tortuous path for a long period. After formation of Unified Party, most favorable situation emerged for the advancement of revolution. We lost this good chance between 1969 and 1972. The biggest boon of this merger has been the result of synthesis of over 35 years of experience of Indian revolution. It has given us enriched basic documents in terms of strategy, tactics and policies. Our merger brought about a significant change from two different parties working in distant separate areas or small pockets to a Party with an all India character. Before merger, in-spite of both Parties having CC, there was a serious limitation to them in functioning as Central Bodies with all India perspective. But after merger, our understanding further enriched about the uneven development of the country and uneven development of the revolutionary movement. Now we can plan at an all India level in a better way. It is not at complete but atleast the disadvantages have been done away with. A clearer and enriched line has emerged in terms of both India and world context. And other aspect in this advantage, is that it had its effect internationally too. Before this, mostly we could not see this much of international support. But, still it is nascent, nonetheless it had developed. In recent years, we suffered

several losses. Despite which we have to think how to avoid this much of losses. But our CC has said that we should avoid mistakes to avoid losses and boldly face the enemy and go ahead.

At present in our country other Maoist Parties are not in a position to provide leadership to the masses due to their right deviationist line and limited strength. The progressive and democratic forces are lacking any revolutionary basic program of action and also at present they are having a limited area of influence. Besides all these limitations no party has people's armed force to defend. I reiterate that at present no one Party or Organization is capable enough to be a rallying centre for all revolutionary, democratic, progressive and patriotic forces and people. Hence, at present juncture our Party can play a significant role in rallying all revolutionary, democratic, progressive and patriotic forces and people. Because our party has an all India character, good political militant mass base in several States, a People's Liberation Guerilla Army(PLGA) fighting enemy in several States and emerging New Democratic People's power in Dandkaranya [an area in central India which comprises predominately tribal districts of five states of India namely Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa], Jharkhand and some other parts of India. We have a clear-cut understanding to unify all revolutionary, democratic, progressive, patriotic forces and all oppressed social communities including oppressed nationalities against imperialism, feudalism and comprador bureaucratic capitalism. Our New Democratic United Front(UF) consists of four democratic classes, i.e. workers, peasants, urban petty-bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie. If we wish to form a strong United Front then it must be under the leadership of proletariat, basing on worker and peasant alliance. If we wish to form a strong United Front then it must be supported and defended by the People's Army. Without People's Army people have nothing to achieve or to defend. Hence enemy is seriously trying to eliminate our Party leadership with the aim of destroying a revolutionary and democratic centre of Indian people. So the condition has matured further to rally around one centre and revolution could go ahead under the leadership of the CPI(Maoist).

At the same time, the world economic crisis, the anti-people and pro-imperialist policies of the Indian ruling classes and the rising state repression, infuriated the masses in the country increasing the revolutionary scope now that there is a single revolutionary party.

For a long time, since Comrade CM's martyrdom, India was lacking a single revolutionary platform. Even in the international scenario, there were many cleavages in the Maoist movements. In this particular juncture the emergence of our Party provides new hope to the people. I want to say that the Party has no illusion about the so called parliamentary system and knows well Indian state's might as well as we clearly know our limitations and shortcomings, even after unity [formation of Communist Party of India (Maoist)]and the weaknesses of Maoist forces in the country and other countries.

The favorable revolutionary conditions, the widespread bitter class struggle rising in Indian society and the development of the armed struggle are being keenly observed by the enemy who is taking it most seriously. So, no opportunity is being given to these struggles by the Indian ruling classes who are also compradors of imperialism. So immediately in the context of world revolution also putting together the experiences of Philippines, Peru, Nepal, and India, imperialism is most concerned about the development of a bitter class struggle emerging in India. In the present situation of world, if the Maoist revolution in India can advance to a new stage, it will become a grave threat to world capitalist system. That is why imperialism, particularly America has taken these developments seriously. So, on the one side, there are more favorable conditions for revolution, and on the other side there is enemy's full onslaught to suppress the revolution. In this situation, our entire plan is to fully utilize the favorable conditions while resisting the enemy which will determine our plan.

In this context, at present, main hurdle in the way of Indian Revolution is the all-out war unleashed by the enemy. This war is principally against Maoist movement but not limited to this movement and aimed enough against all revolutionary, democratic, progressive and patriotic movements and the movements of oppressed communities of our society including oppressed nationalities. At this juncture, all these forces have to think together how to face this mighty enemy and for this how to unite to go ahead.

How can we resolve the problem of all-out war? For resolution of any problem, we have to analyze it deeply to identify the root cause of the problem. Firstly, why this war? Who's imposing it? On whom it is imposing? What is the nature of this war? How long it continues? Can we accept this war or not? Who should counter it? How to counter it? What is the aim of resistance to war?, etc.

This war is meant for destroying the revolution which is gradually emerging as an alternative political power to the existing reactionary political power in the country and plundering massive minerals and other rich natural resources of the vast areas of Adivasi people and other local people from Lalgahar to Surjagarh. They are imposing this war on those who are against this war, i.e. Maoist revolutionaries, Adivasi and local people of the vast forest areas, workers, peasants, urban middle class, small and medium bourgeoisie, Dalit, women, religious minorities and oppressed nationalities, democratic organizations, progressive and patriotic forces who comprise more than 95% of the population. It is completely an unjust war. This war is imposed by the Comprador Bureaucratic Bourgeoisie, Feudal forces of this country and imperialists, particularly America. These are real looters, plunderers, corrupters, blackmailers, hoarders, scamsters, murders, conspirators, oppressors, suppressers, autocrats, fascists, most reactionaries and number one traitors. These reactionaries plan to continue this war for a long time till they achieve their goal. Any Maoist, democrat, progressive, patriot, and people will not accept this unjust war imposed by the rulers. People will completely oppose this unjust, most cruel, inhumane and treacherous war. It will be defied by all people of our country and people of world. This unjust war is totally against the interest of the people and the interest of the country. People will unite and counter this unjust war by waging a just war. People will never tolerate any kind of unjust war. In the history of entire class society people never tolerated any kind of unjust war for ever but they fought back every unjust war by paying price of their own blood and ultimately won it. Immediate aim of this just war is to defeat the unjust war completely and then advance towards changing present social conditions which are giving scope to unjust wars. If we look at the political developments of the country, this inhumane all-out war is giving a tremendous scope to unite vast masses of people and certainly it will become counter productive to the ruling classes.

After 15th August 1947 we never saw such integration of Indian economy, defense, internal security, polity, culture and entire state with the imperialists, particularly with the US imperialists. Nuclear Deal and several defense deals, glaring interference after terrorist attacks in Mumbai on 26th November 2008 and Union Home Minister Chidambaram's visit to US and crucial agreements related to internal

security are some glaring instances. Due to this significant change the Indian expansionists are playing a crucial role in the South-Asia. The fundamental contradiction between imperialism and Indian people has further sharpened. It will give great scope to unite people against imperialists and fight back imperialism.

From several decades entire Kashmir and North East are under military and paramilitary domination. On the other hand drastic change has been seen in internal security due to role of military in the internal security. Indian army was deployed at the time of historic Telangana armed agrarian revolution (1946-52) and for a short-while [in 1971] in some pockets of West Bengal after great Naxalbari peasant armed uprising of 1966. But today in long term perspective, the Indian army is being reorganized. Under the dictates of global war against terror, three years back Indian army has declared its new policy [Doctrine of Sub-conventional Warfare] to deal with internal security and needs of the modern war with other countries. Under this restructured plan Indian army is training a large number of its forces according to needs of wide-spread counter-insurgency operations. Now onwards Indian army is being used in a vast area of our country against its own people in the name of internal security. If it [Indian Government] is really a people's government, how can it use its own army against its own people? The Indian state is functioning as an autocratic and fascist rule in the garb of democracy. All the gains that were made by revolutionary and democratic people's struggles are being challenged by the fascists. But this will also force the vast masses of the people to unite and resist with whatever means to defend and ultimately it will also become counter-productive to the ruling classes.

We must also talk about the current world economic crisis, particularly crisis of US imperialists and other imperialist countries. This crisis is in certain aspects even deeper than the great depression of 1930s. But capitalism does not die on its own without a revolution. Now to come out of this crisis imperialist will try to increase exploitation of working class and middle class of its own countries and increase plunder of third world countries. Multi National Corporations (MNCs) and Comprador Bureaucratic Bourgeoisie (CBB), the collaborators of imperialists concentrated on the large tracts extended from Lalgahar in Bengal to Surjagarh in Maharashtra. To exploit this rich region, primarily Adivasi (tribal) region, state and central governments have signed 100s of MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding).



Indiscriminate loot of this region will destroy environment and bring long term ecological changes. The most oppressed community of Indian society, the Adivasis and local people have come under a great threat. Probably for the first time in the world, such huge populations of indigenous people are being threatened. A new situation is being created and with a concrete program these oppressed sections must advance. It is evident that without the emancipation of these people, we cannot advance nor the Indian revolution succeed. Our Party is working on this problem and more and more people will unite and fight back the arch enemies of the Indian people, namely the imperialists, CBB, feudals and fascist state.

People of North Eastern oppressed nationalities and Kashmiri are fighting for their liberation from decades. They have advanced to some extent and faced unprecedented sufferings. But they did not succeed and still they are continuing their fight. While we have had some successes in guerilla warfare, they (oppressed nationalities) see some hope in the Maoists. There is a new hope that if the Maoist revolution advances, it will hasten the national liberation struggles also. In this context, in accordance with MLM (Marxism Leninism and Maoism) the Party had always maintained the position of the right to self-determination including secession of all oppressed nationalities. They (oppressed nationalities) understand this policy and their fight need to be strengthened. This has to be utilized to unite with them and try for a united front. For instance, when the Naga forces were deployed in Chhatisgarh or when the Mizo battalions were placed here, there were some protests in Nagaland and Mizoram respectively by soldiers own family members as well as by the democratic people. They said that they oppose the war on people; they don't want to send their children for suppressing other people. Strategically it is creating a better condition to unite people of all nationalities, workers, peasants, middle class and national capitalists and the suppression going on everywhere on the people is gradually becoming counter-productive to the rulers itself.

Overall, enemy has declared all-out war on the people in the name of internal security, and in the name of danger from Maoists. We are relatively strong in several rural areas of the country. But at present our forces are weak, we are weak in urban areas, and we are also weak in workers and among petty-bourgeois. People's army too is weak and its weapons are inferior to the enemy. These are our

weaknesses in general. To strengthen the people's army and work in urban areas are some of most important urgent tasks. The Unity Congress of our Party has clearly announced a strategic plan and has given enriched documents for improving in these fields. On the other hand, social contradictions are sharpening very fast. Along with above urgent tasks, our Party is concentrating to unite more and more people. If we succeed in this, we can make a leap in the revolution. We are hopeful about the emergence of a united front. In this new situation, it is one of the foremost tasks of Indian revolution. We strongly feel that it is not only ours task but the task of all revolutionary, democratic, progressive forces. Along with this contradiction within the enemy classes are sharpening. It can be seen in Nandigram and to some extent in the Lalgarh struggles. We are utilizing this contradiction and it is necessary to utilize everywhere to advance the class struggle. We are also working with other democratic organizations and people and some individuals belonging to ruling classes on different issues of the masses by forming tactical fronts. We and all fighting Parties, Organizations and people have to understand the importance of unity between them and formation of a united front. We are providing impetus to unity of the people and building a strategic united front and tactical fronts. This strategic united front will be between the oppressed people against imperialism, feudalism and comprador bureaucratic capitalism. In spite of intensification of the contradiction between imperialism and Indian people our country is not attacked by any imperialist country or has not become a direct colony by any other means. So, at present our condition is different from that of China in mid 1930s in which CPC formed an anti-imperialist united front against Japan imperialism.

**Q: How would the Party deal with the difficulties in the formation of the united front and along with the objective conditions, what does the party think about the subjective conditions in today's scenario?**

A: Comrades, firstly, as the first aspect, Maoist party would like becoming a centre for the people of the country and their development, represent their aspirations. We are representing above 95% of population. There is more favorable objective condition for uniting people and people also want a party that will serve their interests. We are not working for partial reform within the bourgeois and

exploitative system. We are fighting for the socio-economic demands of the people as well as for the qualitative change of the very basic structure of the society. If we succeed in clearly explaining it to the people, we will succeed to mobilize and organize them in the war and will win.

Whenever protracted people's war, as well as national liberation war had been fought, experience shows that without mass base, army, liberated area, people did not succeed in forming a strong united front. In course of revolutionary struggle, forming army and establishing base areas we can form several tactical united fronts and even fragile strategic united front. We have to strive hard to mobilize masses in the war against their enemies and build own army and establish stable base areas and march forward to build a strong united front.

**Q: What are the ways and methods to win-over friends?**

A: For broadest possible unity, we cannot have sectarian approach towards friends of NDR. At present several forces are lined up against the enemy. We have to let them develop too. In the united front on some issues, there would also be representatives of oppressive classes. We can not expect them join our ranks, which is a long way ahead. Right now we need to firmly stick to our strategic goal, and for that tactically we need to remain flexible.

More clearly, there are two different kinds of United Fronts. One, between people, and the other between people and enemy (a section/group/persons from enemy classes) using the contradictions among the enemy. Party has to do that. This scope is there to some extent on some issues. We call it the indirect reserves of the revolution which can be used carefully. If we have clear understanding that they are not our class allies, then we would not have right opportunist deviations. We need united fronts of this kind for the success of the revolution. The Indian Left largely, like CPI and CPM, had trailed behind the bourgeoisie and degenerated.

Last aspect is each class has a separate class interest and a world view. The united front in this sense is also a struggle front. But overall if the struggle is against the main enemy, then this struggle becomes secondary, while unity becomes primary. The real issue is how this struggle and unity can be balanced and used effectively. The enemy classes will never side with the people. Even after the seizure

of power, struggle will continue within the society for a long time. So, united front and class struggle should continue simultaneously. For that it is an utmost important task is to concentrate on the ideological and political education of the masses. If we can do this successfully, then we can win-over those sections too and allow them to join our ranks. These parties also have people under a corrupt leadership. If we can win-over the people through political and ideological struggle, we can win-over large number of their primary membership. Revolutionary breakthrough is linked to this process. The Chinese and Nepalese Party have developed through leaps and bounds by doing the same. Both the cadre force as well as the army can expand through this politically and ideologically also. If this dialectical relationship between the united front and the political and ideological struggle can be handled carefully, we will succeed in forming a strong united front and isolate the main enemy.

Ideologically the bourgeois class influence can be removed on the basis of the historical lessons of Marxism as a scientific theory. By doing this, we can wingover people and even change their world outlook and transform them with Marxist outlook.

We have talked about our basic understanding of a united front. About the subjective conditions the revolutionary intellectuals and democratic people are aligned in a favorable position for people. But this has to be made practically beneficial. The second question being the fierce repression, how can all this be achieved?

We recognize that we are a small Party still. But our real strength lies in Marxist ideology, the classes it represent, its line and policies. And to achieve united front what are the methods? CBB, landlords and imperialists are the enemy against whom vast masses need to be united on the basis of mass line and class line. If we keep to the interests of the masses and use both the mass line and class line correctly, we will definitely succeed and develop from a small force to a big national force.

**Q: But practically how do you do it?**

A: I talked about our strength even while we are physically small. I described where our main strength lies. But physical strength is also needed to fight. We need powerful army and strong mass base along with strong Party. This is practically a must. If this is not there, no matter how strong we are ideologically, it would lead to failure.

So, we have to grow. For this, while facing the enemy repression, we have to use the correct tactics. In our assessment, enemy is going for all-out war. But it is creating its own trap. If we can understand that and effectively handle our guerilla war, we will succeed. In practical terms there are two issues. One, Ruling class contradictions : There exist old contradictions in the society and new contradictions that will emerge among the ruling classes that must and should be utilized for the advantage of the people. Not only to defeat enemy and for immediate gains, but for a longer revolutionary purpose, this is required. We should strengthen our mass base and fronts which are the main shields of our power. Comrade Mao said that for developing army and war people are the decisive. We must mobilize the vast masses against the enemy and utilize the contradictions of the enemy to smash them one after another.

Second, while waging guerilla war in Andhra we had a setback; but we have not completely abandoned; nonetheless it is a setback. From Godavari valley (in Andhra Pradesh) to Maharashtra, Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand to West Bengal border, we have to intensify and expand guerilla war. Enemy must be resisted by our forces but it must be according to our advantage basing on the concrete situation. At present we have to utilize cleverly the tactics of hit and run basically. We have to develop guerilla war into mobile war and guerilla army into a regular army. We need active involvement of people. Our strength lies in the people. The enemy will strive to limit us to armed confrontation only. And they want to limit us to a limited area. They are dividing our areas into various sections and encircle us. But we can also chase their base camps like honey bees by mobilizing the people. In areas where the enemy camps are located, even in those villages, we have Revolutionary People's Committees where work is still going on. Hundreds of people built up ponds in complete knowledge of the security forces in the camps. So as the enemy is splitting our masses, we are also trying to expand our base, and trying to encircle the enemy camps/bases. We have to keep in mind the strategic importance of guerilla war. They are bringing 1 lakh (100,000) soldiers. They have decided to bring and deploy Rashtriya Rifles (A special contingent of Indian army's counter-insurgency force) from Jammu and Kashmir. But still Lalgarth to Surjagarh means crores (one crore equals ten million) of people. If we succeed in actively mobilizing the masses to fight back the enemy forces, then we can

make this very war a basis for revolutionary change. It is definitely a challenge before us but we are confident that there is an advantage in the long run which cannot be achieved in a short period. But unlike what the enemy wants, to finish this in a short period, we want to stretch this war and transform the situation to our advantage favorable to the revolution.

