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**Interview by Comrade Azad, Spokesperson, Central Committee, CPI(Maoist),
on the current unprecedented military offensive by the
Central and various state governments on the CPI(Maoist)
and the armed agrarian revolutionary movement**

[The following is an Interview of Comrade Azad, Spokesperson of the Central Committee, CPI(Maoist), given to the Maoist Information Bulletin (MIB) on October 19, 2009. In this Interview, Comrade Azad answers a whole range of questions dealing with the current centrally-planned massive offensive against the Maoists and the counter plans of the Maoists, the question of state violence and revolutionary counter-violence, the issue of Talks with the government, the real meaning of Chidambaram's campaign for recapturing territory from the Maoists, and several misconceptions regarding: Maoist stand on development, on the charges of extortion, on recruitment of child soldiers, on the beheading of Francis Induvar, and so on.]

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"All our plans, policies, strategy and tactics will be based entirely on the active involvement of the vast masses of people in this war of self-defence. The enemy class cannot decimate us without decimating the entire population in the regions we control. And if it dares to go into an all-out war of extermination of the tribal population the entire socio-political scene in India will undergo a fundamental shift and will witness a radical realignment of class forces."

Q: There is lot of talk about an unprecedented massive military offensive due to begin anytime now. How will your Party confront it?

Azad: The fact is, the unprecedented massive offensive has already begun. In the Chintagufa area in Dantewada district almost 4000 police and central forces led by around 600 elite commandos of the anti-Naxal CoBRA force had carried out their biggest-ever counter-revolutionary operation called Operation Green Hunt in the third week of September. Some media reporters described it as Operation Red Hunt. Whatever is the name, it was the first major attempt by the central and state forces to wrest a part of the territory from the hands of the oppressed people led by the Maoists. This operation was a sort of a rehearsal for the forthcoming centrally-planned country-wide simultaneous offensive on all our guerrilla zones.

When the enemy attack took place near Singanamadugu village, our forces present there were hardly 50 or 60 in number. But they fought heroically, and successfully repulsed the attack by a superior force, by totally relying on the people. It was the people who gave us the information regarding each and every movement of the enemy force. Hence our guerrillas could deal the first biggest blow to these so-called CoBRAs who were specially trained in jungle warfare and sent to wage an unjust war against the Maoist revolutionaries. Six of their men including two assistant commandants—one from Manipur and another from UP—were wiped out in the real battle. These brave CoBRAs demonstrated their heroism and courage by murdering seven unarmed adivasi villagers, including two aged men and a woman, and burning four villages. Not a single Maoist was killed contrary to the false claims of the police that 22 Maoists were killed. Our forces chased them for about 10 kilometers. The people of the entire area stood with us in this counter-attack on the thugs sent by Manmohan-Chidambaram's khadi gang at the Centre and Raman Singh's saffron gang in Chhattisgarh. **This heroic resistance by a handful of Maoist guerrillas underscores the superiority of the tactics of guerrilla war and the massive mass support enjoyed by the Maoists. It demonstrates the ability of our Maoist guerrillas to confront and defeat a numerically far superior enemy force equipped with all the sophisticated weaponry, aerial support and what not, by relying on the sea of people in which we swim like fish.**

In the second week of October once again Chidambaram's men unleashed another massive offensive by amassing 10,000 men in Gadchiroli district in Maharashtra with MI 17 choppers surveying the area from the skies. It was as if an army from an enemy country was waging war on the Indian people. In the face of it our forces had successfully carried out a massive political campaign against the farce of the Assembly elections that were held on October 13 in Maharashtra.

Here I shall not go into the concrete details of our precise tactics to confront and defeat the unprecedented, massive, brazen offensive on the most oppressed people being unleashed by the Indian ruling classes on behalf of the imperialists and the comprador big business houses. I can only confidently say one thing for the present: **All our plans, policies, strategy and tactics will be based entirely on the active involvement of the vast masses of people in this war of self-defence. The enemy class cannot decimate us without decimating the entire population in the regions we control. And if it dares to go into an all-out war of extermination of the tribal population the entire socio-political scene in India will undergo a fundamental shift and will witness a radical realignment of class forces.** All peace-loving, democratic, patriotic, secular forces, all the downtrodden sections of the society will polarize into one pole while the most reactionary, anti-people, authoritarian, traitorous, jingoist counter-revolutionary forces will end up at the opposite pole. Such a polarization is bound to take place as the war advances and the enemy's mercenary forces attempt to turn central and eastern India into a graveyard. The war-mongers will be isolated and will face unprecedented social and political crises. However, on behalf of our Party, PLGA, revolutionary mass organisations and organs of people's democratic power, I can assure the people of our country that with their support, direct as well as indirect, we shall deal crushing blows on the enemy's mercenary forces and defeat their plans to hand over these regions to the international and domestic bandicoots.

Q: But your forces had killed around 20 policemen, most of them C-60 commandos, in Laheri in Gadchiroli district on the eve of the elections in Maharashtra. Is it not due to incidents like this which is provoking the government to deploy huge forces in these areas?

Azad: No, no. It is the other the indescribable atrocities trained anti-Naxal forces that we such attacks. If they do not adivasi population; **if they do them, and rape their women; if destroying the property, burn adivasis, if they do not indulge of abducted Maoists and called encounters, then why such attacks?** How can this be who the C-60 commandos are? as an elite anti-Naxal force to kill Naxalites and Naxal is found they pounce on hapless them, torture them, and murder have become their objects of of the heart-chilling story of a 13-village in Dhanora tehsil who commandos led by the notorious March this year. Or the case of 52-year-old Mynabai from Kosimi in Gyarapatti PS in the same year. For the directors of this war Singh, Chidambaram, GK Pillai of a 13-year-old girl or a 52-year-collateral damage in their larger to plunder its wealth. These "rule of law" advocated by after this poor little adivasi girl Thakur by name, you know! evidence, the loud-speakers of Arnab Goswamys, Chandan Mitras and others—had never bothered to raise a voice against such crimes against humanity perpetrated by these brutes. And what is worse, they even venture to describe these rapists as "brave commandos"! So what these brave commandos are doing in Dhanora tehsil is nothing but creating terror in the hearts of the people. That is why we wiped out around 50 policemen, most of them C-60 commandos, in the past eight months since February.

*"For the directors of this war on adivasis—
Manmohan Singh,
Chidambaram, GK Pillai
and others—the gang-
rapes of a 13-year-old girl
or a 52-year-old woman are
only collateral damage in
their larger war for
capturing the region to
plunder its wealth.
And the loud-speakers of
the reactionary rulers—
Arnab Goswamys,
Chandan Mitras and
others—had never
bothered to raise a voice
against such crimes against
humanity."*

way round. It is because of perpetrated by the specially-are compelled to carry out harass the poor, unarmed **not arrest, torture, murder they do not engage in villages and crops of the in cold-blooded murders declare them dead in so-will our forces undertake** a provocation? You know They are specifically formed whose one and only task is sympathisers. If no Naxalite adivasi villagers, arrest them. And adivasi women rape. You might have heard year-old girl from Pavarvel was gang-raped by 5 or 6 Munnasingh Thakur in the gang-rape and murder of village by several policemen Danora tehsil in May last on adivasis—Manmohan and others—the gang-rapes old woman are only war for capturing the region rapists are immune from the Chidambaram & Co. Even had identified Munna Singh Notwithstanding such solid the reactionary rulers—

No right-thinking citizen of this country would condemn these heroic offensives by our PLGA against murderers and rapists in police uniform against whom no criminal case will ever be filed under

this system and no “rule of law” applies to them whatever be their inhuman crimes. **We boldly and unequivocally declare to the world, notwithstanding the shrill cries of the reactionary rulers and their henchmen about our blood-thirstiness and our ‘senseless violence’, that we shall punish these mercenaries if they continue to indulge in such crimes against the downtrodden masses. Every act of ours is in defence of the poor adivasis who are oppressed and suppressed by these policemen who have created extreme insecurity for the people residing in large parts of Gadchiroli. Our attack in Laheri should be seen as part of our fight against state terrorism.** The more such forces enter our areas, the more they will become vulnerable to such attacks. We will continue to wipe out the C-60 commandos, the CRPF, the BSF and other forces who are sent to the area to unleash terror.

For your information, I can confidently say that there are hardly any violent incidents in Gadchiroli on the part of the attacks on the C-60 policemen. Unfortunately organizations and well-had fallen into the trap of propaganda that we are some of whom are even about the escalating to put an end to it, they government as to why it more special anti-Naxal spreading terror in the why it is recruiting the

“It is sheer hypocrisy and double-speak on the part of those who are making such a big fuss about the plight of one Induvar. They never speak of the thousands who had died unsung, unwept, unheard in the secret torture chambers maintained by the Indian state.”

Maoists this year except the commandos and the cruel some civil rights meaning intellectuals too the reactionary ruling class killing innocent policemen adivasis. If they really bother violence and sincerely wish should question the was setting up more and commando forces and adivasi-inhabited regions; local adivasis into the anti-

Naxal police force and making them into cannon-fodder in the war against their very people; why it is setting up informers from the poor tribals by threatening them or bribing them with huge sums of money. They should ask where is the law & order problem from the Maoists who had actually stopped the illegal felling of forest trees, stopped the exploitation by the forest officials, forest contractors, timber smugglers, government bureaucrats, police officials, money lenders, non-adivasi landlords who had taken over tribal land against the provisions of the Indian constitution. They should ask themselves whether Maoists had done good or bad by securing a massive increase in the rate for plucking tendu leaves, cutting bamboo, laying roads, selling the minor forest produce and so on. And they should expose and oppose the conspiracy of the government in sending massive repressive force armed with the most sophisticated weapons against the Maoists.

We appeal to all peace-loving citizens of the country to objectively see for themselves who has been creating violence and spreading terror in Gadchiroli and other regions of so-called red terror. They should play a responsible role in reducing violence by demanding the withdrawal of the forces of state terror who have made the lives of the people a veritable hell. They should understand the just nature of our war. There need be no doubt at all that peace will certainly prevail once these forces of state terror are withdrawn from these regions.

Q: The general opinion among people outside is that the Maoists are resorting to senseless violence and that many innocent people have become victims in their hands. For instance, the beheading of a Special Branch Inspector recently in Jharkhand. Was it not a cruel act?

Azad: First of all, it is sheer hypocrisy and double-speak on the part of those who are making such a big fuss about the plight of one Francis Induvar. They never speak of the thousands who had died unsung, unwept, unheard in the secret torture chambers maintained by the Indian state flouting every constitutional provision. Not only Maoists and their sympathizers. Every day how many common people are tortured by special branch officers like Induvar in these torture chambers is not recorded. And our honourable Chidambaram calls this sadistic, beastly behaviour of his mercenary force as the “rule of law”.

Do you know how many hundreds of adivasis were beheaded by the salwa judum-police-CRPF combine in Bastar region? And these sadistic forces set up by the Centre and state had even cruelly cut off the wombs and threw out the fetuses. If you just glance through the pages of the fact-finding reports of several independent organizations like the PUDR, Human Rights Forum, Human Rights Watch, CAVOW, and several others you will find an unending list of the crimes committed by the security forces and state-sponsored vigilante gangs. Why are the so-called analysts who appear on TV channels and throw mud on the Maoists accusing them of mindless violence, completely silent

when more than a thousand unarmed adivasis are murdered in cold blood by the CRPF and salwa judum gangs in Dantewada and Bijapur districts in a matter of just three years? Why does their blood boil when one inspector is decapitated while keeping mum regarding a thousand other beheadings and mutilations that make the case of Induvar a relatively insignificant thing? **I once again assertively say that the case of Francis Induvar is an exception and not the rule. This has to be kept in mind while trying to pass judgements on Maoist violence. As for the act itself we do not encourage such beheadings even if the police carry out such brutalities.**

We will punish the enemy but there is no necessity for using cruel methods. No doubt, the anger of the victims of police violence is too difficult to control. When our guerrillas capture a cruel police officer especially one who has been responsible for the murder of several of our comrades there is bound to be serious reaction due to pent-up anger. However, cruelty is the trait of the policeman who serves the exploiting classes. **For the Maoist revolutionaries who serve the masses of the people**

“...none of the newspapers or the electronic media bothered to tender an apology for their irresponsible and vicious attack against the Maoists. Even worse, channels like the Times Now had even continued this vicious propaganda a full week after Nitish Kumar himself ruled out any Maoist link with the incident. But images get implanted in the public mind and the media is mainly responsible for spreading such lies and false propaganda against Maoist violence.”

and aspire to build a new socialist society free of all class exploitation, cruelty is an anathema. We will educate our cadre so that such beheadings do not occur in future.

We also appeal to the policemen and intelligence officials not to engage in activities against the Maoists and the people. They should realise how they are being used by the reactionary rulers as cannon-fodder in unleashing a war of terror against their own people, how they have become pawns in the hands of unscrupulous self-seeking politicians who sell the country's interests for a few crumbs thrown by the imperialists and the big business houses, and we assure them if they desist from such activities we have nothing against them. We Maoists are aware that it is the poor and the starving people who are forced to join the police force and we do not wish their families to be left grief-stricken. We too share the grief of Ms Sunita Induvar and her children. But the rulers have compelled us to take up such actions for our own self-defence.

Our violence is revolutionary counter-violence. It is neither indiscriminate nor mindless as alleged by the reactionary ruling class representatives who cite some instances without context in their desperation to prove that Maoists are blood-thirsty monsters. When the enemy knows he is fighting an unjust war against the overwhelming majority of the people, when he knows that Maoists enjoy enormous support of the masses, when it is clear to him that he is fighting a losing battle, particularly during periods when he is losing his men in the war against the Maoists, what would he do except spreading lies

and slander to boost up the morale of his own forces?