They are trying to limit our area, while we are attempting to expand. They are building Gram Suraksha Samithis to fight so-called anti-socials and thereby doing their best to contain us. But people are inviting us. Even new, less experienced cadres who are meagerly armed are being asked to visit these areas by the people. For example, Sonebhadra in the Orissa, the villages invited us themselves. Then again our plans to expand from Raigad to Nayagad in the form of Operation Ropeway under which the Nayagad Raid was orchestrated enabled us to expand into this area in as little as 8-10 months. So, the Nayagad raid not only had military significance but also political significance as there was strategic reasons behind the raid. Then again Operation Vikas was undertaken to expand into the Manpur (Chattisgarh) area in the plains. And people are inviting us and their confidence is on the high. If we expand in this way, we will grow definitely and expand the guerilla war. If we proceed like this and successfully stretch the war, then in the longer run the political and economic situations are bound to change and under pressure the state will crumble. Presently, the state is willfully spending in military expenses, but as the war stretches and expand in to newer and newer areas, the more it will spend in the longer run it would lead to failure. We are waging our war with this strategic plan. I already explained the second aspect of this question in my answer to your first question.

**Q: Is it possible at this juncture for the Party to be at the centre of United Front? For instance, while working in Delhi where the Party is weak, how does it envisage an united front?**

A: It is an utmost important task to keep the Party in the centre of united front.

I already answered first aspect of your question in my answer to your first question. About my second aspect for your question, in Delhi if you could do that it would be easier to work. But that is not the condition today. So, the party after analyzing the situation, decided to keep the party in centre through various other means possible.

There are other means – through other Maoist forces, democratic and other progressive forces. And therefore, in places like Delhi, where there is limited scope for the Party directly, we have to work in other ways. Our forces must rise to the occasion, deploy capable forces for united front, identify the most reliable forces and organize a joint understanding at any important place. Different arrangements need to be made. Other democratic, progressive and Maoist forces need to be brought together and in the interim they should be made to lead.

**Q: The situation in the early days of the Lalgarh movement was such that intellectuals in large numbers came out in support of the Lalgarh movement. But of late, the intellectuals have had differences in terms of the later stages of the movement, and the focus has been shifted to such issues as opposition to laws like Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA). How do you perceive the situation?**

A: If I had the latest state committee report, it would have been easier for me to answer this question. But still I would like to say that initially there was lot of support among urban intelligentsia. Now depending upon the enemy's onslaught and the nature of struggle, it will also lead to changes in reaction to the support base. Some people may also go over to the opposition side of the Lalgarh movement. In Bengal, our influence in the Civil liberty groups and in urban areas is not much strong. We need to do more to develop this. We need to strengthen our work in urban areas. A lot would depend on our work there and the development of Lalgarh movement to a higher stage. There is a lot of difference between working among the basic masses and working among intellectuals. As the latter involves several complex factors. In this context, if the intellectuals are united around any issue, even being UAPA, considering that it is not in contradiction to the larger struggle, it would be positive for us. Those who cannot come to directly support the violent phases of the movement can come together in other issues like that. So, demands may change but these must be slogans of the people. And both, Lalgarh and new slogans need to be balanced. I would say that the Party will definitely take positive criticisms from any quarter of people even those who may not agree with our basic line but stood up for people. We welcome criticism from people to rectify our mistakes and strengthen our Party. The movement against UAPA is bound to be used in immediate and

long term interest of the people. And in general terms, as such any mobilization in this field in the longer run is not contradictory to the interests of the Party.

**Q: Where do you place democracy in the working of the Party? Meaning the right to strike, the right to dissent, and the right to freedom of expression.**

A: This is a very important question; however there is no confusion in our Party. We need a new democratic state in which other than CBB, the landlords and imperialists all others will have real or genuine freedom. Other than enemies of the people, for everybody there would be real or genuine democracy. In addition, I may say that while preparing Policy Program of Revolutionary people's Committees (RPCs)/Jantana Sarkars, we have studied the experience of Graam Raajyaas of historic Telangana armed agrarian revolution, Policy Program of Chinese Soviets, People's Barrio committees of Philippine, Revolutionary People's Committees of Peru, United Revolutionary People's Councils of Nepal and also studied the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. In accordance with above we have all the fundamental rights including that every voter has the right to recall any elected person. Even has the right to bring any one in position of authority, who works against interest of the people, to court in order to prosecute them. In terms of the four great freedoms declared by Chairman Mao during the Cultural Revolution, other than the character posters on the wall, all the rest freedoms have been ensured by the policy Program of the RPC/Janathan Sarkar. As the level of development in the Janatana Sarkar advances we would also follow the freedom for character posters. According to the constitution no physical punishment for political opposition will be allowed, anybody had right to politically differ and even unionize. The Indian state is trying to control dissent and therefore people want revolution. We would not repeat the same mistake. Besides, for any mistakes in prosecution, the person has the right to appeal to the village Revolutionary People's Committee, to higher levels and even to the Party. For instance, in one of the extension areas, there was an incident where in collusion with the Inspector General of Police, 33 members belonging to two villages became agents of the enemy. In this context our comrades went and handled the issue. While villagers wanted to give capital punishment to the main agent of the police, party interceded to give a chance to that person to realize his mistake.



**Q: In an united front, everybody might not join. Some Maoist outfits and democratic organizations can even remain outside. How will you handle that?**

A: Those in opposition are people's enemies and more than 95% of the oppressed people would be against them. But even 5% is a big number in the Indian context. Our Party believes that over the course of the protracted peoples' war it gives scope to destroy the enemy's political power both directly as well as culturally as many followers are helped to transform. In China, Madam Sun Yet Sen till the last day was in power, although never a member of the Party. They can stay only as long as they serve people and have support of the people. When socially and politically they will become irrelevant, they will automatically vanish. It is possible for them win in elections if such parties have support of the people. This provision is there in our policy Program of RPCs too even other persons belonging to other Parties/organizations can join RPCs if they are voters and they have right to be elected to RPCs. This being our understanding, it has to be practically practiced on ground too. We have to develop this sphere. Nepal had made some advances in this respect.

We give scope to small and medium bourgeoisie to grow with some restrictions so that they may not become anti-people, and black marketing, stock piling and speculating can be controlled. We only restrict big capital of CBB and foreign, for instance in 1998-99 the government had stopped small traders to deal in forest products, so as the Khirjas (local traders) protested we fought for them in a movement, though we stopped usury and have controlled indiscriminate exploitation, we are not stopping products from outside to come in. This is capitalist development of one kind, but we are controlling it. It is needed to develop the people's economy. If traders did not cooperate, how would we have survived? Under the Janatana Circar, the trade and industry department is handling the small traders so that the bourgeois outside cannot take advantage. So full freedom continues even if there are collaborators attempting to win them over. It is only in life and death context, that physical punishment is allowed. However right now, while facing repression and war, we are in a complex situation which has to be acknowledged.

**Q: What is your party's stance on Talks?**

A: In general people and Maoist revolutionaries do not want violence or armed confrontation with anybody. In unavoidable

condition only they take-up arms and resist their enemies and they are waging liberation war by learning from the history. So, we see this as a war of self-defense. In this context of all-out war, we must recognize that the state of Andhra Pradesh has 130 thousand forces, there are 45 thousand forces in Chattisgarh (to soon increase this by more than 20 thousand forces), 160 thousand forces in Maharashtra. Thus each state has a police force which is more than the national level forces of many European countries. The most cruel and dangerous special forces have been trained by the state along with various anti-people draconian laws. Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand, Chattisghad, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh along with Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have between them more than 700 to 800 thousand of police forces. Out of this, 250 to 300 thousand police forces are directly engaged against the people. And alongside 100 thousand central paramilitary forces have been deployed in these areas. Here people are combating against a stronger force than the movements in North East and Jammu-Kashmir. This is a brutal and violent repression campaign aimed at the suppression of the political movement of the people, and for exploitation of the minerals.

In this context, if possible we can hope for some respite. Longer the respite better for people. Democratic work needs this context. But while government is holding automatic gun on one hand, one cannot talk about this. People will keep fighting. While pumping bullets people never drop weapons and people never surrender. All democratic, progressive, patriotic forces need to unite and fight against the all-out war on the people by the central and state governments. To put concisely the main demands that the party has placed in front of the government for any kind of talks are 1. All-out war has to be withdrawn; 2) For any kind of democratic work, the ban on the Party and Mass Organizations have to be lifted; 3) Illegal detention and torture of comrades had to be stopped and immediately released. If these demands are met, then the same leaders who are released from jails would lead and represent the Party in the talks.

### **Introduction on the development of our Party**

Since Jan Myrdal wrote the book "India Waits" in 1980s in which he talked about the movement there have been several developments in various aspects both political and military. It was



since then, that we saw the development of a perspective, taking into account the concrete Indian specificity. There were only few experienced leaders that were left from the days of Com. CM. Many had gone into right deviation, some into left deviation and only few had come here. So, largely it was a new generation, a new youth, and to turn them into experienced cadre, a lot of time had to be invested. When you JAN MYRDAL had come here IN 1980, the party was still undergoing this problem. It was only another 6-7 years, that proper leadership would emerge in the context of PW. When JM visited AP in 1980, that time there was only CPI(ML) state committee along with the TN State Committee. There was also a Central Committee but ofcourse only confined to these two states, its scope was limited. The MCC was working in Bengal and Bihar in that period; however in Bengal it was very weak. In the same way PW was working in AP and Tamil Nadu, but in TN it was very weak. It is a retrospective observation of work in these two centers, in these two regions. Com. Kobad Gandhi and some other comrades from Maharashtra later joined PW. In MCC Com. KC started some work including Assam but in a very limited way. Now we have presence in 20 states but the Party is still very weak in many of these areas. So there is an uneven development under the protracted people's war where according to our strength there are different levels of the movement in different regions. In this context, we must observe the development and the role of a revolutionary party which is important and which I will say.

Comrades, In 1980s the Party was trying to emerge from a setback. It was trying to reorganize and consolidate. On the one side, there was the problem of sectarianism and on the other hand, the mass base was largely lost. So we had to revive every thing both in terms of mass struggle and military. Accordingly, our tactics also changed. At that time it was mainly the anti-feudal struggles and the anti-imperialist propaganda-agitation that had been launched to create an anti-state opinion and open movements in the urban areas.

Previously, under Com. Charu Mazumdar the line had been to disregard mass organizations. Later we rethought and after going through an intense self-critical review, we acknowledged that there were some mistakes in the earlier years and on that basis, in order to advance, we rebuilt the movement. The Self-Critical Review was made in 1974, it was by 1977 August that forces within the party were convinced. And in practice it was reaffirmed by Party AP State

Conference in September 1980 that marks the beginning of a new practice.

It was since then, that we saw the development of a perspective, taking into account the concrete Indian specificity. There were only few experienced leadership that were left from the days of Com. CM. Many had gone into right deviation, some into left deviation and only few had come here. So, largely it was a new generation, a new youth, and to turn them into experienced cadre, a lot of time had to be invested. When you had come here, the party was still undergoing this problem. It was only another 6-7 years, that proper leadership would emerge in the context of PW.

First a revolutionary party needs a leadership for understanding national and international conditions, as well as the economic and political conditions to make tactics accordingly. Some of the perspectives that I talked of, in the post-80s period, if we add those experience, we would see that in later years we had made some developments in this sphere of understanding.

Secondly, a revolutionary party needs to organize people and lead class struggle. From the strategic perspective plans were made and spots were selected and some development was made since 1980s in terms of people struggling under leadership of the party which came up as a concrete development.

Thirdly, for a revolutionary party, it is important to organize armed struggle. The CP Reddy group had the name of the CPI(ML) and was part of the PCP under the leadership of SNS. It was only they who had some squads in the Godavari area at that time which you had visited. People's War had started some armed squads in the shape of peasant squads only then, while they already had 60-70 armed cadres by that time.

Later as we developed class struggle according to the idea of area wise seizure of power, to build people's army, the PW here and the MCC there started making armed guerilla squads at the levels of 5,7,9,11. Some platoons and guerilla zones thereby emerged. In some areas just before the 2004 merger, even companies emerged. The erstwhile PW had People's Guerilla Army while MCC had People's Liberation Guerilla Army. In the merger process we found the PLGA under CPI(Maoist). The next stage is battalions moving progressively towards the formation of PLA. Depending on the basic tenets, we have evolved the higher stages of political and military power and the

political power of the people. The vision was there even before the 80s. MCC was also there. But practically it was only achieved in terms of concrete development after the merger.

There are two more developments that I would like to point out. A party which in practice is evolving tactics or policy involving a large mass in its rank and files has to practice involving people in thousands and lakhs (a lakh equals one hundred thousand). In practice, while facing the problem and while rectifying the mistakes there were bitter internal and external struggle. It is only through the process of this bitter ideological and political struggle that we have reached today's position. After the rectification and review of 70s, the PW had emerged and it had to face grave internal crisis in the form of 1. Sectarianism and dogmatism in the mid-80s, and 2. the hurdle posed by the leadership of Com.Kondapalli Seetharamiah in the beginning of 90s. Then again, the clashes between MCC and PW had been a bitter and unforgettable experience, a black chapter in history. In order to face ideological and political challenges, the party tactically evolved two approaches: discussion and review and struggle. All three times the party emerged successfully from the crisis. The MCC also in the same way emerged from its own internal crisis. A section of it intended to continue the fight, they were also differences pertaining to Maoism and dogmatism through which it emerged successfully. The PU too fought against forces that opposed protracted people's war and agrarian revolution and emerged successfully. The PW and MCC even at this stage get smaller. While the Vinod Mishra and Satya Narain Singh groups get stronger and influential. While VM moved to left opportunism, SNS moved into right opportunism. And in practice, they split and finally faced virtual liquidation with extremely nominal presence today. Earlier, along with the fight against revisionism we faced the problem of having a line that was only talked of seizing state power and that other political questions like the nationality question, the women question, the dalit (untouchables or schedule castes) question and the question of religious minorities would automatically be addressed. However, later we rectified this stand and merged both immediate slogans and ultimate slogans together. This was a must for the success of NDR and development towards it. While various other ML groups only raised immediate slogans and thereby went into reformism, we for a long time only gave the ultimate slogan. But now, by putting together both immediate and ultimate slogans we move towards better development.

For Party education, there are several Party Magazines at Central, State and District level. Around 25 of them are Party's. Several others are Mass Organizations' Magazines. E.g. Centrally we are publishing People's War/Laal Pathaaka an Ideological and Political Magazine simultaneously in English and Hindi and in other languages; Awami Jung, a Military Magazine in different languages; Maoist Information Bulletin in English.

In DK we are publishing following Magazines

1. Prabhath (Hindi, Party Political Magazine)
2. Viyyukka (Ideological and Political Magazine, in Gondi/Koyam)
3. Padiyora Pollo (Military Magazine, Gondi/Koyam)
4. Sangharsharath Mahila (KAMS Magazine, in Hindi)
5. Jhankar (Literary and Cultural Magazine in multi-lingual)

At Division/District level in Gondi/Koyam: South Bastar Division: Pituri (rebellion); West Bastar Division: Midangur (fire place); Darbha Division: Moyil Gudrum (Thunder); north and South Divisions of Gadichiroli: Poddhu(Sun); Maad and North Bastar Joint Division: Bhoomkal (Earth quake); East Bastar Division: Bhoomkal Sandesh(rebellion message); Other than this the Janatana Sarkar also has made a Magazine called Janatana Raj(People's State).

There are also study classes that are organized with study notes and syllabus. Political classes are organized at different state levels, some times rectification campaigns are organized for 4-6 month to one year when the history of the Chinese, Philippines and Peru revolutions are discussed for political and ideological training. There are military instructor teams for military schools and Awami Jung as the military magazine of Central Committee.

The Party in the DK area faces the problem of illiteracy and lack of primary education and so we organized the MAS (mobile education) for the purpose of primary academic education of party cadres. Hundreds of cadre have been trained since its beginning. The mass organizations also run academic programs with their own syllabus which is made in consultation with the leadership and committee members. Introduction on the development of People's Army (At present called People's Liberation Guerilla Army).

I request you refer our central documents for complete picture of our army development in specific conditions of the country and in which international situation it is formed. I request you to give attention on this due to its vitality in any revolution Introduction on the development of UF.