Q: But there are reports in the media that 6000 people were killed in Maoist-related violence in six years? How do you explain this?

Azad: This is a part of the propaganda war and psychological war unleashed by the reactionary rulers. There is as much truth in this as there is in the propaganda of a George Bush that Saddam Hussein was in possession of weapons of mass destruction. A George Bush destroyed an entire country with his one big white lie. And our Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram gang wants to destroy the entire adivasi community in the mineral-rich areas under Maoist influence by spreading deliberate lies of senseless violence by Maoists. It is really unfortunate that a section of the media has become a vehicle for the proliferation of such lies and distortions.

We challenge the TV channel which spoke of 6000 killings by Maoists to come out with a concrete split-up of the figures. You select any period and analyse the violence on both sides, and you will find that the total number of unarmed innocent civilians and Maoist revolutionaries murdered by the police and state-sponsored vigilante gangs has always been far greater than the policemen and people's enemies punished by the Maoists. More than half of the 6000 deaths you are speaking of consists of those killed by the police and gangs like salwa judum. The hypocritical manner in which some papers and tv channels report on violence makes disgusting reading. If a hundred Maoists are murdered by the police and 50 policemen killed by the Maoists, a paper writes that *“150 people killed*

in Maoist-related violence". This creates an impression in the public mind that 150 were killed by Maoists.

Some of the distortions and lies appearing in the media about Naxal violence are extremely obnoxious. For instance, Chhattisgarh DGP Vishwa Ranjan spread a lie that eight of a family, including a two-year-old and five women, were burnt alive in the village of Kesikodi in Kanker district in the second week of August. The entire media ran banner headlines condemning the Maoists for their inhuman and sadistic act and calling upon the government to crush the Maoists with an iron hand. Within two days it turned out that such an incident had not occurred at all. But **the media lacked the honesty to admit its mistake and apologise to the Maoists for having run a vicious campaign against them.** What was worse, the police gave the episode an added twist by charging the Maoists with spreading the lie so as to trap the policemen and carry out a massacre! And once again the media faithfully churned out this police story.

Let me take another instance which occurred just over a fortnight ago. On October 2, there was a massacre of 16 people belonging to Kurmis and Koeris by Musahirs over a land dispute in Khagaria district in Bihar. For two days, the entire media spat venom against the Maoists describing us as murderers and blood-thirsty monsters but by 4th the chief minister of Bihar and the police top brass clarified that Maoists have no connection whatsoever with the said incident. **However, none of the newspapers or the electronic media bothered to tender an apology for their irresponsible and vicious attack against the Maoists. Even worse, channels like the Times Now had even continued this vicious propaganda a full week after Nitish Kumar himself ruled out any Maoist link with the incident. But images get implanted in the public mind and the media is mainly responsible for spreading such lies and false propaganda against Maoist violence.**

In this context, I would such incident that happened Delhi Rajdhani express was known to the railway passengers died in the immediately put on the that we had nothing to do media continues to repeat section of well-wishers too fall prey to this vicious propaganda.

"...each and every mistake committed by our forces has been frankly and promptly admitted publicly, ... We have never hidden our mistakes, lapses, weaknesses and shortcomings. Our review documents reveal this very clearly."

draw your attention to one five years ago. Howrah-derailed for reasons best authorities and several accident. The blame was Maoists. We had explained with the mishap but the this lie against us and a

As for our revolutionary counter-violence, you should note that it has always been selective and organized. Our targets are proven die-hard class enemies, leaders and activists of armed vigilante gangs, policemen and special police officers who unleash attacks on the people and our revolutionary forces, corrupt officials, anti-people political leaders who are instrumental in policy-making, and proven police informers and covert agents who are sent by the police into the ranks of the revolutionaries. Without verifying the incidents, the media is just parroting the police version in the most irresponsible and casual manner. I agree there have been some mistakes in the course of our people's war which are an exception. However, each and every mistake committed by our forces has been frankly and promptly admitted publicly, and the comrades responsible for such incidents are warned or punished in accordance with the seriousness of the mistake. We have never hidden our mistakes, lapses, weaknesses and shortcomings. Our review documents reveal this very clearly.

Q: Manmohan Singh and Chidambaram have been repeatedly appealing to the Maoists that they are prepared to sit down for talks if the Maoists lay down arms. How do you respond to this call?

Azad: I can say this is the most absurd proposal which only stupid minds can think of. **It shows that these men are either completely ignorant of the historical and socio-economic factors that had given rise to the Maoist movement or are too intoxicated by the brute force that they possess by which they dream they can stamp out a movement rooted in the socio-economic causes.** With such men at the political helm of India one can only foresee a terrible tragedy for the vast masses of the Indian people who reject this system and opt for a revolutionary alternative.

Manmohan and Chidambaram and all the brains in their think-tank should understand why a significant section of the people led by the Maoists have taken up arms in the first place. Can anyone who has a capacity to think imagine that Maoists have taken up arms only to lay them down without arriving at a solution to the issues confronting the Indian society? **If Manmohan and Chidambaram think they are doing us a favour by offering the proposal for talks without touching upon the actual issues that serve as the basis for our armed struggle they are only living in a fools'**

paradise. It is not that these men who occupy the highest pedestals in the government do not know these things. They only want to pretend that they are for peace and that it is the Maoists who are intransigent and reluctant to sit down for talks.

If these representatives of state terrorism really want to sit for talks then they have to fulfill several conditions all of which, of course, fall within the ambit of the very Constitution by which these gentlemen terrorists swear.

Q: What are those conditions?

Azad: I am just coming to the point. They should stop illegal abductions of Maoists and people suspected to be supporting Maoists. They should put an immediate halt to tortures and murders of unarmed people, instruct their so-called security forces to desist from raping women in Maoist-dominated areas, abandon their policy of destroying the property of the people and burning adivasi villages. They should withdraw the police and para-military camps from the school buildings, panchayat community buildings and from the interior areas so as to instill a sense of security among the people. They should disband the state-sponsored armed vigilante gangs like salwa judum, sendra, gram suraksha samiti, nagarik suraksha samiti, shanti sena, and various types of cobras and tigers since all these blood-thirsty gangs are unconstitutionally established by the police top brass and the political leaders. An impartial judicial commission of enquiry should be formed to go into the inhuman atrocities by the police, CRPF, other central forces and the vigilante gangs on Maoists and the people at large and basing on the investigations the culprits should be punished as per the law. All political prisoners i.e., those arrested for being Maoists or on suspicion of aiding the Maoists, should be released unconditionally. They should repeal all draconian laws and Acts such as the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), Special Powers Act, etc. Chhattisgarh government-organised concentration camps in the name of rehabilitation of the adivasis displaced from their villages, pay adequate compensation to were forcibly displaced by over one lakh adivasis who the CRPF-police combine. Likewise, all those who have become victims of state and state-sponsored terror, i.e., those who were murdered, maimed, raped and pushed into a state of mental trauma should receive adequate compensation. Through all these measures they should create a conducive democratic atmosphere in all these regions before placing their proposal for talks.