In terms of mass organizations, we over the years, developed in several fronts including peasant, women, students, youth, civil rights groups, literary and cultural groups, children, nationality, workers, employees and so on. The stronger the party in a state, the larger the organization and the fronts. In the weaker areas there are fewer mass organizations at the state level in accordance with the strength of the party. Right now, the party has mass organizations both at the state and all India level, and the idea is to represent the four-class organizations in accordance with the four-class alliance and other sections too. With the emphasis is being to mass organizations, we presently have 30-40 of them working in various fronts. During by the 80s MCC had few mass organizations working secretly in a limited scope in AP the peasantry, the students and the literary-cultural sections along with the youth had some influence but now with the development of our understanding different mass organizations from village level to the state level to the all India level exists. In the 9th Congress of the PW it was decided to develop mass organizations and united fronts which would be issue-based and tactical. At some issues even enemy classes and local leaders could come together in immediate and medium terms. These developed further after the merger. So the class struggle needs to be waged at sectional, underground as well as open levels. Legal opportunities needs to be utilized, there are some mass organizations working with MLM general guideline, while there are some that are working under complete cover even with others.

### **On International Relations**

In the 1980s beginning both MCC and PW had been regional in scope, because of which we failed to a large extent in connecting at the larger international movements. However mid-1990s onwards, both Parties and particularly after the formation of the CPI(Maoist), is now playing a role in the internationally too. We are participating in international debates and sending delegations to international forums

though much progress needs to be made in this front. It is nonetheless better than in the 1980s and 1990s. In terms of RIM, MCC had joined it in 2002. The PW however opposed to join in RIM as it believed that it is only after thorough deliberations, understandings and discussions that such an international platform could be evolved in order to avoid a sectarian approach. Therefore the PW did not join the RIM, while MCC went ahead. After merger, though it was decided that whatever the new Party decide would be put to practice. And since then as per the decision of the whole Party, it kept itself out of RIM. We kept outside RIM which by now has become virtually defunct. It is important for the success of the Indian revolution as an inseparable part of great world socialist revolution, actively defend MLM, fighting imperialism and supports the class struggle throughout the world and also take the support of the international Maoist Parties/Organizations/ Forces, proletariat and people. For this purpose, maintain fraternal relations with Maoist and anti-imperialist forces. We believe that it is both important to extend help as well as take international help for the success of any revolution but because of the ongoing repression. Overall, I once again say that we stuck to basics of MLM. We invite critical suggestions from any Maoist Party/Organization..

We believe that CPI (Maoist) is a detachment of world proletariat revolution. If it succeeds, we would say one part of the world would succeed - it is not independent. It would work as a part of the world socialist revolution and it is strictly related to the success or failure of the world socialist revolution. More working class struggles in the imperialist/capitalist countries will have a favorable impact on Indian revolution.

### **Notes:**

Jan Myrdal is a Swedish author, political writer, journalist, and lifelong supporter of anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist and popular liberation movements

Gautam Navlakha is the editorial consultant of EPW (Economic and Political Weekly) and also a leading democratic rights activist (attached to People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR), Delhi.

## Sri Lanka

### Plight of the Tamil War Victims in Sri Lanka

*Tamil national question in Sri Lanka had been an unresolved question. To achieve a Tamil Eelam the LTTE for more than 25 years until its final defeat in May 2009 had engaged in a war with the Lankan government that had refused to grant autonomy to the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. Thousands of Tamils in Lanka had been killed, tortured, displaced, impoverished and traumatised in the never ending cycle of rebellion and counter-rebellion repressive measures. The defeat of LTTE had neither shown an abrupt end to state violence nor rehabilitation of the Tamil war victims. It was against this background that a Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT) on Sri Lanka (14-16 January 2010) was organised by the Irish Forum for Peace in Sri Lanka at Dublin in Ireland. The Sri Lankan Government rejected the report of the PPT on the ground that such report would do nothing to further permanent peace efforts in Sri Lanka, but pose a serious threat to the country's stability. We in CPDM however have decided to reproduce selected chapters of the PPT report that throws light on the plight of the Tamil war victims in Sri Lanka in post LTTE defeat period. The report on the **Convention on The Unspoken Genocide: War Crimes in Sri Lanka** held in Delhi on the 15 April 2010 is also being reproduced here.*

*Editor*

### 1 Verdict of the Permanent People's Tribunal on Sri Lanka

#### 4. The Atrocities of the Last Weeks of the War

This part of the report of the Tribunal is focussed on the terrible consequences of the collapse of the ceasefire agreement (CFA), and in particular the military and other actions taken by the Government of Sri Lanka in respect to the LTTE forces, and the civilians associated with them.

The tribunal listened to several presentations by NGOs, experts on the recent and current “civil war” situation in Sri Lanka, in front of a public audience. The Tribunal listened to a larger number of witnesses, victims, human rights defenders, journalists and Tamils from the diaspora in ‘in camera sessions’ in order to protect their identity.

In its work the Tribunal was reminded several times that this civil war was a “war without witnesses” because the GoSL had prevented either national or international media coverage. In fact, some of the early victims were the many journalists that were murdered by unknown assassins, something which appeared to serve the agenda of the Government by silencing critical opinion. The impression held by most experts and witnesses is that this was a civil war, and an exercise in ethnic cleansing, perhaps even genocide, and that the Government did not wish to share this with the media. Instead, significant misinformation as to the policies, the fighting, and the numbers and overall well-being of civilians in LTTE-controlled areas was provided by Colombo.

This misinformation frequently underestimated the number of Tamil civilians within LTTE-controlled areas who were trapped by the military, and exposed to attack by aircraft and artillery. It was only when the final exodus from the much diminished LTTE-held territory began, and the internally displaced persons (IDPs) were counted that it was seen that the government had misinformed both the national and the international public.

The atrocities carried out by the military relate particularly to civilians, and there is evidence of cluster munitions being dropped by warplanes. Some witnesses reported that white phosphorous was used in violation of international law. Several witnesses had seen burn marks on wounded civilians. Others believed that indications of napalm were apparent, and evidence of other incendiary devices has been confirmed by doctors who had cared for hundreds of Tamil civilians wounded in this manner. The sight of hundreds of dead bodies was reported by a number of witnesses. This indicates that in addition to the many wounded and the heavy loss of civilian life, the destruction of civilian infrastructure essential for human wellbeing was common (with women and children among those targeted) in the diminishing areas controlled by the LTTE.

The frequent use of heavy artillery by the military against LTTE forces in civilian areas, including on public buildings such as hospitals and schools as indicated above, constitutes a violation of the Geneva Conventions. The populace suffered from the lack of potable water, lack of access to essential medical care and continuing lack of access to educational facilities. Virtually all their basic human rights were violated. Further, loss of civilian life under these conditions was very high. By April 2009, according to internal documents of the United Nations, use of heavy weapons, combined with air-raids caused the death of some 116 persons



each day. Further, British and French media indicated that during the final weeks of fighting some 20,000 Tamils were killed.

The attempt to annihilate the Tamil population with or without the use of illegal weapons certainly constitutes one form of war crime. The question remains if the government intended genocide in respect of the Tamil people in brutally suppressing armed and political resistance. From expert and eye-witness testimony, it would seem certain that the military attacked targets of a purely civilian nature, such as hospitals, fleeing IDPs and many villages. Further, evidence that the military executed both Tamil civilians and LTTE prisoners of war, who in some cases had voluntarily surrendered, further supports charges of ethnic cleansing and violations of international law.

Before drawing any conclusions, other atrocities and abuses of Tamil civilians need to be considered. Witness testimony on IDP “camps”, or perhaps “concentration camps” as suggested by testimony, demands attention. Portrayed by the government as temporary residential facilities pending the return home or resettlement of those detained within them, the camps were designated as “welfare villages” by the government. Fifteen such IDP camps were so designated. These camps continue to be in gross violation of the Geneva Conventions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Many tragedies within the camps were reported to the Tribunal members. Living space was very modest, cover was of galvanised tin which in hot conditions became a health hazard, often resulting in poor skin conditions. Many children in particular, but also women and the aged, died from diseases such as cholera and malnutrition. Water supply was a significant problem, with five litres per day for all the needs of a family being totally inadequate and threatening to health. Sufficient water for simple hygiene, toilet use and the washing of clothes (most IDPs had only the clothes on their backs) was simply unavailable. Garbage remained in place, and toilets pits constructed without cement often collapsed leading to flooding, and, in some cases, the drowning of children. Many children had lost both parents and become orphans, or only had the protection of a single parent, and were thus vulnerable to the many dangers lurking in the camps.

Another unacceptable government policy was the withholding of food, and the use of this tactic as a tool to coerce and torture Tamil civilians. The blockade of food supplies and deliberate underestimation of the numbers of civilians within the LTTE-controlled areas also led to dangerous food shortages. The additional withholding of medical supplies

to Tamil civilians is equally unacceptable and a violation of humanitarian law.

Sexual abuse and the rape of women by government troops was yet another atrocity repeated throughout the civil war by government military in destroyed villages and in the “welfare villages”. This practice, which is in violation of the Rome Statute as a crime against humanity, led to tragedies such as abortions and suicide on the part of victims unable to live with family shame and mental trauma. This policy of targeting also applied to Tamils living outside the conflict zone. Apart from mass deportations, selective terror campaigns were carried out by means of abductions, assassinations, arbitrary arrests, detention, sexual assault and torture.

The information provided in the paragraphs above can be found in the reports of Human Rights Watch (28.07.09 and 24.11.09), of Amnesty International (10.08.09), and of the Centre for Policy Alternatives (September 2009).

Specific assassinations of Tamil leaders are yet another atrocity, and highlighting this occurrence is the targeted killing of members of Parliament, including Joseph Pararajasingham, Nadarasa Raviraj and T. Maheshwaran, who had protested the military massacres.

One aspect of government policy that facilitated a variety of atrocities was the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) of 1979 which designated the LTTE forces as “terrorists.” It further undermined some of the safeguards in the justice and military legal systems, leading to significant abuse.

#### **Evidence shows that maltreatment of the dead also took place.**

In summary, in pursuing its ambitions to remove the threat that LTTE forces presented and to control the Tamil civilian population, the Government of Sri Lanka pursued military actions in violation of international law, including the Geneva Conventions and the Declaration of Human Rights. The resulting atrocities of rape, torture, assassinations, “disappearances,” and withholding of food, water and medical supplies brutalised and threatened the survival of the Tamil community. The use of artillery and illegal weapons such as white phosphorus and cluster munitions places the government outside accepted international legal standards. It is not surprising that charges of atrocities, ethnic cleansing and indeed genocide have been levelled at Colombo. War crimes and crimes against humanity clearly appear to have been committed.



## 5. On the Qualifications of the Facts

Summing up the facts established before this Tribunal by reports from NGOs, victims' testimony, eye-witnesses accounts, expert testimony and journalistic reports, we are able to distinguish three different kinds of human rights violations committed by the Sri Lankan Government from 2002 (the beginning of the CFA) to the present:

- Forced “disappearances” of targeted individuals from the Tamil population;
- Crimes committed in the re-starting of the war (2006-2009), particularly during the last months of the war;
- Bombing civilian objectives like hospitals, schools and other non-military targets;
- Bombing government-proclaimed ‘safety zones’ or ‘no fire zones’;
- Withholding of food, water, and health facilities in war zones;
- Use of heavy weaponry, banned weapons and air-raids;
- Using food and medicine as a weapon of war;
- The mistreatment, torture and execution of captured or surrendered LTTE combatants, officials and supporters;
- Torture;
- Rape and sexual violence against women;
- Deportations and forcible transfer of individuals and families;
- Desecrating the dead;
- Human rights violations in the IDP camps during and after the end of the war:
- Shooting of Tamil citizens and LTTE supporters;
- Forced disappearances;
- Rape;
- Malnutrition; and
- Lack of medical supplies.

### 5.1 War Crimes

The actions included under the second point above clearly constitute “war crimes” committed by the Sri Lankan Government, its security forces and aligned paramilitary forces, as defined under the Geneva Conventions and in the Rome Statute, with regard to the following sections of Article 8.

**If this conflict is recognized as international in nature, the following charges would apply:**

(b) Other serious violations of the laws and customs applicable in international armed conflict, within the established framework of international law, namely, any of the following acts:

- (i) Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities;
- (ii) Intentionally directing attacks against civilian objects, that is, objects which are not military objectives;
- (iv) Intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects or widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment which would be clearly excessive in relation to the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated;
- (vi) Killing or wounding a combatant who, having laid down his arms or having no longer means of defence, has surrendered at discretion;
- (ix) Intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not military objectives;
- (xxi) Committing outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment;
- (xxii) Committing rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, as defined in article 7, paragraph 2 (f), enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence also constituting a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions;
- (xxv) Intentionally using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including willfully impeding relief supplies as provided for under the Geneva Conventions;

**If the conflict is of a domestic character, the following charges would apply:**

(c) In the case of an armed conflict not of an international character, serious violations of article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, namely, any of the following acts committed against persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed hors de combat by sickness, wounds, detention or any other cause:

- (i) Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture;

(ii) Committing outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment;  
(iii) Taking of hostages;  
(iv) The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgement pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all judicial guarantees which are generally recognized as indispensable.

(e) Other serious violations of the laws and customs applicable in armed conflicts not of an international character, within the established framework of international law, namely, any of the following acts:

(i) Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities;

(iv) Intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not military objectives;

(vi) Committing rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, as defined in article 7, paragraph 2 (f), enforced sterilization, and any other form of sexual violence also constituting a serious violation of article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions.

So, if we analyze the conflict as either an international conflict or as an internal armed conflict, we have clearly found that war crimes were committed by the Government of Sri Lanka.

## 5.2 Crimes against humanity

The actions included under the points 1 (forced disappearances) and 3 (violations committed in the IDP camps during and after the war) clearly constitute “crimes against humanity”, as defined in the Rome Statute, Article 7, specifically in the following sections:

Any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack:

(a) Murder;

(b) Extermination

(d) Deportation or forcible transfer of population;

(e) Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law;

(f) Torture;

(g) Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity;

(h) Persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender as defined in paragraph 3, or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court;

(i) Enforced disappearance of persons;

(k) Other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health.

## 5.3 The possible commission of the crime of genocide

Although the charge of genocide was not included in the inquiry requested of the Tribunal, some of the organizations and persons that gave testimony insisted that it be recognized that genocide occurred, or may have occurred, against the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. There was not enough evidence presented before the Tribunal to determine that the crime of genocide be added to the charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Some of the facts presented should be investigated thoroughly, as possible acts of genocide. Such facts include the following:

A possible pattern of forced “disappearances” of Tamil individuals carried out by the Sri Lankan armed forces and by paramilitary forces with the acquiescence of the State, directed against crucial members of the Tamil community (journalists, physicians, politicians) to destroy, as Lemkin said, “the grounds for the continuity of the life of the group”(in this case, the Tamil group); and

The persistence of the situation of the Tamil population in the IDP camps; the continuity of shootings, systematic rape and forced “disappearances;” the widespread destruction of infrastructure in those parts of the country where there is a concentration of Tamils; and the lack of food, medicine and other fundamental needs for the continuity of life of the Tamil people.

Although the facts listed above are current, we have not received enough evidence to include them as charges. However, the Tribunal acknowledges the importance of continuing investigation into the possibility of genocide.

#### **5.4 The right of any human being to be under the protection of humanitarian law**

The so-called “global war on terror” has produced the idea that any act committed in such a war should be allowed as the best means to defeat a most dangerous enemy. This kind of new security paradigm has led to the justification of human rights violations against those members of the population labeled “terrorists”. It is fundamental for the verdict of this Tribunal that even considering crimes committed by the LTTE forces, the alleged “terrorists” are under the protection of humanitarian law. Neither war crimes, nor crimes against humanity (the charges that have been recognized by this Tribunal) would be justified by any act committed by the victims.

The importance of highlighting this question is that, within this new security paradigm, members of the population labelled as “terrorists”, or any other extreme qualification, would be excluded from the rest of humanity and therefore would not enjoy any protections ensured by human rights law. This assumption would deny the existence of human rights law as such.

#### **5.5 The alleged commission of “crimes against the peace”**

The last crime submitted to the Tribunal deals with the charge of “crimes against the peace”. Allegedly, the Government of Sri Lanka and some “external forces” conspired to commit a “war of aggression”. Crimes against the peace were defined in the Nuremberg Tribunal as: (i) Planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances and/or (ii) participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of such acts.

The problem for this Tribunal regarding this part of the accusation is not only with the evidence provided to the Tribunal to support the charge, but also (and mainly) with the consequences of accepting such a concept as part of humanitarian law.

The idea of a crime against the peace supposes that peace exists and that one side of the conflict breaks this peaceful situation through a war of aggression.

However, in the majority of the armed conflicts that humanity have suffered, the situation can be analysed from a more subtle and complex perspective. The definition of the first offender in an armed conflict is difficult to determine and subjective. The manner in which years of

oppression accumulate to a critical level may easily become the first act in a “war of aggression.”

That is the case of the years of war within Sri Lanka. The perspective through which the conflict is analysed defines who may be charged with “crimes against the peace”. That is the reason the Tribunal will not endorse specific charges in regards to such a crime.

Nevertheless, on the basis of the evidence obtained and the testimonies heard, the Tribunal acknowledges the responsibilities of the international community, inasmuch it did not take concrete steps to prevent violations of the human rights of the Tamil people, and subsequently omitted the pursuit of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Tribunal stresses the responsibility of the Member States of the United Nations that have not complied with their moral obligation to seek justice for the violations of human rights committed during the last period of war. After repeated pleas, and in spite of the appalling conditions experienced by Tamils, the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Security Council failed to establish an independent commission of inquiry to investigate those responsible for the atrocities committed due to political pressure exerted by certain Members.

It also highlights the conduct of the European Union in undermining the CFA of 2002. In spite of being aware of the detrimental consequences to a peace process in the making, the EU decided - under pressure from the United States and the United Kingdom - to list the TRM (Tamil Resistance Movement, which included the LTTE) as a terrorist organization in 2006. This decision allowed the Sri Lankan Government to breach the ceasefire agreement and re-start military operations leading to the massive violations listed above. It also points to the full responsibility of those governments, led by the United States, that are conducting the so-called “Global War on Terror” (GWOT) in providing political endorsement of the conduct of the Sri Lankan Government and armed forces in a war that is primarily targeted against the Tamil people.

The Tribunal also points to the direct responsibility of various countries in providing the Sri Lankan Government with weapons. Some of these weapons are banned by conventions such as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), and others. In addition, some of those countries also trained Sri Lankan military forces during the ceasefire period.

## II Report of the Convention on the Unspoken Genocide: War Crimes in Sri Lanka, 15 April 2010, New Delhi

The Delhi Tamil Students Union and the Democratic Students Union jointly organized a convention titled “The Unspoken Genocide: War Crimes in Sri Lanka” in Delhi on the 15th of April. Focusing on the Dublin based Permanent People’s Tribunal report that indicted the Sri Lankan government of war crimes and crimes against humanity, the speakers charged the Sri Lankan government with genocide and criticized the international powers for their support to the war crimes committed by the Lankan state. The Indian English version of the report was released by Ajit Singh Bains, Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Kolathur Mani.

Rajinder Sachar, former Chief Justice of High Court of Delhi, said that conditions in Sri Lanka cannot improve unless the Tamils are given a respectful place in society as equal citizens. “Unfortunately, that is not happening” he said. He also pointed out that the Tamils may be forced to take other courses of action if in the immediate future the Lankan government did not give them an equal and respectful place. VR Krishna Iyer, former Judge of the Indian Supreme Court, seconded Sachar’s point by adding that the concept of human rights was absent for the Tamils suffering in Sri Lanka. Mr. Iyer, who could not attend the convention owing to health reasons, had sent in a recorded video statement.

Prof. GN Saibaba, Vice-Chairperson, International League of Peoples’ Struggles, drew a link between what is happening in Sri Lanka and what is happening in other parts of South Asia. He said that pressure must be put on the international community to prevent the extermination of the Tamils. Terming the war on the Tamils as “one of the biggest genocides of the 21st century,” he said that if the international community failed to save the Tamils, they would be unable to intervene in the case of repression in Kashmir, the North-Eastern states or on the Adivasis of the Indian heartland. “The most immediate task that all of us have to do is for all nationalities facing similar situations to come together and raise a voice.”

Syed Ali Shah Geelani, All Party Hurriyat Conference, Kashmir, expressed his solidarity with the struggle of the Eelam Tamils against state repression and said that the people in India should extend their support to the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Pointing how state terrorism made life miserable for the people of Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine he said that “all humanity should unite against state terrorism.” Ajit Singh

Bains, former Judge, Chandigarh High Court, also spoke on the issue of state terror. “When the state has become terrorist, there is no rule of law.” He argued that a UN commission must be appointed to probe the atrocities of the Lankan government.

Kolathur Mani, president, Periyar Dravidar Kazhagam, said that the genocide which was carried out by the Lankan government with help from international forces was “part of a systematic programme and should also be investigated for the context of the patterns.” Accusing the Indian govt. of aiding Sri Lanka in its war crimes, he said that as ‘Indians’, “our hands are soaked in blood.” He also lamented the pathetic conditions of the Eelam Tamils in the refugee camps in India. Kavita Krishnan, from CPI(ML) Liberation, said that much of the Indian media has gone overboard in selling Rajapakse ‘final solution’ as an ideal model. She said that talks of peace in Sri Lanka was a joke considering that lakhs of Tamils were languishing in camps under sub-human conditions. “We will have to stand in solidarity with the Tamils’ movement for self-determination and justice,” she said.

Prof. Jagmohan Singh, editor, World Sikh News, was of the opinion that there was a pressing necessity for a permanent mechanism to provide for a unity for various struggling peoples. As far as the Tamils were concerned, he said that it was time for a next phase of action to be launched. Lauding the struggle for Tamil Eelam, he said that “we need to recall the historic and heroic role of all Tamil Eelam fighters.” Many speakers expressed their admiration for Prabhakaran and the Tamil Eelam movement.

Varavara Rao, revolutionary poet, sent in a written statement where he condemned the Indian government for its support to the genocide of the Eelam Tamils. “This genocide of the Eelam Tamils under the leadership of V. Prabhakaran was orchestrated, supported and directed by the Indian government.” He also criticized the major political parties in Tamil Nadu for doing nothing more than shedding crocodile tears for the Eelam Tamils. In his statement, he also remarked that “Prabhakaran will not die” to show that the ideas of the Tamil Eelam movement would regenerate in newer struggles. A poem written by Varavara Rao in honour of the LTTE leader was also read out.

SAR Geelani, Committee for Release of Political Prisoners, said that India intervening in Sri Lanka to bring about a positive solution is most unlikely considering that the Indian government has not even bothered about the welfare of Tamils in camps in its own territory. “It is the responsibility of concerned people to raise these issues and to make them a public debate.” Stating that defeat itself is not so harmful as the sense of defeat, he said that the sense of defeat should not get into the psyche of

the Tamil community. “The martyrdom of Prabhakaran does not signal the end of the struggle for self-determination” he said.

Viraj Mendis, International Human Rights Association, Germany, said that “if not for the position that India took on the Tamil struggle, the international perception about the oppression of the Tamils would not have occurred.” He argued that the role of India and other international powers in the Sri Lankan conflict needed to be critically examined. Alleging that India turned 180 degrees as regards to the Tamil question in Sri Lanka, he said that “without this change the genocide would not have happened.” He also criticized the international powers for their role in the collapse of the peace talks in Sri Lanka. Mr. Mendis, who is Sinhalese by origin, is a renowned human rights activists and is one of the main organizers of the Tribunal. He was denied a visa by the Indian embassy in Hamburg as they did not get ‘approval’ from their counterpart in Colombo and thus, he sent a recorded video statement instead.

Recorded statements from KG Kannabiran, former PUCL national president, and Janani Jananayagam, spokesperson for Tamils Against Genocide, were also received but could not be displayed owing to certain technical problems and lack of time. KG Kannabiran, who has worked on the Eelam Tamil issue since the 90s, said that the Tamils of Sri Lanka would not be content to be treated as subordinate citizens. Ms Jananayagam in her statement drew parallels between the military strategy of Sri Lanka to the well planned massacre of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica. She also made an appeal to India to apply ‘Right to Protect’ to Sri Lanka. Dr. Mrigank from Nauajawan Bharat Sabha and Malem Ningthouja from Manipur Students’ Association also expressed their solidarity with the struggle of the Eelam Tamils.

The convention put forth five resolutions which were passed with unanimous approval by the house. They are as follows

- 1) The house condemns the genocidal war crimes perpetrated by the Sri Lankan govt. on the Tamils. War criminals in the Sri Lankan govt. must be brought to justice.
- 2) The house demands the release of all the Tamils who have been forcefully detained in camps and their settlement in their native homes.
- 3) The house demands an immediate end to the colonization of Tamil Eelam by the Lankan state.
- 4) The house demands that the Indian govt. stop providing political, military and logistical aid to the genocidal Lankan govt.
- 5) The house condemns the Indian state’s war on the various nationalities fighting for self-determination

## Pakistan

### Ownership or Death

*Shaukat Chaudry*

For the last 10 years peasants working on the government agricultural farms in the Punjab province of Pakistan have been raising the slogan of ‘ownership or death’. They are demanding ownership rights for the land which was sowed and developed by their forefathers since 1885. This demand for ownership got further strengthened during the era of Perwaiz Musharraf, when he wanted to sell these farms to multinational companies and evict thousands of peasants. The movement to stop this eviction gradually became the movement of ‘ownership or death’.

Voices of protest have been reverberating in support of providing ownership rights to the tillers of the land. The Okara Military Farms became the centre of this movement and peasants from dozens of farms all over the Punjab came together. The slogan *ownership or death* became the rallying point of this movement. In 1999 during the struggle many peasants gave the ultimate sacrifice, making their name immortal and have secured a permanent place in the minds of the people. This movement of the peasants during the era of Perwaiz Musharraf had played a heroic and unforgettable role without the fear of martial law. It’s also worth mentioning the role of those women who saved their lands from being sold to multinationals and the land mafia by sacrificing their lives at that time. But the saga of this struggle did not end but it continued, all those who believe in the supremacy of the dictatorship of proletariat from all over the country came together further strengthening the ongoing struggle.

The movement had forces associated with NGOs, who with their vast resources, wanted to hijack it and for sometime they succeeded. They always wanted to deviate the movement from attaining its ultimate goal of land ownership. The leaders associated with the NGOs deliberately collided the struggle with the authorities so that it never reach its final goal and they continue to mint money at the cost of the peasants

But the year 2010 proved to be very different. From peasants’ quarters voices of resistance rose against the NGOs and all other vested interest groups whose prime motive was to fill their own coffers at the expense of the belligerent peasants. With the passage of time these voices said that they would themselves, with the help their own class allies lead the movement. In the beginning this appeared to be a difficult task, as in



Anjuman Mazareen Punjab (A.M.P) there was a rift between those who were for the NGOs and those against them. But later the overwhelming majority of the peasants decided that they will not participate in the movement if it was led by the NGOs. In such circumstances the Anjuman Mazareen Punjab in Perowal Stud Farm Khanewal Chak 87-10-R announced the date of a Peasants' Conference, along with a call of a 'Protest Rally' from Khanewal to Lahore. On reaching Lahore, there was a programme to cordon off the Punjab Assembly till the acceptance of the peasant's demand for ownership of land was met. All these announcements were made in the month of February 2010. Peasants from all over Punjab prepared to arrive in Khanewal. It was the first time in the decade long history of struggle that peasant themselves were leading their rally and their conference. All financial costs were borne by them. Every peasant contributed according to their ability. Every wall of the Punjab Agricultural farms was covered by posters announcing the protest rally and the peasants' conference. Banners with slogan 'Ownership or Death' were displayed in every village and town. The only talk of the towns was the Long March from Khanewal to Lahore. Everyone was busy, someone sewing the flags while the others collecting rods for them. Tractors and trolleys were being prepared for the journey. There were corner meetings held round the clock, everyone was giving assurance to each other for his participation and were trying to take the lead. Words cannot describe the enthusiastic fervour that I witnessed. I myself keenly observed those bright eyes and shining foreheads. I have not seen such enthusiasm and fervour in my 40 years political life. It was entirely a new experience for me. Along with my old comrade and the leader of Anjuman Mazareen Punjab, Wazir Sahoo, we traversed from village to village witnessing those scenes closely.

On the evening of 8th March a delegation led by special assistant chief minister of Punjab Raja Ashfaq Saroor reached Khanewal to meet the peasants. Negotiations started in the Circuit House, Khanewal, but after 3 to 4 hours discussion the outcome was nil. The delegation of the rulers was insisting that the announcement of the long march be cancelled so that negotiations could take place. At the other end the peasants' delegation were demanding a commitment of land ownership before they called off the long march announcement. None showed any flexibility in their respective stands. The leaders of the peasants on their return from Khanewal started to more aggressively prepare for the rally. They also decided not to hold the Peasants' Conference and to be more focused on the long march. All night preparations were in progress. In morning at 8.00

A.M. from the Khanewal Perowal farms men and women carrying with themselves pieces of bread, bottles of water, and with rods started gathering at the points from where they were supposed to start the march. Within 2 hours the roads of all villages were full of children, youth and elders. At the pre-decided time of 10.00 A.M. with the slogan of 'Ownership or Death' the rally started for the final destination of Lahore. The distance of Lahore from Khanewal is 287 kilometres. On slow speed vehicles like tractor trolleys this distance cannot be covered in less than 14 to 15 hours. Nobody was concerned when they will reach Lahore everyone had one aim and mission to cordon off the Punjab Assembly after reaching Lahore. This incident reminded me of the scenes from the novel of Krishan Chander 'Jab Khaet Jagtay Hain' (When Villages Awake). In every village on each road there was a sea of thousands of men and women holding red flags. When these all small processions gathered on one road it was the march which was spread over miles with hundreds of tractor trolleys (which came from different towns), cars, motorcycles and people on foot. From here the distance of the main road is about 8 to 10 kilometres.

With the workers of Lever Brothers under the leadership of their leader Mohammad Hussain Bhatti and the comrades of the Railway Workers' Union under the leadership of Ghulam Nabi Awan and Ghulam Abbas Daha joining the march the atmosphere got charged with the reverberating slogan of 'Workers-Peasants Unity'. The rulers were also not unaware of all these preparations. The police had blocked the ways which led to the main road from the villages by placing trawlers on it. A heavy contingent of police was deployed to block the rally of the belligerent peasants. But it was not in their (police) control to stop such a big rally of peasants and workers. At last after crossing these blockades and covering the distance of 8 kilometres, peasants and workers came to the main road. Meanwhile journalists from Khanewal under the leadership of the known journalist and social and political leader, columnist Amir Hussaini joined the peasants' rally. Gradually friends from the electronic media also start coming and people of Pakistan started to know of the struggle of the peasants. After that for 20 kilometres we did not face any blockade but 15 kilometres before Mian Chunno the police had barricaded the canal bridge with the help of containers. There was a deployment of more than one thousand well armed policemen at that spot, high officials of the police was also present at the spot. Due to these circumstances the long march had been stopped before that point.

Dr. Amna Buttar, a Pakistan People's Party member from the provincial assembly Punjab along with her husband and political leader Advocate Khawar Mahmood Khatana were also accompanying us and they had reached Perowal farm the night before. The three of us after getting the approval of the leadership of Anjuman Mazareen Punjab went for negotiations with the police. The police had adopted an extremely aggressive attitude. From constables to high officials all were steering that they want to eat our flesh. We did our best to make them understand that the unarmed men, children, women do not want to fight with them, that we want our right, our freedom, our farms, we want to get a hearing from the Punjab government that is why we are going there. But the police replied that they have the orders to stop the rally at any cost even by exercising the option to shoot. The police ill treated us. On our return we appraised Mahar Ghulam Abbas, Younus Iqbal, Wazir Ahmed Sahoo, Dr, Cristofer Jan, Liaquat Ali Gul, Faizaan Bibi leaders of Anjuman Mazareen Punjab about the situation. Soon it was decided to sit till the acceptance of the demands. The only highway of Pakistan was blocked. It was 1.30 A.M. Police remained there in position and the peasants camped on the broad road. This status quo was maintained till 5.00 P.M. when the Punjab government called the leaders of the Anjuman Mazareen Punjab and showed their interest in negotiation. A delegation of representatives of Anjuman Mazareen Punjab left Okara for negotiations that continued for three and half an hours. Women, children remained there on the road. There was no regret on any one's face. Everyone was very much concern about each other.

During this whole process the leader of the Communist Mazdoor Kissan Party Mr. Taimur Ur Rahman along with his comrades made the event more colourful by singing revolutionary songs. At night around 9.30 P.M. news reached that the negotiations were successful and the government of Punjab had announced that they were going to give ownership rights to the peasants of nearly 35 government agricultural farms, it was also announced that the process will be completed within one month's time. As this news came there was a ripple of excitement amongst the peasants, they felt that now they have broken the shackles of slavery which they were carrying like an albatross around their necks since 1885. In the same zeal and sprit they returned to their homes. It's for sure that this announcement cannot straighten the back of bowed old peasants but after the ownership rights they will get rid of the pressure that they had been bearing since 1885. This movement was started in

1999, and I want to mention with full responsibility that the movement would not have succeeded if the participation of women along men was not there. Their role will not be forgotten. Although the government of Punjab has announced the rights for ownership, but there are still several hurdles on the way. There are reservations that the shrewd bureaucracy will try to create hurdles and may not keep to the promised timeline. But because of the scenes which I have seen I can say with full confidence that now no power can stop peasants from getting their rights, and the most important reason of all is that all of the workers of Pakistan are with them.