“...an agreement could be reached by both sides on a cease-fire without pre-conditions.....if men like Chidambaram give up their irrational, illogical, impracticable, absurd condition that the Maoists should abjure violence if they have to sit for talks.”

As for socio-economic issues, the lands of the tribals should be handed back to them wherever they are snatched whether in Salboni (West Bengal), Kathikund (Jharkhand), Lohandiguda, Pallamad, Bodhghat, (all in Chhattisgarh) Niyamgiri (Orissa) and elsewhere. The mining and other so-called development projects that lead to displacement of the tribals and destruction of their way of life should be immediately disbanded. All the MOUs signed with the imperialist MNCs like Vedanta and the big business houses like the Tatas, Mittals, Essar, Jindal, etc should be scrapped. The lands snatched away from the tribals by unscrupulous landlords, other non-adivasis, and by the government should be restored to their rightful owners. These demands might sound utopian and revolutionary but there is nothing extraordinary in them. Most of these fall within the ambit of the Indian Constitution while others are needed for creating a conducive atmosphere for talks.

If these are fulfilled, then one can think of talks to discuss on the deeper issues that are blocking the real development of our country.

Q: What you say will never be accepted by Manmohan and Chidambaram as it would mean betraying their own class interests. So don't you feel that by laying down arms without such pre-conditions you can save your forces from the brutal offensive by the Centre?

Azad: We know that these die-hard agents of the ruling classes whose real social base comprises of hardly five per cent of India's population can never think in terms of the interests of the remaining 95 per cent of the population. They will not accept even these Constitutional demands unless the people rise up and bring enormous pressure or rebellions break out in their own police and other armed forces.

No people's force in history has preserved itself through meek submission to the enemy. **Maoism teaches us that self-preservation is possible only through war. You cannot defend**

yourself against a powerful and extremely cruel enemy by submitting to him meekly. You have to choose the appropriate method to fight a relatively superior and powerful enemy and only by this one can ensure the preservation of one's forces. Whoever had surrendered to the enemy or had laid down arms had gone over to the enemy camp. For instance, the leadership of the communist party had betrayed the people by laying down arms in 1951 in the midst of the glorious Telangana armed agrarian struggle and turned revisionist. So a war of self-defence alone can ensure the preservation of the revolutionary forces.

And once you lay down your arms then of what use is your force to the people who are daily groaning under the oppression and suppression by the feudal forces, land and forest mafia, and the various wings of the Indian state? Without a people's army can the people achieve even a bit of justice? How can you expect an army, however small it may look at the present juncture, to abandon arms when the state's armed forces are engaged in brutal suppression of every people's movement? It is yet another thing if an agreement could be reached by both sides on a cease-fire without pre-conditions. On this thing there could be some discussion and some agreement may also be reached if men like Chidambaram give up their irrational, illogical, impracticable, absurd condition that the Maoists should abjure violence if they have to sit for talks.

Q: When you take into account the serious setbacks suffered by the armed national liberation movements recently in many parts of the world such as in Sri Lanka, how do you think you can confront the mighty Indian state and succeed?

Azad: Every war has its own particular, specific features. The war waged by the LTTE in Sri Lanka received a severe setback due to several mistakes which were explained vividly in a recent interview by our Party Secretary comrade Ganapathi. You cannot compare a people's war waged under the leadership of the proletariat over a vast territory spread out over a few lakh square kilometers of area with a war waged by non-proletarian leadership in a small area roughly the size of a big district in India. Moreover, the people's war we are waging is based on the Maoist principles of guerrilla war. Until the time we reach a decisive stage in our war, we will not fight a positional war in a small area against a superior force that is likely to resort to aerial bombardment if needed. **We can fight the mightiest enemy by properly adhering to the principles of guerrilla warfare. We will hit the enemy when and where it is convenient to us, and not when and where he provokes us.** His aerial surveys cannot locate the guerrillas who mix up with the people or are in constant mobility. His air sorties too would fall on the wrong targets, may be sometimes on his own men (smiles). It has happened several times in Iraq and Afghanistan. We will even change our battle fatigues and move in the dress of civilians. **It will be impossible for the enemy to target us if we adhere to these methods. He will only end up killing civilians and help us in getting more recruits into our guerrilla army. That's what the salwa judum had done. Thanks to salwa judum our guerrilla army has expanded rapidly.**

It is the same story everywhere. A George Bush had created more enemies for the American imperialists. He helped Al Qaeda, Taliban and several other Islamic organizations find recruits and provided them with a justification for waging a jihad.

The unfolding explosive situation makes it impossible for these reactionary rulers to maintain stability or control the mass uprisings and armed resistance even if they continue their mad policy of continuously increasing their the vast majority of the Indian extreme poverty and misery. spend people's funds to apparatus and the state's their own security and majority of the Indian people food, drinking water and the life, the more they will become wrath and hatred. By stepping up repression instead of addressing the problems of the oppressed the reactionary rulers of India are digging their own graves by creating hundreds of thousands of Maoist guerrillas.

"He (the enemy) will only end up killing civilians and help us in getting more recruits into our guerrilla army. That's what the salwa judum had done. Thanks to salwa judum our guerrilla army has expanded rapidly."

repressive forces while population languishes in The more these vultures strengthen the state forces in order to ensure marginalize the vast who are left without even minimum necessities of the objects of people's

Guerrillas will learn how to fight and defeat the Indian army, or for that matter, even the US Marines. That's how the guerrilla army was born and developed to this stage. They learnt how to fight and inflict lethal blows on the elite anti-Naxal special forces and various Commando forces, they learnt how to fight the central para-military forces, the Naga, Mizo Battalions, who are projected as an

invincible force. They had also dealt the first big blow to the COBRA force. They will teach the Indian Army too a fitting lesson if they ever dare to enter deep into the Maoist guerrilla zones. With tremendous mass support and participation in the people's war, the Maoists are confident of defeating the conspiracies of Chidambaram & Co and grow stronger from an escalation of the war just as it grew into a qualitatively stronger and highly steeled force after the reactionary rulers unleashed the cruel terrorist campaign through salwa judum in Dandakaranya, sendra and NSS in Jharkhand, harmad vahini and the social fascists in West Mednipur.

"...the more Chidambaram's men go about terrorizing people, killing, torturing, raping and creating havoc in the adivasi areas, the more intense and extensive will be the armed resistance of the masses, and the stronger will our army become."

Repression breeds resistance. And the more Chidambaram's men go about terrorizing people, killing, torturing, raping and creating havoc in the adivasi areas, the more intense and extensive will be the armed resistance of the masses, and the stronger will our army become. This is the logic of historical development. Hence we will utilize the situation created by the enemy's white terror to organize armed resistance on a far wider and extensive scale than ever before. As I said before, we live among the people and if the enemy destroys the entire population, we are willing to die with them rather than submit to the enemy.

It is the people who make history and not a George Bush or a Manmohan Singh or a Chidambaram. These vultures who prey on the corpses of millions of helpless people will be washed away by the unfolding tsunami of people's revolts throughout the country.

Q: Then will you never be ready for talks with the government by laying down arms as a pre-condition?

Azad: Never, not even in our dreams we can think of such a step. We have taken up arms for the defence of people's rights and for achieving their liberation from all types of exploitation and oppression. Laying down arms means a betrayal of the people's interests.

We may lose some forces in this brutal offensive by the enemy. But you must keep in mind that when the people's war began we had only a handful of committed cadre. Today it has grown into a mass Party with an All India character and we have a people's army for the first time in the history of the revolutionary movement in India. Even if we lose some forces we shall rebuild the movement as we are now doing in Andhra Pradesh. You will see the results of our painstaking underground work in the near future.

Q: Chidambaram has been saying that this is not a war against the Maoists but only a police operation. How do you describe the ongoing offensive?

Azad: This is sheer deception and a jugglery of words which the rulers of this country have mastered right from the days of Chanakya. What is it if not a bloody war when 75,000 well-trained para-military forces are mobilized against their own citizens aided by helicopter gunships, mine-proof vehicles, mortars, rockets and heavy artillery? And add to this an equal number of the police forces of the states in the war zones. This is a force which is greater in size than the armies of most countries in the world. And this force is trained and guided by the Indian Army which is playing a key role in the entire operations. The IAF has deployed its Garuda commandos and is ready to fire on the people and other non-combatants under the pretext of self-defence. Only a Goebbels and Chidambaram have the guts to say it isn't a war. **In fact, armed revolutionary war has been confronting armed counter-revolutionary war ever since the Naxalbari armed revolutionary upsurge.**

But there is a hidden reason why Chidambaram has been repeatedly saying his military onslaught is not a war on the Maoists. Chidambaram is a shrewd and cunning man. He is aware of the implications if he officially declares a war. If it is a war then he has to adhere to the provisions of the International Geneva Convention.

"What is it if not a bloody war when 75,000 well-trained para-military forces are mobilized against their own citizens aided by helicopter gunships, mine-proof vehicles, mortars, rockets and heavy artillery?.. This is a force which is greater in size than the armies of most countries in the world."

But nevertheless, Article 2 of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that signatories are bound by the convention even in situations of armed conflicts where war has not been declared. We hope all civil rights organizations and democratic forces will bring pressure on the Indian government to abide by the Geneva Convention even if it deliberately denies going into war with the Maoists. We hope Chidambaram will

instruct his forces waging war against us not to harm non-combatants or civilians, not to kill those who are wounded or detained during the war, not to indulge in mutilation, cruel treatment and torture; not to indulge in rape of women guerrillas arrested and the adivasi villagers, and to adhere to all judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples. It will be the bounden duty of the civil rights organizations and the media to ensure that Chidambaram who talks of the 'rule of law' ad nauseum will ask his men to adhere to these minimum provisions of the Geneva Convention during the current war.

Q: The government, leaders of mainstream political parties, and even some civil society leaders have been emphatically saying that there is no other option before them but to go for a military solution as the Maoists are blocking development work in the areas they control and are keeping the people in abject poverty. Why don't you allow development work to take place?

Azad: This is another classes and parroted by the (pro-establishment)

behind the façade of civil Maoists are blocking the so-the government, how much population is affected by it? controlled areas as such, the Indian population. Even

under our direct influence, it would be no more than five per cent though the geographical area may be more. Then what are these gentlemen, who yell incessantly about lack of development in Maoist-held areas, doing in the rest of the areas that are home to 98 % of the Indian population? Who is keeping 77 % of the Indian population in abject poverty? Why are they living in grinding poverty with just Rs. 20 a day? Who is stopping the government from bringing development in these regions and improvement to their lives? Who has caused the suicides of two lakh farmers in just ten years? Are not Manmohan Singh and Chidambaram responsible for this great human tragedy which is a direct fall-out of their imperialist-dictated neo-liberal policies?

"Then what are these gentlemen, who yell incessantly about lack of development in Maoist-held areas, doing in the rest of the areas that are home to 98 % of the Indian population? Who is keeping 77 % of the Indian population in abject poverty?"

myth circulated by the ruling media and some *circari* intellectuals who hide society. Even supposing the called development work by percentage of the If we take the Maoist-they embrace hardly 2 % of if we consider the areas

The BJP and the Congress have both turned the lives of the common people into a veritable hell. They brought forth SEZs to fatten the comprador business houses and the real estate mafia who are their blood brothers. How much of the funds sanctioned for development in the areas outside the Maoist influence actually reach the poor and the needy and how much goes into the pockets of these political leaders, bureaucrats and contractors? **Several independent studies had revealed that more than 50 % of the funds allotted for the so-called development are siphoned off by these very bureaucrats, police top brass and political leaders who spit venom against the Maoists.**

If a people's committee consisting of independent eminent personalities and social activists is set up and an enquiry is conducted into the assets of all the bureaucrats, police officials, political leaders, and businessmen, I think we can ferret out several trillions of rupees worth of illegal assets that can be put to good use. It is the imperialists, the feudal forces and the comprador big business houses that are blocking genuine development. It is the local gentry, the land mafia, the hoarders, unscrupulous moneylenders and landlords who are blocking real development in the rural areas. In the name of development, lakhs of adivasis and other sections of peasantry have been displaced from their villages by successive governments whether it is led by the saffron gang of Vajpayee or the khadi gang of Manmohan Singh. **What these rulers are carrying out in these regions is not development but destruction, pure and simple.**

It is also not a fact that the Maoists are opposing or obstructing all the schemes of the government. No scheme that is really beneficial to the poor is blocked by us whether it is by the government or an NGO. A visit to our areas would prove this beyond any doubt. Can you imagine that Maoists who work for the people will oppose anything that is really beneficial to them? And if they do, would they not be isolated from those very people? How can you explain the ever-increasing mass support to our Party if we are doing anything against the will and wishes of the people? We are only opposing projects that lead to massive displacement, submerge entire villages, or snatch away fertile lands from the peasantry—projects such as the Netrahat Firing Range that displaces 224 villages in Palamau, Latehar and Gumla districts, dams like Mandal and Auranga, Abhijeet Power Project and Essar steel plant in Latehar, Bhushan and Jindal projects in East Singhbhum and Saraikela-Kharsewan districts, all in Jharkhand, Pallamaad mines, Bodhghat project, and Tata steel plant in Lohandiguda in Chhattisgarh, Jindal steel plant in Salboni, POSCO and Kalinganagar steel plants in Orissa, Jindal's

bauxite mining project in North Andhra, and so on. The sanction for these projects was done without the consent of the local people, and in most cases, the land was forcefully acquired with the help of the police and the goondas of the management. In some cases, a drama of convening the gram sabhas and taking their consent (through intimidation and even at gun-point) was enacted. We shall lead the people against these anti-people projects and the secret deals made by the rulers with the imperialists and the comprador capitalists. Only anti-people die-hards can say this stand of ours is against real development.