*Shaukat Chaudry is General Secretary, Pakistan Mazdoor Mahaz.*

### **Anti displacement movement**

#### **I Stop the Corporate Terror Against the Adivasis of Kalinganagar**

*Statement of Protest by Janpaksh  
31 March 2010*

Today 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2010 in Kalinga Nagar industrial complex in Orissa's Jajpur district heavily armed para-military force brutally attacked the adivasis who are resisting the construction of 7.5 km road, being constructed for Tata's (the biggest Indian industrial house) upcoming project.

The adivasi villages have been razed and houses demolished. In Balligotha village firing on adivasis took place injuring about 15 persons. One of them who is seriously injured has been whisked away by the police. This brutal attack is organized after days of preparation in order to put down the resistance of adivasis against Tata's project which will displace thousands of families. About 25 platoons of police and paramilitary forces have been deployed and the district administration has started construction in Kalinga Nagar industrial area of Common Corridor Road (CCR).

The state government has been falsely claiming that the land it wants to acquire is wasteland, while the reality is something diametrically different. This area that has been called as the core zone consists of green hills with rich forests, tribal settlements of more than ten thousand people spread over two gram panchayats, agricultural lands, ancient tanks, grazing fields, village common lands and roads. Twenty per cent of the Project area has quality forest where timber species like Sal, Kuruma, Vandan, Ashan and Piasal, besides Mahula, Kendu are plentifully available. The total area of waste land is less than 5 acres on the Northern side.

The Orissa government till date has signed nearly 40 MoUs with various industrial houses and groups to set up their plants in Orissa out of which 13 plants are planned in Kalinga Nagar of Jajpur district. The government has been equally brutal against the tribal communities gathered at Maikanch and Kashipur in protest against Utkal Alumina Project, whereby three tribals were killed in Maikanch in the recent past. The government has come out openly as the hireling of the exploitative

capitalists, at the expense of the poor and the voiceless. It has been brazenly trampling upon the basic right of livelihood of the local population with impunity.

This is not the first time in Kalinga Nagar that the state and its armed forces have proved to be so brazenly vindictive, aligning with the industrialists at the cost of local communities. In the past also it has used its force to silence the resistance of the poor. Four years ago in police firing 14 tribals, including three women, were murdered, on January 2, 2006 while opposing forcible land acquisition by the Tata Steel for its proposed steel project in the area. The same saga is being repeated today.

We severely condemn this barbarous attack on adivasis by the police and para-military forces who are acting as a hired mercenary of Tata Steel company and demand that it should immediately stop the construction work of the Common Corridor Road project as it will be built on fertile farm land and the community land of the tribals who are the real owner of this land.

We appeal to all the organizations and concerned citizens to raise their voice against the Fascist predatory tendencies of the Govt and express solidarity with the belligerent tribals of Kalinga Nagar.

#### **II Halt the Offensive Against People and End Militarisation of the Forests**

*Joint Statement of Forest People's Movements  
13 March 2010*

Yesterday, (12 May 2010) the police have killed one person (Lakshman Jamud in Chandia village) in Kalinganagar and critically injured at least thirty more; at the proposed POSCO plant site in Jagatsinghpur, Orissa, 25 platoons of police have been deployed to crush the people defending their land. They expect an attack tomorrow or the day after.

As national platforms of democratic forest movements, with more than 200 organisational members spread across the country, we unequivocally condemn this brutality. But such atrocities are not occurring in isolation. Operation Green Hunt and the increasing militarisation of the conflict in central India is wreaking devastation in our homelands and closing the space for democratic struggles. We first reiterate the following facts, to expose the myths being promoted by the government:

- *In all the areas where Operation Green Hunt is underway, aside from individual atrocities, security forces are now preventing*

people from entering the forest, cultivating their lands or collecting minor forest produce. The numbers that are threatened with starvation or disease as a result is not even known. These facts have been ignored even as the tragic loss of lives in Maoist attacks have received a lot of attention. How can an offensive with such results be justified?

- *An offensive in the name of the “rule of law” has been launched in areas where the government has never shown the slightest respect for the law.* Under the law, land acquisition in Scheduled Areas is subject to consultation with the gram sabha (village assembly); diversion of forest land in all forests is subject to the consent of the gram sabha; and people have rights over village common lands, forests, water bodies and grazing areas. Can the government name a single place in the country where the rights of people over forests and lands have been fully recognised and respected? Can it name a single “development” project in the forest areas that has complied with the requirements of law? Rather, in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh alone, after 2006 the government has illegally granted in principle or final clearances for the use of 15,411 hectares of forest land to various “projects”.
- *The government’s true intentions are revealed by their response to democratic movements in the majority of forest areas, where the CPI(Maoist) does not exist.* As an indicator, in just the few weeks between March 20 and April 20, activists in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam and West Bengal were arrested or attacked by police for the crime of standing up for the law and demanding legal rights. The protesters at POSCO and many other places, who have no link whatsoever with the Maoists, are being attacked. These are examples of a trend that has become far worse with Operation Green Hunt, under which the label “Maoist” is used to justify all kinds of brutality. The Home Minister’s latest statement threatening anyone “supporting Maoism” with jail is clearly aimed at justifying yet more such brutality.
- *The conflicts in forest areas, whether with the CPI(Maoist) or with other movements, have nothing to do with “security” or “development”.* What is at stake is the right of people to control their ecology, their production systems and their lives. Can a community lead a life of dignity when they are harassed, beaten or killed every time they cultivate forest land, collect minor forest produce or protest evictions? People are not demanding *welfare*; they are struggling for the right to live with freedom and dignity.

*This is the true meaning of security, development and the rule of justice.*

- *It is clear that the government’s offensive is driven by more obvious interests – resource grabs (in water, minerals and land) have become a key source of profits.* As the Maheshwar Dam, Vedanta or POSCO projects were found to break the law, the government has scrambled to bend or break the law itself to favour the corporates. When the Forest Department promotes illegal policies in international negotiations on climate change (i.e. the REDD agreement), these are not just condoned but promoted as a point of pride. Meanwhile, people’s rights over minor forest produce, forest land and common lands are frustrated at every turn by official violations of the Forest Rights Act. Clearly this is why the government now wants to crush all resistance, whether it is organised by the CPI(Maoist) or not.

### **Beyond Green Hunt: A Call for Democratic Space**

*We believe in and stand for the mass democratic struggle of the working people for social transformation. From this perspective, the damage is not limited to this offensive and the devastation it is wreaking.* More insidious but much longer lasting is the destructive impact this militarisation is having on the democratic space for people’s struggles. This militarisation is not limited to Operation Green Hunt.

Even outside this offensive, the government has consistently used its force against all democratic formations and those who speak the language of people’s rights; it has thrown the Constitution to the winds. The CPI(Maoist) has also engaged in indiscriminate physical attacks against those who are of a different political allegiance, and has often shown little tolerance for those who are engaged in other movements or who are critical of them. The turning of vast areas of the country into war zones, where all else is subordinated to the perceived military needs of the government or the CPI(Maoist), is unacceptable. It constitutes a betrayal of the values that both the CPI(Maoist) and the government claim to believe in. For this reason above all, there is an urgent need at this moment to restore basic democratic norms in the conflict zones.

### **Our Call:**

1. The paramilitary forces must be withdrawn and the salwa judum, as well as other similar private militias in other states, must be disbanded. Public facilities – schools, clinics, etc. - must be treated as out of bounds for the conflict.

2. The government must respect the rights of people over their lands, forest produce and community forest resources as provided by the Constitution, the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, the Forest Rights Act and other such laws. It must comply with the requirements under these Acts relating to the consent of the community prior to diversion or acquisition of land.
3. The security forces must stop interfering with the rights of people to cultivate their fields, go to markets and engage in their livelihood activities.
4. Illegal arrests, fake encounters and police murders must be halted immediately.
5. The CPI(Maoist) should make clear its position on the activities of other political forces in the conflict areas. It should respect the right of the people to be members of other parties, including opposing parties, or other movements and to otherwise exercise their democratic rights.
6. The right of refugees and the displaced to return home, especially in Dantewada, must be respected by the security forces and their private militias.

## II Join Anti Posco Resistance week 15-21st May 2010

*POSCO Pratirodh Sangram Samiti (PPSS)  
13 May 2010*

Dear Friends,

Our sincere and heart-felt thanks to you all for your continuous supports and cooperations to the people in struggles for the protection of their lands and livelihoods from the clutches of the South Korean eagle POSCO. Now, on behalf of the POSCO Pratirodh Sangram Samiti (PPSS), I am writing this letter with a special request.

As you know, in protest of the joint conspiracy by the Manmohan Singh Government at Delhi, Naveen Government at Bhubaneswar and South Korean President, we, the people of Dhinkia Charidesh have been continuing our day-and- night peaceful Dharna (Sit-in) at Balitutha since last 107th days began from 26th January 2010 mid-night. Everyday thousands of women, men, children from families of peasants, fisher-folks, landless labourers, dalits are participating in the sit-in. Sadly enough,

views of affected people did not create any sense of responsibility among the governments supposed to represent people of India. Moreover, they have been showing extra-ordinary favours to the corporates such as POSCO, Vedanta and TATA.

On the last Republic Day, both Manomohan Singh and Naveen Patnaik governments had assured to South Korean President Lee Myung-bak in a special meet at Delhi that the state government will expedite works 'to hand over lands to POSCO'. Throwing behind all protocols related to Republic Day celebrations in Orissa, a frustrated CM rushed to Delhi to prove his allegiance to SK President. PM, CM along UPA Chairperson had a meeting with him. They did not hesitate to sell the 'dignity' of people's India to a private company on the same day of India's pride.

Utter failure to displace the people by any means has made the desperate Orissa Government blood-thirsty. On 12th May 2010, the Orissa Police killed a person at Kalinga Nagar, where they had massacred 14 persons on 2nd Jan 2006. They are going to use the same murderous tricks at Dhinkia Charidesh to dissuade people from their resistance. On 11th May they sent, twenty five platoons of heavily armed police force have arrived and have already taken position around Balitutha and Dhinkia Charidesh to attack, the unarmed peasants, fisher-folks, landless daily labourers, dalits, other backward classes, women, men, children those who continuing their peaceful resistance movements the lands and livelihoods. With a well-crafted evil design, they have also brought 3 Magistrates with the police and sent 5 ambulances to nearby Kujanga Hospital. Almost all the schools at nearby villages have been forcibly occupied by the Police force in spite of the opposition by the villagers.

At this decisive juncture, PPSS decides to face the reality and calls to observe Mass Resistance Week from 15-21 May 2010 at Balitutha and affected villages. People in thousand numbers will gather there to express their support and solidarity to the struggling villagers. In this context, we would like to call people's movements, political parties, trade unions, human rights organizations, solidarity groups, activists, supporters, sympathizers from various corners of the country to participate in the Resistance.

We are glad enough to invite you to make it possible to join the Resistance Week. You may, please, come to Balitutha and Dhinkia Charidesh on or before 15th and leave after 21st May 2010. We would also request you to bring your own fooding, tents and banner with you. Those who cannot physically be present may organise protests or send letters, faxes or phone calls of protest to the addresses below. Your smallest support will be our greatest inspiration.



## War on People

### I Indian State's War on People and the Assault on Democratic Voices

*Forum Against War on People  
24 April 2010, Delhi*

It has been seven months since the Government's war on the people named 'Operation Green Hunt' was launched in September 2009. The war has been further intensified by the government, expanding it to ever new regions during this period. The operations started with a deployment of paramilitary forces on the tri-junction of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh on one side and on Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh borders on the other, has now been extended to cover the states of Jharkhand, Bihar and Bengal as well. The Union Home Minister P Chidambaram is travelling the length and breadth of the country to sell the war to the state governments. The 'security' forces are moving deeper into the forests wielding sophisticated weapons and with Air Force backup, leaving behind a trail of destruction and death of adivasis and their villages. Going by the government's own admission, around 107 adivasis have been killed during this Operation till mid-January. Most of them have been killed in a cold-blooded manner in fake encounters. What is going on today in the adivasi-inhabited regions of central and eastern India is nothing less than a calculated genocide of our own people; a war of extermination in the heart of the country.

**Operation Green Hunt is an unprecedented military offensive on the people:** Indian government has been at war with the people of Kashmir and the North East for decades. In the name of 'national security' and 'national interest', the government has been trying to crush the democratic aspirations of these oppressed nationalities with state terror. Through Operation Green Hunt, the government has brought its war on people to the heart of India. If the total number of government forces presently engaged in this Operation is taken in its entirety (including the paramilitary forces and the state police) it comes close to a quarter of a million (2.5 lakh). This is more than double the US forces presently deployed in the occupation of Iraq—approximately 1.2 lakh—and bigger than the armies of Australia, Netherlands and South Africa put together. The war preparations alone speak volumes about the real intentions of the

government. Air Force helicopters equipped with guns are used against the adivasis, airstrips are constructed in Raipur and Jagdalpur, tens of Jungle-Warfare schools are established to train the forces in special operations, new barracks and bases to station armed forces are prepared all over the war zone, and public buildings such as schools, panchayat houses and health centres are converted to camps for the Security Forces and torture chambers. In the name of fighting Naxalites/Maoists, new armed forces such as the CoBRA, Jharkhand Jaguar, C-60, etc are raised with public money to unleash terror on the adivasis. With a heinous intent, special emphasis is given by the government to recruit adivasi youths into government forces and state-sponsored vigilante gangs to instigate a bloody internecine war. To top it all, army commanders are deputed to oversee the war operations while the US is providing 'advisors', military intelligence, satellite surveillance and overall 'tactical guidance'.

**The hidden objective behind this unprecedented military offensive** is to crush all forms of people's struggles and revolutionary movements so as to clear the way for the giant multinational companies, with whom hundreds of MoUs have been signed by the government. Till September 2009, MoUs worth of Rs.6,69,338 crores have been signed in the adivasi regions of these states (which is 14 percent of the total pledged private investment in the entire country). Arcelor Mittal alone is planning to invest \$24 billion for the production of iron-ore in the mineral-rich regions of Jharkhand and Orissa. Likewise, the financial worth of the unexplored bauxite deposits of Orissa alone is estimated to exceed \$4 trillion. The powerful foreign and Indian corporations are lying in wait for the government clears the land of the adivasis and smash their resistance, so that they can move into the land with earth-diggers and empty the land out of its minerals. The stage has been set to undertake what has been termed by a Government-appointed committee as the "biggest land-grab after Columbus". The target this time is not the indigenous inhabitants of North America, but the adivasis of central and eastern India.

**The ongoing War on People leaves a trail of devastation and death:** In the wake of this war imposed by the government on our own people the death-count is mounting. In a region where 40 people are said to be killed every week on an average (Outlook, 22 February 2010), what the corporate media has missed or has deliberately overlooked is the sheer number of adivasis who died in the hand of the government's armed forces. Whereas the government has claimed success in killing around 170 'Maoists'/'Naxalites' during the joint operations under Operation Green Hunt till now, whereas the media quoted the Maoists saying that none of

the killed were the members of their organisation. There are reasons to believe that a great part of the dead were unarmed and defenceless villagers killed in cold blood by the joint forces in fake encounters. The killing of adivasis in Gompad, Singanmadugu, Tetemadugu, Dogpadu, Palachelim, Palad, Kachalaram and scores of other villages in Chhattisgarh seems to have followed such a pattern.

**An attack on democratic voices:** By these acts of fascist repression, the government has made it very clear that the Naxalite movement is not the only target of its war operations. Any movement, organisation or individual that fights for people's demands and against government policies, is to be branded as a part of the Naxalite/Maoist movement and suppressed by the government through Operation Green Hunt. Swapan Dasgupta, the editor of the journal *People's March* in Bengali and owner of Radical Publications was arrested. He died in police custody on 2nd February 2010 even before his trial began due to police torture. He has become the first martyr to fall under the draconian UAPA. Lalmohan Tudu, president of People's Committee against Police Atrocities (PCAPA) in Lalgargh was picked up from his house and shot dead by the paramilitary forces on 23rd February, 2010. On 20th November 2009, Wadeka Singana, the president of the Chasi Mulia Adivasi Sangh (CMAS), Narayanpatna in Orissa along with another activist was shot dead by the police during a rally to protest against the atrocities committed on women by the government's armed forces. Two of the CPI(ML) leaders Ganapati Patro and Tapan Malik have been arrested on numerous trumped up charges. In Kalinganagar 28 platoons of special police were used to attempt to forcibly acquire land for a road in service of Tatas. When the Bisthapan Birodhi Janmanch Sukinda led adivasis protested, police firing on 30th March 2010 led to bullet injuries to 16 tribal people. Repression is intensifying in the anti-land acquisition movements of Niyamgiri and Jagatsinghpur and against movements under Lok Sangram Manch in Rayagada of Orissa.