Q: Chidambaram has been describing you as bandits, terrorists, murderers, extortionists and so on?

Azad: This belligerent attitude on the part of the Home Minister, who has many resemblances to the hawkish Donald Rumsfeld, is not at all surprising to us. It reflects the fascist mind-set and political bankruptcy of our reactionary rulers who are incapable of waging political battles with the Maoist revolutionaries. It is a sign of their desperation and their extreme ideological-political weakness. Now I wish to make three points on Chidambaram's refusal to recognize the CPI(Maoist) as a political party.

Firstly, this guy is too enamoured of a military solution to the Naxal issue; he wants to just bomb us out of existence by describing us as terrorists. If he recognizes the CPI(Maoist) as a political party then he would have to logically try the political solution to begin with. But once you describe your enemy as a terrorist and a bandit engaged in ruthless, mindless violence, then you have no hassles in bombing him out of existence. Not a political party, hence no political solution-so runs the perverted logic of this gentleman heading the Union Home Ministry who received his apprenticeship in the thriving "war on terror" industry from the American imperialists. The war cabinet comprising of Manmohan, Chidambaram, GK Pillai remind us of the war cabinet under George Bush.

"It reflects the fascist mind-set and political bankruptcy of our reactionary rulers who are incapable of waging political battles with the Maoist revolutionaries. .. If he (Chidambaram) recognizes the CPI(Maoist) as a political party then he would have to logically try the political solution to begin with. But once you describe your enemy as a terrorist and a bandit engaged in ruthless, mindless violence, then you have no hassles in bombing him out of existence.... He is ignorant of the ideology, political programme, strategy and tactics of one of the biggest political parties in this country, a Party that is the only real opposition to the so-called mainstream political parties."
"...none of the mainstream parliamentary parties can come anywhere near our Party in terms of democratic functioning."

Secondly, the infamous statement that equates Maoists with bandits betrays the utter ignorance of the man who, to the misfortune of the vast majority of the Indian people, has come to occupy the helm of the Home Ministry. He is ignorant of the ideology, political programme, strategy and tactics of one of the biggest political parties in this country, a Party that is the only real opposition to the so-called mainstream political parties. One cannot but feel sorry for this ostrich that refuses to utter the truth even as he yells that Maoists are the "*single biggest threat to the country*", that they are spread over 2000 police station areas in around 200 districts in 17 states, and so on. Then what prevents him from calling the CPI(Maoist) a political Party is something he will never be able to explain.

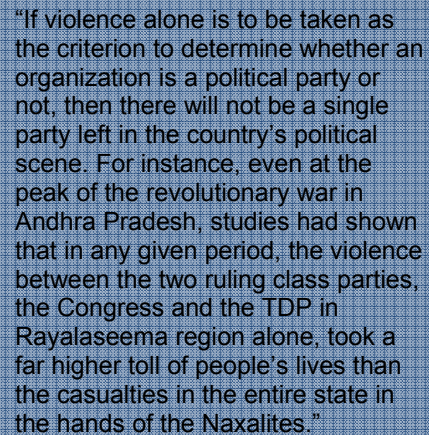
I suppose he imagines that a political party should be something akin to his own Congress party run by coteries and cliques comprised of a handful of leaders and extra-constitutional powers who are answerable to none, obnoxious dynastic culture, or in one word, a non-transparent, autocratic structure without any democratic functioning in the real sense of the term. In fact, none of the mainstream parliamentary parties can come anywhere near our Party in terms of democratic functioning. Our Party holds plenums at all levels every two years, conferences as frequently as we can, and a central Congress every five years. Every Party committee is elected at these forums. Not only in the Party, in all our mass organizations, organs of people's power and other departments too, the same practice is followed. And you can imagine how extremely difficult it is for an underground party operating in the midst of the severest enemy onslaught, to practice such democratic methods.

Thirdly, I should say that in one sense, the title of bandit by our die-hard enemy is a compliment to us. When we hear such an attacking tone from our enemies we are doubly assured that we are

going in the correct direction. In China, the reactionary ruler and traitor Chiang Kai-shek, who was an agent of the Anglo-American imperialists, described the Communist Party of China as a bandit party and the communists as red bandits. Comrade Mao took it as a complement and said that if the communist revolutionaries expected good words from the enemy then there must be something basically wrong with their line and practice. Even supposing we are red bandits who rob the rich to feed the poor, like some sort of robin hoods, as some believe, it is still not too bad a thing. But Chidambaram & Co are white bandits who rob the poor to pay the rich.

Interestingly, while Chidambaram refuses to recognize us as a political Party, even some police officers like the former DG of BSF, ML Kumawat, have better clarity at least on this question. People like Arnab Goswamy of *Times Now*, who not only reflect the views of Chidambaram and the police top brass but also embellish them with their own perverted logic, become wild when someone says CPI(Maoist) is a political party. How can a party that beheads an Inspector be called a political party, he thunders. But even a schoolboy knows that not just beheading, but burning alive and massacring, thousands of Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, raping women of the minority communities, and organizing mass murders of over 10,000 revolutionaries in the past four decades, have not disqualified the Congress and the BJP as political parties. On the contrary they remain the two biggest representatives of the ruling classes.

If violence alone is to be taken as the criterion to determine whether an organization is a political party or not, then there will not be a single party left in the country's political scene. For instance, even at the peak of the revolutionary war in Andhra Pradesh, studies had shown that in any given period, the violence between the two ruling class parties, the Congress and the TDP in Rayalaseema region alone, took a far higher toll of people's lives than the casualties in the entire state in the hands of the Naxalites. Stories of such rampant, brutal violence between sections of the ruling classes in their dog-fight for power abound in the states of West Bengal, UP, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and several other states. Then with what logic do these so-called analysts argue that a few punishments on the part of the Maoists disqualify it as a political party?



"If violence alone is to be taken as the criterion to determine whether an organization is a political party or not, then there will not be a single party left in the country's political scene. For instance, even at the peak of the revolutionary war in Andhra Pradesh, studies had shown that in any given period, the violence between the two ruling class parties, the Congress and the TDP in Rayalaseema region alone, took a far higher toll of people's lives than the casualties in the entire state in the hands of the Naxalites."

All these ostriches betray their stupidity by imagining that they can transform a political party into a non-political entity with the wave of a hand. Will these ostriches ever lift their heads from the sand?

Q: Speaking to some TV channel Chidambaram said he would love to be the Minister for Environment and Forests so that he can sit in a forest lodge and study books. Any comments?

Azad: (*laughing loudly*) This is the cruelest joke of the decade. If, to our misfortune, Chidambaram becomes the Minister for Environment and Forests, then would there be any forests worth the name left?