The Vanavasi Chetna Ashram of Himanshu Kumar, a Gandhian social activist working in Dantewada for the past 18 years among the adivasis and fighting against the atrocities of Salwa Judum, was razed to the ground on 17th May 2009. In three eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh no mass activity is allowed by declaring these districts as 'Naxal-infested.' Two PUCL activists, Sheema and Vishwa Vijay were arrested in Uttar Pradesh. Hundreds of leaders of farmers' organisations in Punjab were arrested to prevent their democratic right to protest against state killings of farmers and other leaders. Thousands have been imprisoned in jails all

over the country and tortured for allegedly being Naxalite/Maoist 'sympathizers'. People's organisations like PUCL, IAPL, PUDR, RDF, PDFI, CRPP, APDR, DSU, etc. and their activists have been falsely implicated by the government. This is an attempt to unleash state terror in order to curtail our democratic rights and to silence all voices of dissent against this genocidal Hunt of the Adivasis. A climate of undeclared emergency now prevails in the country in the wake of this undeclared war on people and the assault on democratic space by the Indian State.

The Home Minister, who has been campaigning desperately to mobilise support for this US-dictated war on the poorest of the poor, has even gone to the extent of denying the existence of Operation Green Hunt! Similarly, he continues to utter the rhetoric of 'Talks' while refusing to take a single step towards creating a conducive atmosphere for any negotiation to take place. Such, lies, hypocrisy and double-talk by Chidambaram with the support of the Arnab Goswamis, Rajdeep Sardesai and his other wily allies in the corporate media, has not been able to hide the truth of this war. Even the Supreme Court of India, while hearing a petition on the 'disappearance' of 12 adivasis from Gompad village of Dantewada district during Green Hunt, castigated the government's offensive. The court observed, "Some of the reports appearing in the media are disturbing. Over two lakh people have been displaced in this fight... Where will they go? What will they grow?" (IBN Live, 17 February 2010).

**The resistance to the government's war on people is growing:**

The millions of adivasis under direct attack from the state's offensive are using all means to defend themselves and their jal-jangal-jameen. The democratic and progressive sections of the country have also come out against the government's war on the people in the last few months. Individuals and organisations within India and abroad have in one voice condemned the government's genocidal war. Hundreds of protest rallies, dharnas and demonstrations are being organised in different parts of the country and outside. Peasants, workers, employees, intellectuals, artists, writers, civil rights activists, students etc. have registered their strong protest against the government, and demanded an immediate halt to the Operation Green Hunt. The need of the hour therefore is to unite and build the broadest possible solidarity among the people against this war and intensify the resistance. Only an unceasing wave of mass resistance can stop government's assault on struggles against sale of the country and plunder of resources and suppression of democratic struggles.

to the extermination of the most oppressed and exploited millions of our own people.

## **II** **Illegal detention of Human Rights Activists, Writer and Photographer**

*Jharkhand Indigenous People's Forum  
17 May 2010*

Jharkhand is known for its mineral resources and people's movement against the land acquisition for the corporate houses. However, a Corporate House "Bhushan Steel and Power Limited" has purchased 135 acres of private land secretly from the villagers belonging to the business community of Potka comes under East Singhbhum district in Jharkhand. The company has started levelling the land and already established 3 portable ITI centre (moving house) at Potka village. The initial work of establishment has resulted in a sense of insecurity and tension among the villagers of entire Potka region.

Needless to say that the company has signed a MoU with the Jharkhand government on 7 September, 2006 for establishing an integrated steel plant of 3 Mt and 900 MW power plant with the estimated investment of 10,500 crore. Consequently, there would be mass displacement and the local people especially the Adivasis have been protesting against the land acquisition for steel and power plants since 2006. So far, the company has failed to implement its plan.

The company had announced a formal Bhumi Pujan (inauguration) programme to be conducted on May 16. Consequently, the situation was completely tense. There were series of meetings going on in the villages under the banner of "Bisthapan Virodhi Ekta Manchi" a pioneer organization of the displacement movement supported by many people's organizations and movements. The organization had decided to impose an indefinite "Janta Curfew" (People Curfew) at Potka, which had begun at 6 PM on May 15.

Gladson Dungdung Human Rights Activist, writer and convener of Jharkhand Indigenous people's forum, Joy Raj Tudu Programme Head Jharkhand Initiatives, Vijay Munda - DBSS, Arvind Kishku volunteer Jharkhand Initiatives of CNI-SBSS, Photographer Gopal Paswan and Badal Sardar convener of Khutkati Raiyat Bhumi Raksha Samity were taken to police custody at 10 PM in the night on May 15 while they were coming back to Roladih village after attending a preparation meeting at Khariasai village. The OC of Potka Police Station, Mr. Mahesh Prasad arrested them

near Potka village. After some time, SP of Jamshedpur rural Mr. Shashikant Kujur reached on the spot. After verifying identity cards, vehicle papers and checking, all 6 people were taken to Potka police station.

The OC Mr. Mahesh Prasad questioned why you people are protesting against the Bhushan Company. He said that you have seen women going to Jamshedpur for job. If the plant is established, they will get job at Potka itself. He threatened that if the protesters do not allow establishing the plants of Bhushan Company then their kids would face a serious problem during the verification for their jobs. The Superintendent of Police Mr. Shashikant Kujur said that if you want to talk to the officials of the Bhushan Company we would connect you with them. You can get job, tender and money from the company, which would lead you to a good life. You have to just convince people to withdraw the people's curfew and let the Bhumi Pujan to be conducted.

All 6 people were illegally detained for 6 hours alleging that being the outsiders; they have come to instigate the villagers against the Bhushan Company. They were released at 4'O clock in the morning on May 16 with the condition to leave Potka immediately. The OC of Potka Mr. Mahesh Prasad threatened that if they take part in the protest against the Bhushan Steel they would be facing a dire consequence and booked under IPC 144 and other serious offence. The acts of the OC and the SP are serious violation of the Human rights guaranteed through the Indian Constitution Article 19, 21 and 22.

Therefore, we demand for:

1. A high level inquiry should be done on the case of illegal detaining and the police officers role in the establishment of the Bhushan Company.
2. A legal action against the OC of Potka police station Mr. Mahesh Prasad and the Rural Superintendent of Police Mr. Shashikant Kujur who illegally detained Human Rights Activists, Writer and Photographer for 6 hours in Potka Police Station.
3. The OC of Potka police station Mr. Mahesh Prasad and the Superintendent of Police (Jamshedpur – Rural) Mr. Shashikant Kujur should be immediately transferred from their posts precisely because instead of maintaining the law and order they are influencing the villagers on behalf of the Bhushan Steel and Power Ltd.
4. The MoU of the Bhushan Steel and Power Ltd. should be immediately cancelled and a case should be filed against the company to creating tense, insecurity and clash among the communities.

5. The villagers should be given protection and their livelihood resources should not be allowed to be taken away by any of the corporate criminals including the state.

### **III** **Selling India by the Pound** **The hidden story of Operation Green Hunt**

*Joint statement of civil societies in Delhi*  
*3 April 2010*

Operation Green Hunt was launched in the latter half of 2009 and a large contingent of paramilitary and military forces aided and abetted by mercenaries were deployed in large parts of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and West Bengal. It is a war supposedly to free the people of these areas from Maoist influence. By repeated declarations and one-sided media statements the Government has made Maoists “the single largest internal security threat to the country”.

Advertisements are regularly appearing in all major newspapers which call Maoists nothing but cold-blooded murderers. They are being accused of terrorizing the poor, killing men and rendering women widows, destroying school buildings, as criminals who indulge in extortion. The Home Ministry then exhorts the common people to stop violence and become prosperous. According to government sources 203 districts are affected by Maoists. What we should ask is: are people prospering in the remaining 400 districts? Do people have enough employment there? Do children go to schools? Do innocent people not die untimely deaths there?

Let’s take the case of Delhi which is not affected by Maoists. Prices of basic food items have skyrocketed. One day it is sugar, another day milk, on the third the price of cooking gas or public transport – the government keeps increasing prices under one pretext or the other, or many a time without giving any reasons. While the common citizens pay ever-rising prices the benefits go increasingly to big companies. Sugar mills and traders make windfall profits by importing sugar and selling it at uncontrolled prices; Petrol fills the coffers of the likes of Ambanis.

We have witnessed many innocent people being killed in the last thirty years. Gas leak in Bhopal killed thousands but no punitive action has yet been taken against the management. In the case of the proposed Nuclear Civil Liability Bill, instead of protecting its citizens, the government

has been trying to cap the damages to be paid by nuclear companies of US regardless of the destruction they cause. The killing of innocents is not acceptable to anyone, but why have the guilty of the 1984 riots belonging to Congress not been punished as yet? By inciting people to break down the Babri Masjid, BJP caused riots all over the country; why use the army against one set of supposed killers (Maoists and other “insurgents”) but set up tedious commissions for communal riots against another?

The other charge against the Maoists is that they are luring people by making false promises of prosperity. But one must not forget that the Maoist party and their predecessors came into existence long after ruling parties had made these promises to people for decades to garner their votes. It is the false promises of development which lacked any real will that gave opportunity to new forces and parties. At any rate the real reason to send the army to these states is not to flush out Maoists.

The reality is that our government is subservient to domestic and foreign capital. Today, these masters are not satisfied with control over the market—whether it is retail, whole sale, rural, urban, high end or of those that cater to basic necessities. They are desperate for the real estate, water, and minerals and other natural resources. The regions and states where the Operation Green Hunt is being carried out have a large proportion of tribal population who have been living under dismal conditions for decades. The only outreach of the government to them has comprised of the Forest Department and the police and neither has lost any opportunity to intimidate them. Unfortunately for the tribals, their land has vast mineral treasures hidden under their feet. To mine these and to process them, the concerned governments have signed unprecedented numbers of MoUs with Indian as well as foreign companies during the last five years. In this period another opportunity has also been created for real estate speculation and take-over with the SEZs Act.

If the MoUs have to be honoured then the government is under compulsion to remove the present inhabitants. Crores of people will be affected in this exercise. While the government is eager to implement the MoUs it has thrown to winds all the constitutional guarantees under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution which acknowledge the traditional rights of the tribals to the forest land. Notwithstanding the tall claims of Rehabilitation and Resettlement there has not been a single case so far of proper rehabilitation of the people who have been affected. All the ‘Modern Temples’—as Nehru used to call it—of ‘Development’ like Mega dams, Steel factories, mining establishments till date have been built on the graveyards of people who were never part of that much abused word,



'development'. The poorest of the poor people of these regions are facing perhaps the worst ever murderous campaign, called "the biggest land grab since Columbus" by none other than the Ministry of Rural Development report of the Government of India! In the state of Chhattisgarh 644 villages have been vacated in the district of Dantewada alone by burning and looting. The residents are forced to live in inhuman conditions in refugee camps which lack basic facilities and are no more than night shelters. Lakhs are hiding in the jungles without any support system and lakhs have migrated to districts like Khammam in the neighbouring states. This eviction was carried out using a private army called Salwa Judum. But when this operation was not adequate as it met with stiff resistance from the local people as well as the civil society and a sizeable section of the media provoking worldwide indignation then further operations were planned using the pretext of Maoist threat. The people of India is time and again being informed and reassured by a suave, erudite, Mining Company Director-turned Lawyer- turned Finance Minister-turned Home Minister that the army will move in, clear the area of the Maoist 'menace', and development will follow closely on its heels.

Today it has become a crime to take the side of the tribals. Whether it is the Gandhians who provide them with rations, or the doctors who reach out for treating the tribals where the government has abandoned them, or the democratic rights organizations who expose the violence committed by the state or Salwa Judum. Such supporters have their Ashrams demolished, doctors and civil rights activists are thrown in jail, even fact finding teams are not allowed in the area. The tribals themselves are in a much worse shape. Complaints of rape are not filed, witnesses of police firing and atrocities are made to disappear and the Salwa Judum crosses over to Andhra Pradesh to intimidate the internally displaced tribals. Opposing the government and its excesses has been made the synonym of support to Maoists. Now, well known civil rights groups and leaders have been named explicitly in Kobad Ghandy's charge sheet. They are being called the fronts of Maoists. This act of association has been carried to such extremes that even the Supreme Court has warned the Chhattisgarh police to refrain from using "Maoist supporter" as an "innuendo". Not just in Chhattisgarh but in other states as well people are struggling against oppression and exploitation. To term all protest as Maoist has become the standard response of the government.

Does it mean that sooner than later the army will be called to deal with all resistance? Will prisons be filled up with the voices of dissent? The government's own reports acknowledge that Naxalism has grown on

account of neglect and miseries of the people. The response then calls for social and economic justice and not of military attacks under the guidance of American and Israeli specialists. Violence will evoke counter-violence because peaceful protests are facing firing everywhere leaving them little option. Whether we look at Tamil Nadu or UP or Karnataka or Maharashtra we find that freedom of expression is largely abridged and leafletting is also termed as sedition. Draconian laws follow each other with urgency to crush dissent, terming everything into a crime at the whim of those in power and bringing incarceration without trials in their wake. Media is run as a profit making venture by large corporations and it gives weightage and coverage to those in power.

No amount of force or use of army is likely to bring lasting peace. We should not forget that army has been used extensively in Kashmir and the Northeast. For sixty years these areas are under siege. In Manipur, for every citizen there are forty men in uniform – the result is false encounters, rapes and disappearances. The Home ministry states that at the height of insurgency there were 3000 extremists in Kashmir. The violence unleashed to contain them led to human right violations, rapes and disappearances – all leaving deep scars in the psyche of Kashmiris which still breed hatred and mistrust. UN figures suggest that the victims of army atrocities far outnumber those of the militants. But this has not taught any lesson to the government and it persists in repeating military offensive in large parts of the country. The problem cannot be solved by combat and will lend itself only to a political and economic solution.

In the light of this, we call upon all concerned citizens to come together and join the struggle for people's rights to life, livelihood and resources.

We demand:

- Immediate and complete withdrawal of military and paramilitary forces.
- Allow independent observers to visit the affected areas.
- Make public all MOUs concerned with natural resource extraction and industrial production, 2005-09.

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**The statement was endorsed by:** Campaign against Genocide of Adivasis; Campaign for Peace & Democracy (Manipur); Campaign for Peace and Justice in Chhattisgarh; Citizens Initiative for Peace; Delhi Solidarity Group; Delhi University Campaign against War on People; Forum against War on People; Janmadhyam; Jawaharlal Nehru University Forum against War on People; Manipur Students' Association, Delhi; People's Union for Democratic Rights; Saheli; and others.



## Human Rights

### **I Post Mortem reports of Atif and Sajid call the bluff of NHRC and Delhi Police; Institute Judicial Probe into the Batla House ‘Encounter’ Immediately.**

*Jamia Teachers’ Solidarity Association  
19 March 2010*

The NHRC has released the documents which formed the basis of its conclusion that the Batla House ‘encounter’ was genuine. The post mortem reports of the slain young men, Atif Ameen and Md. Sajid, as well as Inspector Sharma have been made public for the first time. Thus far, the Delhi Police and AIIMS (which conducted the post mortem) have declined to provide information citing 8 (1) b and 8 (1) h of the RTI Act. Section 8(1) b of the Right To Information Act–2005 states that information which has been expressly forbidden to be published by any court of law or tribunal or the disclosure of which may constitute contempt of court cannot be provided to a RTI petitioner. Section 8(1) h states that information cannot be provided about matters which would impede the process of investigation or apprehension or prosecution of the offenders. It should be noted that when the RTI was filed the first time by RTI activist and Jamia student Afroze Alam Sahil, a few days after the ‘encounter’, there was no direction from the court that such information be withheld. Indeed, frustrated by the Police’s refusal to part with the post mortem report, the Central Information Commission directed the Delhi Police to submit all documents pertaining to the Batla House Encounter before it by March 5, 2009 for inspection by the bench” so that it could examine whether the information could be made public. The Delhi Police instead rushed to the High Court, challenging this directive, feigning that such information would be detrimental to investigations. The High Court stayed the CIC directive on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

Meanwhile, the NHRC in its ‘enquiry’, extensively cited the postmortem report of Inspector Sharma to prove that he had been fired upon by alleged terrorists. While wounds suffered by the slain police officer were provided with great detail such as the places in the body where bullet injuries were found, their impact, ‘entry and exit points’ etc. Even the injury suffered in the arm by injured Constable Balwant Singh

carried all this information but the same treatment is curiously absent in the case of Atif and Sajid, the slain ‘terrorists’. This is surely intriguing because the post mortem report mentions quite clearly that:

- 1) **Atif Ameen** sustained injuries on right knee cap (injury number 7); grazing effects in the interscapular region or back region in layperson’s terms (injury number 11), multiple abrasions on right buttock (injury number 21). See attached photo of Atif’s back and leg which clearly illustrate these injuries.

It is further explicitly stated that injury number 7 was “produced by blunt force impact by object or surface.”

| Gun Shot Wound No (as in the report) | Size  | Area  |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 14                                   | 1 cm diameter, cavity deep                        | Left side of back   |
| 9                                    | 2X1 cm, cavity deep having 1 cm abrasion collar   | Left side back of chest   |
| 13                                   | 3X1 cm cavity deep with abrasion collar of 9.2 cm | Over midline at back, 30 cm below the nape of neck  |
| 8                                    | 1.5X1 cm X cavity deep                            | Right scapular region, 10 cm from midline and 7 cm below tip of right shoulder  |
| 15                                   | 0.5 cm diameter X cavity deep                     | Lower back midline, 44 cm below nape of neck  |
| 6                                    | 1.4 X1 cm oval in shape                           | Inner aspect of left thigh (track going upward), communicating with gsw injury no. 20 at left buttock region from where a metallic object is recovered. the GSW 20 is cited as of unusually large |

|    |               |  |
|----|---------------|--|
| 10 | 1X0.5 cm      | size of 5X2.2 cm<br>5 cm below right shoulder tip<br>& 14 cm below midline         |
| 11 | 1X0.5 cm      | Inter scapular region, 4 cm<br>right to midline                                    |
| 12 | 2X1.5 cm      | Right side back, 15 cm from<br>midline, 29 cm below tip of \<br>the right shoulder |
| 16 | 1 cm diameter | Outer and back aspect of<br>right forearm  |

The gun shot injuries received by Atif are as follows:

- Almost (8 out of 10) all the entry wounds on the body of Atif Ameen are on the back side, in the region below the shoulders and at the back of the chest, which point to the fact that he was repeatedly shot from behind.
- Another one (no.6 on the table) is on the inner side of the left thigh but suspiciously, the trajectory of the shot is in the upward direction, thus suggesting that in this case the shot was fired from below. What caused the unusually large wound of 5 x 2.2 cm? Why were metallic objects present in the left thigh?

2) **17-year-old Md Sajid** also displayed at least two injuries (numbers 13 and 14, interscapular region and right leg), which had been caused by blunt force impact by object or surface.” The gunshot injuries received by Sajid are as follows:

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Gun shot Wound no. 1  | Right frontal region of the scalp (forehead)                         |
| Gun shot Wound no. 2  | Right forehead   |
| Gun shot Wound no. 5  | Tip of right shoulder (going vertically downwards)                   |
| Gun shot Wound no. 8  | Back of left side chest (12 cm from root of neck)                    |
| Gun shot Wound no. 10 | Left side of occiput (in layperson’s term, back portion of the head) |

The entry points of each of these gunshot wounds—and the fact that all but one bullet is travelling in a downward direction—strongly suggests that he was held down by force (which also explain the injuries on the back and leg region), while bullets were pumped down his forehead, back and head. (See also photo attached.)

In which genuine cross fire do people receive injuries only in the back and head region??

The all-important question is at why the NHRC deliberately ignored this incriminating and suggestive evidence? In its refusal to pursue any contrary line of investigation, it has proved itself to be in collusion with the Delhi Police, discarding even the minimum pretence of impartiality.

## II

However, post mortem report is only one of the documents that been released by the NHRC to the appellant Afroze Alam. It includes, in addition, statements by senior police officers and a “Note on Investigation of the Serial Blasts at Delhi” (which became the basis for NHRC’s report and also the LG’s decision that no magisterial probe was required into the encounter’).

The Note on Investigation is high on allegations but cipher on any hard evidence. Some of the important point it makes to buttress its claims about Indian Mujaheddin and Atif Amin’s terror links are as follows:

1) The cell phone number 9811004309 is shown to be at the heart of the investigations. According to the police, this number was in touch with three cell numbers from Gujarat, which were under surveillance by Gujarat Police following the Ahmedabad blasts (which took place on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2008). Further, this number was found to be present near Nizamuddin station on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2008, from where according to the police, ‘terrorists’ booked train tickets for Ahmedabad.

According to the police, the cell number belonged Md. Atif Amin and the police even lists how this cell number was switched off on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2007 (UP court blasts).

However, by the police’s own admission in the Note, this number came to be acquired by Atif Amin on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2008 (much after UP court blasts and after Ahmedabad blasts and the supposed booking of train tickets at Nizamuddin station). Atif got this number as a post paid connection on 11<sup>th</sup> Aug and

all the address details furnished by him were found to be true (that is how the police arrived at L-18 on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2008 in the first place).

So the only piece of evidence that the police had to nail down Atif Amin was his cell number, which he did not even possess at the time the Gujarat Police was tracking it. None of the material and evidence supposedly seized by the police has any procedural validity (The Note even fails to mention where most of the material has been seized from).

2) The Note also mentions that immediately following the shootout, photographs of the “deceased Atif and Sajid were sent through Intelligence Agency (sic) to Afzal Usmani, who confirmed that they were indeed involved in the blasts. Recall that the ‘encounter’ took place on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2008, and the Annexure ‘A’ submitted by the police to the NHRC states that Usmani was arrested on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008, full four days after the ‘encounter’. So when was Usmani arrested? When were the supposed confirmations made?

In light of these revelations and in the persistent refusal of the NHRC to take into account evidence which vitiates the Delhi Police claims that the ‘encounter’ was genuine, JTSA reiterates the demand for a judicial probe into the Batla House ‘encounter’. All those arguing that judicial probes are protracted and futile exercises are simple asking us to forget that two young men were killed under highly mysterious circumstances, and given that a separate FIR has not even been filed in the case of their killings, nor a magisterial probe conducted, as required under NHRC guidelines, a time bound judicial probe is the only solution.

Sd/

Manisha Sethi, Adeel Mehdi, Tanweer Fazal, Ahmed Sohaib, Ghazi Shahnawaz, Azra Razaak., Farah Farooqi, Sanghamitra Misra, Anwar Alam, Arshad Alam, Shakeb Ahmed, Amarien Al qadar, Haris ul Haq and others...

## **II Produce Mr. Gopal Mishra, Mr. Pradeep trade unionists and Ms. Anu, wife of Gopal Mishra before the court!**

*Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners  
27 April 2010*

The Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners (CRPP) would bring before the media the news as per available from civil rights groups Mr. Gopal Mishra, a trade unionist was taken to custody by the Special Cell of the Delhi Police on the 25 April 2010 from Ramnagar, Nathu Colony, East Delhi. They reached his residence along with him at 11 am on 26 April 2010 and waited till evening for his wife Ms. Anu to return, according to Mr. Ritesh Kumar the owner of the house in which Mr. Gopal Mishra was staying as a tenant. The house owner was later told by the police that they were taking him to the police station. Later it became clear that along with Mr. Gopal another trade unionist Mr. Pradeep was also taken away by the police. It is also reported that along with another person whose identity is not known was also detained. Even after 24 hours of the detention of all of them they have not been produced in the court. There is no news about the whereabouts of Gopal’s wife, Ms. Anu.

We at the CRPP demand the unconditional release of all the trade union activists and Ms. Anu. We are concerned that they may be tortured physically and mentally to extract any form of confession which can later be used against them and for media trial by the police. We demand that they be given access to lawyers and not to violate their right to silence through intimidation and torture. As per the court of law both Mr. Gopal Mishra and Ms. Anu should be immediately produced before the court.

## **III Letter of Condemnation**

*Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners  
7 May 2010*

Condemn the blatant communal prejudice in the matter of delaying the release of Mr. Mirza Iftikhar Hussain!

We condemn the harassment of Dr. SAR Geelani who has been targeted for a criminal prosecution on the basis of false and extraneous considerations.

The Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners (CRPP) takes strong exception to the way the media has voiced the story of Dr. SAR Geelani facing criminal proceedings for “furnishing false information” to the court. Given the vitiated atmosphere that media trials have generated, particularly the prejudice caused to those who belong to a certain community, it is important to bring forth certain facts which squarely expose the patent lies that have been carried in the media regarding the case slapped on Dr. SAR Geelani.

It is by now known to all that Mr. Mirza Iftikhar Hussain has been acquitted in the Lajpat Nagar blast case after 14 long years as an under trial in Tihar Jail. No one cared to raise any question about the blatant injustice meted out to Mr. Mirza Iftikhar Hussain, who spent much of his youth in prison for a crime he had not committed and that it took a court fourteen long years to realise that he was innocent. Moreover, when it comes to Kashmiri Muslim prisoners, it is natural that new cases get slapped on them to prolong their detention in prison. Mr. Mirza Iftikhar Hussain too, faced a similar situation and his release was hampered by the existence of another case of attempt to commit culpable homicide for allegedly attacking a fellow inmate in jail. If anyone cared to examine the records of this case, it would become evident fairly soon that Mr. Mirza was the target of attack in Jail, not the perpetrator. So when he was acquitted on 8 April 2010 in the Lajpat Nagar blast case, it was certain that he would get bail in the second case which was of little consequence.

On 17 April 2010 Dr. SAR Geelani, a Delhi University lecturer and the Working President of the Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners (CRPP) furnished surety bonds, before the court of the Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Nivedita Anil Sharma for the release of Mr. Mirza Iftikhar Hussain. He had furnished all his personal details on the same date before the court. But the court dismissed the bail bond of SAR Geelani on a technicality notwithstanding the fact that his lawyers were present before the court and had given satisfactory explanations about the address furnished on the Surety Bond.

At that time there was no reference to “falsity of the documents” furnished by Dr. Geelani. Notwithstanding the irrationality of the rejection of his surety bond, a Senior Editor of a reputed magazine Mr. Syed Qasim Rasool Ilyas offered to stand as a surety for Mr. Mirza’s release on bail.

This time the court even went to the extent of asking Mr. Ilyas whether he would be responsible for Mr. Mirza’s conduct outside Jail, to which Mr. Ilyas maintained that he took full responsibility for Mr. Mirza’s conduct. The court declined to accept Mr. Ilyas’s surety bond on the ground that he had no control over the accused! Any discerning mind sensitive to the fundamental principles of justice will fail to understand the rationale of such a directive.

Only when the question of prejudice and double standards was brought to the notice of the court by Dr. SAR Geelani, did the court respond, as an after-thought, by instituting the much publicised case of “furnishing of false documents” against Dr. SAR Geelani. There was absolutely no question of furnishing false documents. Both the addresses of proof of residence furnished before the court were authentic as Dr. SAR Geelani was available on both.

The CRPP strongly condemns the initiation of a case of perjury against Dr. SAR Geelani. Dr. Geelani has not furnished any false document or false information pertaining to his residential address. Needless to say that Dr. Geelani will challenge the order in the Hon’ble High Court of Delhi. This act of vendetta from an office which should be judicious and free from the maladies of communal and xenophobic propaganda of the so-called war against terror gives credence to the scathing observation made by one of the accused in the Lajpat Nagar Blast case of 1996 that “to be a Kashmiri itself is a crime to be punished in India.”

## Analysis:

### Interview with Santosh Rana

*Biswajit Roy*

One of the much talked-about young revolutionary leaders of the undivided CPI(ML) in Bengal in the seventies and now with of PCC CPI(ML), a smaller faction of the fractured party, Santosh Rana has emerged as a major critic of the CPI (Maoist) in the wake of Lalgarh movement. For him, the popular uprising of the tribal and non-tribal poor against the police repression in the Junglemahal of West Bengal bordering Jharkhand had many potential for democratizing the local and regional polity with far-reaching ramifications. But the opportunities were lost after Maoists aped the CPM in imposing their one-party rule and killing opponents irrespective of their class background. Far from considering the wanton killings now prevalent in Lalgarh region as aberrations of Maoist revolutionary schema, Rana argued that Maoist denial of democracy to rivals and friend-turned-foes in their fiefdoms has its ideo-political roots in the Soviet and Chinese version of proletarian dictatorship and peoples' democracy. More concerned about the self-rule or autonomy for Junglemahal, he believes democratic content of revolutionary power including guarantee for multi-party polity must be central to all future revolutions including Indian revolution. Despite his differences, he is opposed to state repression in Lalgarh and wants talks between the government and Maoists as well as other representative of people there. Biswajit Roy, a journalist based in Calcutta, spoke to him to understand his arguments.

***Q: The growing strength of CPI(Maoist) in a large part of the country underlines not only the failure of mainstream Left but also other Naxalite groups. It seems Maoists have established themselves as the alternative to the parliamentary and constitutional politics of all hues. How do you look at it?***

SR: Since early nineties, the LPG (Liberalisation-Privatisation-Globalisation) regimes both at the Centre and the states have been spreading the tentacles of neo-liberal global economy across the country that resulted into the concentration of wealth in the hands of 27 super-rich families. This concentration of wealth has been reflected in the country's

politics also. Never before Indian parliaments have so many crorepatas as its members. With this class background of a sizable section of the MPs, it was hardly unexpected that none of the 540 MPs had opposed the draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Act. Even the mainstream Left kept mum except feebly suggesting some cosmetic changes.

This has only reduced the democratic space with the parliamentary system. As the State and its non-State collaborators are denying people their constitutional and legal rights, they are turning towards non-parliamentary paths which can deliver in more direct, immediate and localized ways. The surge of so-called Maoists should be seen in this context.

Nevertheless, I must insist that the Maoists' success is limited to those parts of central Indian plateau which have forested hilly terrains with concentration of tribal population. The central and state governments, run by the parliamentary parties of all hues, have sold off the mining rights of huge mineral reserve of this region to multinational and Deshi corporate groups. These capitalists have been given virtual license to plunder the country's natural resources without caring for its adverse impact on the lives of local tribal and other marginal communities. As the State-corporate nexus is trying to crush all democratic protests in the affected regions of Chattisgarh, Maharastra and Orissa, people turned to armed Maoists for protection of their traditional rights on Jal-jungle-jamin.

But Maoists could not spread much beyond Dandakaranya region. Even in their stronghold Dantewara, they couldn't ensure the victory of the CPI candidate, Manish Kunjam. In Andhra, the home-ground for erstwhile (CPI(ML) People's War, their model has failed and they are on the run. I admit they have made inroads in certain areas where democratic movements are weakest and state-corporate joint repression and denial of people's rights are severest. But they failed to offer an alternative model for the entire country Consider their roles in the anti-special economic zone, anti-land grab peasant movements as well as anti-eviction struggle of the development refugees across the country. From Kalinganagar in Orissa to Raigarh in Maharastra and Nandigram in Bengal – Maoists were at the fringe.

Indian State may be considering them as the biggest threat since they have attacked the state directly. But in reality, both the State and the so-called Maoists are taking complementary roles in shriveling the democratic space.



***Q. Maoists insist on their ideo-political continuity from undivided CPI(ML) led by Charu Mazumdar. But the CPM and even some of the Naxalite groups refused to accept it. What is your take on it?***

SR: Differences between the original CPI(ML) and today's CPI(Maoist) are too many. Despite our criticism of Charu Mazumdar's line of annihilation campaign, I must point out that he never asked us for indiscriminate killings like today's Maoists. In 1969-71, I was active in Debra-Gopiballavpur region, close to Lalgah, now a major base of the Maoists. We killed around 120 people, most of them landlords or their henchmen. In fact, we had not killed even our class enemies till Charuda complained: Tomra dhan katcho kintu jotdar katcho na (you are engaged in forcible harvesting to ensure share-croppers and farmers share but sparing the landlords). Today, I feel most of these killings were unnecessary. But unlike the CPI(Maoist), we killed not a single tribal, Dalit and poor people in the seventies in Debra-Gopiballavpur. Even Charuda insisted not to 'touch any tribal', landless agri-labourers, poor and marginal peasants even if he was opposed to us. He always asked us not to carry weapons when meeting the peasants. He wanted us to kindle the poor people's class consciousness first and depend on their initiative and the weapons they use for armed actions.

Secondly, Charuda's focus was always on the class struggle and class issues. In the seventies, we began our work not in forest areas like Nayagram, Binpur or Lalgah. But mainly in densely populated Debra-Gopiballavpur along the bank of Subarnarekha river where class contradictions were sharp over land and wage questions. We endeared ourselves to poor peasants and landless by focusing on land issues as well as exploitation by the money-lenders. In contrast, today's Maoists have forgotten the land questions. They have not redistributed a single bigha land to any landless so far in Belpahari-Bashpahari-Lalgah region now under their control. For them, land reform is over in West Bengal. The Maoist-controlled People's Committee against Police Atrocities failed to mention the land issues in their 13-point charter of demands.

***Q. But then how do you explain the Maoist success in garnering the mass support in the Lalgah area and their increasing presence in Junglemahal of western Bengal adjoining Jharkhand? Do you subscribe to the CPM's views that the Maoists are a gang of criminals who compelled locals to follow their dictate at the point of guns?***

SR: No, I don't agree with the CPM. Before the CPI(Maoist) was born in 2004, its two constituents, MCC and Peoples War were active in different pockets of the Junglemahal for more than a decade. They have garnered support among the tribals by taking actions against the corruption and exploitation of the Kendu leaf contractors and their nexus with the forest officials. But they didn't opt for organising sustained movements on issues relevant to the tribals and other poor people of Junglemahal.