The reason why Chidambaram is longing for the environment ministry is not difficult for any keen observer of the unfolding events to understand. The files of many mining and so-called development projects are languishing in the shelves of the Ministry of Environment for want of clearance. The bauxite project of Vedanta Aluminum Ltd, a subsidiary of UK-based Vedanta got the clearance from the Environment ministry in April this year after pending for a long period. The Company is devastating the Niyamgiri Hills in Kalahandi and destroying one of the oldest indigenous tribes of India—the Dongria Kondhs.

The big steel, aluminum magnates and forest contractors want someone very close to them who will clear their projects without any hassle. If the Environment Ministry is in the hands of their loyal agents that would be the end of all their woes. No wonder, Chidambaram is longing to take over this job. One thing is certain: with Chidambaram at the helm of the environment ministry several more millions of adivasis would be displaced from their traditional homes, the forests would be decimated, the traditional way of life and the cultural identity of the adivasis would be destroyed, water sources polluted, and ecological imbalance would further aggravate.

Moreover, the entire forests will be on fire as the people's war will spread even more rapidly due to the current repressive policies of the government. So can poor Chidambaram fulfill his long-cherished wish to study books in peace?

Q: Now tell us something about the development work in the areas under your control?

Azad: If you visit the adivasi villages in our areas running into a few thousands in the vast hinterland of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra you will see what real development means to the poor of this country.

The most essential thing and a pre-condition for achieving real development in the lives of the people is an end to feudal and other types of rapacious exploitation. In the adivasi areas, the ruthless exploitation by the forest officials, revenue officials, contractors, village mukhiyas, non-advasi landlords and traders, and the policemen makes their very survival an impossible thing. Manmohan Singhs and Chidambarams may go on shouting from roof-tops about trickle-down effect, percolation of growth, and such abstract phrases that have absolutely no meaning or relevance to the poorest of the poor. As long as the poor masses are in the vice-like grip of the rapacious exploiters who are ruthless to the core, you cannot imagine any sort of improvement in their lives. This is true not only in the adivasi areas but throughout the country.

"The most essential thing and a pre-condition for achieving real development in the lives of the people is an end to feudal and other types of rapacious exploitation.... development is basically linked to the class struggle of the masses."

So the first thing I wish to emphasise is that our people's war had put an end to this terrible exploitation and oppression of the people living in the areas of our struggle. This itself has brought about a qualitative leap in their living conditions. From a life of slavery and animal-like existence these down-trodden masses are now living in relative freedom, administering their own lives and deciding their destiny. However, they have to ward off the attacks by the state's armed forces and state-sponsored vigilante gangs who are desperately trying to re-establish their lost hegemony and bring these proudly independent communities under their rapacious exploitation. Hence the people will fight unto the last man and woman to defend their new-found freedom and life of dignity and independence under the people's governments.

The second point I wish to emphasise is that development is basically linked to the class struggle of the masses. I will not dwell into the details of the struggles waged by the adivasis under our Party leadership. There is literature on that. I only wish to point out that people had increased their real incomes quite significantly after we took up struggles against exploitation by the tendu contractors, bamboo contractors, forest department, road-laying contractors, traders, money-lenders, landlords, and so on. Through these struggles the adivasi peasants have been able to increase their incomes and standards of living. The liberation of the people from feudal customs, traditions, values and attitudes due to the conscious effort of our Party has also contributed to releasing the initiative of the masses, particularly women, tremendously.

Now after the formation of the people's governments, there has been further improvement in their lives due to improved productivity in agriculture, formation of co-operatives, mutual-aid teams, proper utilization of local resources, marketing of minor forest produce, setting up poultry farms, piggeries,

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"..the incessant attacks by the Indian state and vigilante gangs sponsored by the state are obstructing development and even destroying what has been achieved."

fish farming and other productive activities. The development in our areas is carried out by the people's governments. You must keep in mind that we are carrying out the development activities in the midst of the incessant murderous attacks by state's armed forces and state-sponsored vigilante gangs, i.e, under the most severe constraints. Hence defence of the people's government and the gains achieved by the people too is an important task of these governments. We had eight departments under each people's government. A few months ago we established the trade and industries department taking the total government departments to nine. These are:

agriculture, education & culture, health & social welfare, defence, economic affairs, justice, forests, and public relations.

We have set up schools in villages where the government had never bothered to go. And where school buildings were built, these are used for accommodating the police and the central forces; there are no teachers worth the name in schools which exist only on paper. In all these villages it is our

teachers who teach the boys and girls basic subjects and make them basically literate. We have developed the language of the adivasis, published text-books in their mother-tongue, and thus facilitated a flowering of their culture and rich heritage.

There is also a conscious people's movement for the preservation of forests and an improvement in agricultural productivity. Now no dispute in any of our villages goes to the police station, so naturally, the policemen are angry that they are losing their illegal incomes. Health conditions have significantly improved when compared to those existing a decade or two decades ago. We have set up basic medical facilities in the villages.

However, all this development is taking place within the framework of the existing socio-economic system in the country and hence it has its limitations. Moreover, the incessant attacks by the Indian state and vigilante gangs sponsored by the state are obstructing development and even destroying what has been achieved.

Q: The government wants to establish its authority over the areas controlled by the Maoists. Chidambaram has been talking of a policy of clear-and-hold or wrest-control-develop or area domination in the major pockets of Maoist control. His argument is there can be no development without recapturing territory from the Maoists. How do you counter this policy?

Azad: Although we have influence over a wider area, our actual control is confined to a small area when compared to the vast geographical area of our country. And this area is witnessing real development as I had explained earlier. The exploiting classes have absolute control over more than 90% of the country's geographical area. If at all they wish to reach out to the masses with their so-called reforms, who is preventing them from doing so? Instead of addressing the burning problems of the poor in these vast regions under their absolute control they are talking of recapturing territory from the Maoists.

This policy of clear-and-hold as against the search-and-clear operations or sweeps is a carbon copy of the policy pursued by British imperialists in Malaya and the American imperialists in Vietnam during the 1950s and 60s. This policy was described at length by Robert Thompson in his book "*Defeating Communist Insurgency*". The dual purpose of the clear-and-hold policy is to kill the insurgents and destroy their infrastructure. The key element in restoring state authority and control is the programme of strategic hamlet. The enemy has realized that short-term raids into the guerrilla bases and zones, however large-scale they might be, will not fetch lasting results and the revolutionaries can regroup. Hence, there is an increasing emphasis on clear-and-hold operations with the creation of strategic hamlet as the key. The basic military strategy of the enemy is to deploy as many of his forces as possible in the same area of operation as that of the guerrillas. And the strategic hamlet is a pre-condition for restoring state authority as this ensures the physical and political isolation of the guerrillas from the population. So run the basic principles of this policy of Thompson now pursued by Chidambaram & Co starting with Lalgarrh.