For example, 75 per cent of the sale proceeds of commercial forest products, mainly timber go to government exchequer under the government's joint forest management project. Only 25 per cent of the proceeds are earmarked for the Gramrakhsa committee which comprises the villagers close to the forest. But in practice, the corrupt officials line their pockets with both the government and villagers' money. The Jharkhand Samannaya Manch of which we are a part had offered the Maoists to join hand to launch a movement demanding the lion's share of the proceeds for the villagers. We could have begun movement against the corruption of panchayat bodies which now handle huge amount government money earmarked for skews of tribal welfare and rural development projects. These are all popular issues that affect everyday lives of millions. The gram sabhas and gram sansads, the in-built mechanism integral to the panchayati raj are aimed at public accountability and popular participation of people at the grass-root level. They are largely dysfunctional as the corruption, nepotism, clientism and narrow politicking by the CPM and other mainstream parties have alienated people. We could have begun with some innovative ideas to redeem these grass-root institutions by ensuring genuine popular control and more power to people after the CPM lost Lalgah panchayat Samiti and most of the gram panchayats there. But the Maoists refused to listen to us.

Nonetheless, some of CPI(ML) groups like CPI(ML) New democracy and different factions of Jharkhand Party had participated in the mass uprising against the police atrocities in November 2008 and later joined in the Maoist-controlled PCPA.. The explosion of people's pent-up anger against police repression triggered a genuine mass movement. The police and bureaucracy's attitude has hardly changed since the Raj days as they refused to treat tribal and other poor in Junglemahal as human beings and fellow citizens of Independent India. Illegal detention, arbitrary arrests, merciless beating, harassment and intimidation of women and children, nocturnal raids and search operations in villages became the order of the day since the MCC and PWG had renewed their activities in

the region. The repression reached its peak after the government ordered night-raids in the villages of Lalgarh block following the Maoist attempt on chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee's life on 2 November on his way back from Shalboni. Maoists detonated the popular fury.

With the wounds of Nandigram still fresh, the CPM and state administration cowered before the people's might and the government withdrew eight police camps from Lalgarh area in mid-November. It was a great victory of the people. The movement was pregnant with many possibilities as it started spreading beyond Lalgarh. There was an opportunity to mobilize the awakened masses for establishing the organs of democratic self-rule and launching movement for autonomy for JUNGLEMAHAL, for that matter, entire Western Bengal. For seven months, there was no police in the area and Maoist-backed PCPA ruled without any opposition. CPM lost its base in Dharampur after Lok Sabha polls. Angry over the corruption and high-handedness of local CPM party satrap Anuj Pandey and his family, local people, assisted by Maoist squads, demolished the Pandey's palatial house in Dharampur. Such was the people's fury that even CPM leaders couldn't defend the Pandey's. But this emboldened Maoists so much that flaunted their assault rifles in front of TV cameras on the very day and made the PCPA irrelevant by announcing they were leading the movement. This only helped Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee to abandon his all the Left and federalist pretension and join hand with P Chidambaram in unleashing Centre-state joint security crackdown in Lalgarh, thus unleashing another phase of state terror against the people of JUNGLEMAHAL.

On the other hand, CPI(Maoist) steamrolled all the other voices in the PCPA, denied democracy to any other political force which was opposed to their schema and established their one-party rule by replacing the CPM's version of it. They have killed around 200 since last June. Though they have not killed other Naxalites so far, they didn't spare many of their former friends including members and supporters of different factions of Jharkhand party.

***Q. It seems to be a blame game continued among former comrades. You said Maoists killed friendly Jharkhandi leaders while they accused them of being police moles and CPM's collaborators in killing their cadres and supporters. They particularly named Jharkhand Jana Mukti Morcha-led Gana Pratirodh Committee, one of your allies, as the part of the CPM's version of Salwa Judum campaign in Bengal. According to them, many of the Jharkhandi faction leaders have morphed***

***into political mafias and amassed wealth and power by collaborating with anti-tribal, anti-people forces. A mere adivasi surname can't conceal their real class loci and save them from people's wrath.***

SR: I have no major difference with them on the analysis of class character of Jharkhandi leaders in general. We have a long relation of unity and struggle with Jharkhand factions as we have participated in the struggle for separate Jharkhand in tune with the undivided CPI(ML)'s position to support the struggle for self-determination of nationalities in different parts of India. We have articulated the demand for autonomous council for tribal-dominated Western Bengal which we consider the part of Jharkhand cultural sphere, historically different from rest of Bengal. The Jharkhandi groups have presence and influence among local people long before the Maoists became active here. It is wrong to stigmatise any Jharkhand leader or group which is opposed to the Maoist schema. In fact, Maoists have not only alienated traditional tribal social organizations and their leadership, but also humiliated them and even killed some of them.

Among the tribals, Santhals were the main force behind the November uprising but the other communities like Mundas and Mahatos also joined the struggle. The Bharat Jokat Majhi Marwah, a body of the traditional tribal headmen, was in the forefront of the movement in the beginning. The Majhi Marwah had entered into negotiation with Bengal administration in the initial stage of anti-police movement and agreed to withdraw blockade after government conceded some demands and agreed not to launch any night-raids in villages. The Maoists did not agree and criticized the Marwah leaders as sell-outs. But the terms and conditions of later PCPA agreement with the government were more or less same. The Maoist-led PCPA even issued leaflet announcing the trial of Majhi Marwah head Nityananda Hembrom in a 'people's court'. They also ordered those who live in the areas under the influence of Majhi Marwah to join PCPA procession and beaten up those who had defied it.

We think the differences with Majhi Marwah and other Jharkhandi forces that had joined the movement could have been sorted out in democratic manner. The Maoists swear by Mao Tse Tung. Didn't they learn from him on how to handle the non-antagonistic contradictions? The killing of Sudhir Mandi was another example of maiming a dissenting voice among the people by labeling him a class enemy. Mandi, a Jharkhand leader, was poor peasant having one acre of Dahi or infertile land. Despite being a former chairman of Belpahari panchayat samiti for five years, he

used to stay in traditional kuccha house with thatched roof. He was killed by the Maoist when he had gone for selling the Sabui grass, collected by poor people for making ropes. This killing created major spit among the locals. Regarding the CPI(Maoist) complaints about our allies, JJMM had denied the charges of killing of PCPA or Maoist cadres and any relation with Gana Pratirodh Committee. Morcha agreed to our proposal for an independent enquiry into these complaints by the civil rights and democratic movement activists. The CPI(Maoist) cold-shouldered the proposal and continued killing anybody who crossed their path.

*Q. In your exchange of open letters with the CPI(Maoist) leadership, the eastern bureau of its central committee has complained that your Jharkhandi allies were actually trying to enjoy a piggy-back ride on the people's movement to fulfill their electoral ambitions while maintaining clandestine relation with the CPM. For example, Aditya Kisku, the leader of Jharkhand party faction whom you and other two CPI(ML) groups supported in Lok Sabha polls in Jhargram constituency.*

SR: It was the CPI(Maoist) leader like Kishenji who in his newspaper interview (Times of India 2009) admitted having collaborated with the CPM against Trinamul-BJP combine when both sides had been engaged in a bloody turf war in Keshpur-Garbata region in late nineties. In his bid to reprimand the CPM minister and local party satrap, Sushanta Ghosh for his ingratitude, Kisenji even boasted that he had collected 5000 rounds of cartridges from the CPM office at that time. It was another matter that their brief bonhomie with the CPM ended soon after and a new relationship began with the Trinamul. Coming to the parliamentary polls in May 2009, CPI(Maoist) hinted that they might consider support if there was a single candidate against CPM. We tried to convince Chunibala Hansda of JKP(Naren) faction for united fight but she, being the Congress ally, refused. We supported Aditya Kisku since he stood for autonomy for western Bengal for long. But CPI(Maoist) called for vote boycott and stopped voters to cast their votes in 75 booths where Kisku had a support base. On the other hand, they asked people to vote for Congress-supported Hansda in other booths. The CPM won by 2,93,000 votes, the highest victory margin in Bengal despite the Left front's worst-ever poll debacle in the state. The Maoists can claim certain share of this achievement of the ruling party.

*Q. The Maoists are describing the ruling Marxists as 'social fascists' and have practically declared the entire party rank and file enemies of people. They argued that CPM and the government led by it have become stooge of foreign and deshi corporate capital and an outright anti-people regime after Singur and Nandigram. Their anti-CPM virulence didn't stop at polemics or political battles but unleashed a killing spree particularly after the Centre-state joint operation had begun. In fact, most of the victims of Maoist wrath are CPM cadres and supporters. The CPI(Maoist) politburo member Kisenji told me they corrected Mazumdar's singular focus on annihilation of class enemies and carried the killings along with mass movement in Lalgarh and elsewhere. According to him, there is no Chinese wall between the annihilation campaign and mass movement. He denied the charge of being blood-thirsty and insisted all the death sentences were passed by the people's court. He said he was considered soft-hearted in his party. He told me they have killed only 50 per cent of those should have been killed and on some occasion his deputies like Bikash persuaded villagers not to award capital punishment to class enemies.*

SR: This indiscriminate butchering of CPM and other political party workers is totally unacceptable. Kisenji claimed that old feudalism is extinct in Bengal and the CPM rank and file now represent the new feudal class. This is ridiculous. Majority of CPM party members in Bengal belong to poor and toiling people by their class background. It is dangerous to declare them as class enemies on the basis of their political allegiance. It has no relation with Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse Tung thought but with Fascism. If this Fascist politics wins in Lalgarh, the future of democratic movement will be doomed. We strongly believe that political differences cannot be sorted out by killing the political rivals or evicting them from their home. If we want to fight against the corruption, arrogance and nepotism of the CPM leaders and panchayat functionaries, their killing can't be the solution. We too consider today's CPM as the stooge of forces of globalisation and main agency of police-party joint repression on people. But to call them social fascists for last 30 years will lead us to deny the achievement of limited land reforms and operation Barga to protect the rights of share-croppers as well as implementation of Panchayati raj. We have to admit the fact that first two Left front government had made some democratic reforms that Today's Lalgarh would not have happened without operation Barga. Secondly, we must be objective. Unlike the mineral-rich areas of Chattisgarh, Orissa and Jharkhand, Left front

government in Bengal so far didn't acquire land or notify for it to facilitate mineral extraction by private corporations in Jhargram sub-division. The government allotted vested land to Jindal group's steel plant in Shalboni. But the PCPA's original charter of demands didn't ask for closing up that project. They could have objected to government's decision to allot vest land to corporate sector instead of distributing it to landless or without consulting the gram sabhas and gram sansad. They didn't. In fact, there is protest against the project in the area. We will continue fight against CPM when it courts big capital compromising farmers and peoples' interests. But it is a gross mistake to consider the CPM as the enemy number one in the context of national politics. The party's opposition to the Indo-US nuclear deal is in tune to the Left position.

*Q. It is clear that the Maoist project is completely different from you. They want to establish their own power base in their liberated zones, in the process of setting up their parallel state by forcibly replacing the existing one. So their priorities are different. Kisenji complained you have lost faith in revolution and now preach a reformed bourgeoisie democracy, a more inclusive and publicly accountable parliamentary democracy, that's all.*

SR: I have not lost my faith in armed revolution. The existing State apparatus has to be smashed and a new State has to be established. But I differ with both the CPM and CPI (Maoist), for that matter, with many other CPI(ML) groups on the fundamental questions on the nature of the revolutionary State and role of communist party it. Both the CPM and CPI(Maoist) practices made it clear that they want to establish their own one-party rule in the name of peoples' democracy or proletarian dictatorship. But we can't accept it after the Soviet and Chinese experiences. The denial of democracy, both inside and outside the party, imposition of one-party state was main reason for the Soviet debacle. Mao was one of the greatest thinkers and revolutionaries of 20th century. Even he couldn't succeed in safeguarding Proletarian dictatorship in China which has now degenerated into a capitalist heaven. Because the party dictatorship was consolidated in the name of peoples democracy. There is no reason to believe anymore that rule of communist party is synonymous with the working class rule. For Marx, Paris commune was the embodiment of the proletarian dictatorship in which representatives of armed workers and other toiling people, elected on the basis of universal franchise, replaced the existing State and exercised the revolutionary power, both legislative

and executive. All power to the soviets was the fundamental call of Russian revolution. I challenge Stalinism, for that matter, the third international formulations which had replaced the rule of soviets by the communist party rule that gradually wiped out all internal and external opposition. Rosa Luxemburg one of those few revolutionary thinkers who foresaw the dangers posed to the Russian revolution because of the denial of democracy.

*Q. In that case, you are also questioning Lenin. It was he who theorized the seizure of power as key question of revolution and emphasized on the vanguard role of the communist party in establishing and securing the proletarian dictatorship. He was still the supreme leader of Bolsheviks when the party outflanked Mensheviks and Right social revolutionaries to ensure the passage of revolutionary decrees in the post-October second congress of soviets, rejected the results of constituent assembly poll in which Bolsheviks were minority, concentrated the power in the party's hand and dumped the key allies, Left social revolutionaries. All power to the soviets became a façade to the Bolshevik rule. Rosa had debates with Lenin on the fundamental questions of Russian revolution.*

SR: I stand by Lenin's position on the key tasks of proletarian revolution as articulated in the State and Revolution. Seizure of power is the half of Marxism-Leninism. Power to whom, who will replace whom—that was basic question that Lenin posed. Power to Kisenji and his party instead of Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee and his party?

Secondly, we have to understand that no revolution in our age will be successful without addressing the question of democracy. The people of Russia and China had accepted the party rule in the name of the class since bourgeoisie parliamentary democracy was rudimentary or non-existent in pre-revolutionary Russia and China. The same can't be repeated in India where parliamentary democracy, despite its all travesties, has taken roots down to the villages. Revolutionaries have to move ahead in India not by shrinking the parliamentary democracy but by expanding it. For us, the basic question should be more and more power to the people in order to make the democracy meaningful in the lives of the millions. And, our acceptance of opposition to the ruling party, freedom of minority voices must be an integral part of vibrant and participatory democracy.



***Q. The activists and intellectuals close to the Maoists have pointed out that no other people than the masses of Lalgarh should decide who would lead them and it was they who had rejected the parliamentary parties and accepted the leadership of the CPI(Maoist). The rebels have set up their own version of people's power and executing with alternative development plans with the active participation of the people. So why grudge it?***

SR: There is no democracy in the so-called peoples committees and people's courts. Kisenji and his party are just aping the CPM and Trinamul fiefdoms. The Maoists squads dictate everything in the name of people. Any dissenters will risk beating, even killing. They are forcing people to join their rally, extracting tax from them, compelling the supporters of CPM and other political parties to give undertaking at the point of gun. They have turned the people of Lalgarh cannon-fodders. Villagers faced bullets and one of them died when Maoists clashed with para-military forces on the day of the blockade of Rajdhani express. Villagers didn't know about their plan for the blockade and landed in the soup. Maoists had to pay Rs 3 lakhs as compensation to the deceased family after the villagers confronted them. They are in fact following not only the LTTE military line but also its political line. Prabhakaran had exterminated all other Tamil groups. In the end, he got exterminated. The Maoist experiments in alternative development are all sham. They are not interested in these school, health centre or road-buildings. These are basically ideas of some city-based sympathizers, attempted half-heartedly. The region is poor. Where from the money will come for development? Why don't they win the panchayat polls and use the government money with people's supervision? After all, it's the people's money.

***Q. CPM is constantly harping on Maoist-Mamata Banerjee nexus. What is your reaction to it?***

SR: Both sides tried to use each other in sheer opportunism. It happened in Nandigram earlier. For rhetoric's sake, Maoists described Mamata as the part of big-bourgeoisie state. But in practice, they are soft to Mamata and her party as the CPM has become their common enemy. Recently Mamata thundered against the Maoists under the pressure from the Centre and the CPM. But she offered olive branch to the Maoists few days later. Kisenji's open letters to her and sound-bites on television also revealed the blow-hot blow-cold affair.

***Q. Did you ever speak to Kisenji or other CPI(Maoist) leaders to sort out the differences?***

SR: I have tried to speak to him they got no response. I spoke to some other leaders of the party and got the impression that they didn't approve all that he had done. But the party is ultimately responsible for whatever is going on.

***Q. Judging by your harsh criticism of the CPI(Maoist), it appears that you and your allies are not opposed to the centre-state joint security operation or the massive crackdown planned by P Chidambaram.***

SR: In no way we condone the state repression on the people of Janglemahal as well as on the Maoists as it will legitimize the designs of forces of globalization and their lackeys in India to turn India into a police state in the name of internal security and doom the democracy whatever people of India have achieved. On behalf of Jharkhand Andolan Samannaya Mancha, we have urged all sides to turn to talk table to resume democratic atmosphere in Lalgarh and adjoining areas so that Maoists, CPM as well as other forces can preach their politics without fear of police or political repression. We want all sides to focus on development of the backward region with an elected, publicly accountable autonomous council at the helm of affairs. People must have the right to recall their representatives down to the village level.

*Courtesy: Seminar, March 2010 (issue on Red Resurgence)*