The success of the British in Malaya was not due to the greatness of this policy but due to the revisionist line of the leadership of the Communist Party leading the revolution in that country. Coming to our own experience in India, we find that in the glorious Telengana armed agrarian struggle of 1946-51, around 3000 villages were liberated but we lost them to the enemy control due to the betrayal by the leadership of the Communist Party. If a revolutionary line is pursued by the Party and uses the principle of guerrilla war properly, it will be impossible for the enemy to completely clear and hold an area for long, not to speak of development. The colossal failure of the strategic hamlets created through the combined salwa judum-state military campaign is a proof of this.

The Indian government will pour in huge funds and carry out some reforms to win over a section of the people in a few areas. But even in these areas they cannot sustain for long nor can they set up strategic hamlets in a vast region. Anyway their chief aim is to clear the areas of Maoists and hand

"If a revolutionary line is pursued by the Party and uses the principle of guerrilla war properly, it will be impossible for the enemy to completely clear and hold an area for long, not to speak of development.... Hence if the enemy wants to set up police and army camps in the interior, he will not last long. He will be under constant attack and harassment from our PLGA and the people's militia.... I can confidently say that within a short period, there will be demoralization and desertion from these repressive forces."

over the mineral wealth to the corporate sector. So even if they compel us to retreat from some areas through their brute force, the entire population will be on our side and our war will be waged on a far extensive scale against the occupiers.

The case of Vietnam is a classic illustration of the total failure of the clear-and-hold policy propounded by Thompson. Although 8000 strategic hamlets were established in just two years, the enemy could not protect them or insulate them from the influence of the Vietcong, and several of these were recaptured by the guerrillas or used for their operations against the enemy forces.

The most important thing to keep in mind is: Guerrilla warfare is precisely developed to hit and run i.e., to hit at the enemy where he is vulnerable, harass the enemy day in and day out, cut off his supplies, create instability and a sense of insecurity among the enemy forces, annihilate them bit by bit, and finally throw them out from the area. Hence if the enemy wants to set up police and army camps in the interior, he will not last long. He will be under constant attack and harassment from our PLGA and the people's militia. How long can the enemy stay in these malaria-prone, water-scarce, inhospitable regions without any support or co-operation from the people? It will ultimately turn out to be a graveyard for these mercenary forces.

"These forces which spread state terror.....will get more and more bogged down and sucked ever deeper into the quicksands of people's war.

Chidambaram's fond dream can never be fulfilled even if he turns the so-called red corridor literally into a corridor of red with the blood of the adivasis and Maoist revolutionaries by enacting gory blood-baths."

I can confidently say that within a short period, there will be demoralization and desertion from these repressive forces. We have to wait to see how Chidambaram would deal with these desertions and what measures he would adopt to boost up the morale of his forces. Raman Singh and Vishwa Ranjan have been boosting up the morale of their forces by carrying out massacres of unarmed adivasis as in Singaram, Tongapal, Singanamadugu, etc and claiming that several Maoists were killed by their brave forces. Chidambaram too has to travel along this beaten path thereby sending us more recruits. And the more areas his forces try to "recapture", the deeper they will get bogged down in an unending civil war. The one lakh and odd forces that Chidambaram is currently deploying in the Maoist areas cannot control a fraction of the entire region. **These forces which spread state terror—the CRPF, BSF, EFR, IRB, CISF, ITBP, NSG, Cobras and various anti-Naxal special forces and elite commandos like the Greyhounds, STF, SOG, C-60, and so on—and their state-sponsored terrorist gangs like the salwa judum, sendra, TPC, JPC, NSS, Shanti Sena, Tigers and Cobras under various names, will get more and more bogged down and sucked ever deeper into the quicksands of people's war.** Chidambaram's

fond dream can never be fulfilled even if he turns the so-called red corridor literally into a corridor of red with the blood of the adivasis and Maoist revolutionaries by enacting gory blood-baths.

The reactionary rulers can neither wrest, nor control, nor develop any of the regions but will get embroiled in a war of attrition causing thousands of deaths of innocent adivasis and losing their own forces in huge numbers. They can only destroy the villages through their policy of "kill all, burn all, destroy all" as pursued by their reactionary counterpart Chiang Kai-shek in pre-revolutionary China. **The more destruction and havoc these mercenary forces cause the faster our people's army will grow and our guerilla war will spread to wider regions in the country.**

Thanks to salwa judum, our war had achieved in four years what it would have otherwise achieved in two decades. Now thanks to Chidambaram, our war will expand to wider areas, mobilise wider masses, and also will gather new momentum and get new dynamism. Every mercenary repressive force, by its very nature and sense of insecurity in rebel-held areas, will end up murdering people and destroying their property. This is what even the mightiest army is doing in Iraq and Afghanistan and getting rapidly alienated from the people.

Q: But the Home Minister says the government is duty-bound to establish the "rule of law"?

Azad: The "rule of law", huh! Is the Home Minister serious about it? If so, why does he allow his police and the army to abduct people, illegally detain them for days without end, torture them in secret

torture chambers in the most brutal manner, and murder them? Why did he permit the SIB of AP to abduct, torture and murder our central committee member comrade Patel Sudhakar? Why did he not ask his men to produce comrade Kobad Ghandy in the court within 24 hours after his arrest and instead kept him in illegal detention for four days? Chidambaram revealed how big a liar he is by announcing that Kobad was arrested on the 20th of September and produced in the court within 24 hours. Just ten days ago, two of our comrades Ravi Sharma and Anuradha, were arrested from Jharkhand but the police vehemently denied even after the news was flashed in the media and the AP High Court called for an explanation from the police after a habeas corpus petition was filed. Only after they were completely exposed and all-round pressure was built up, the police produced them in the court on the 14th claiming they were arrested only the previous day. The list of such incidents is endless. As regards the atrocities on innocent people I had already described in some detail.

“The so-called “rule of law” bandied about by Manmohan, Chidambaram, Raman Singh, Buddhadeb and others is only an empty phrase. It is an instrument used to oppress and suppress the people. If the “rule of law” is really implemented, the entire corrupt and lawless bureaucracy, police, and the political class would be languishing in jails.”

The so-called “rule of law” bandied about by Manmohan, Chidambaram, Raman Singh, Buddhadeb and others is only an empty phrase that exists on paper. In the eyes of the people it is merely an eye-wash and, moreover, is an instrument used to oppress and suppress them. If the “rule of law” is really implemented, the entire corrupt and lawless bureaucracy, police, and the political class would be languishing in jails.

Q: What of the child soldiers? Some papers and TV channels have even shown some photos of child soldiers recruited by the Maoists. How is it correct to arm the children when you say you are fighting for liberation from all exploitation?

Azad: Child soldier is another myth that is deliberately concocted and circulated by the police, the various reactionary parties ruling the country, some so-called political analysts employed by the reactionary rulers and dishonest media personnel as part of the enemy’s psychological warfare. Some media channels have been carrying out vicious propaganda that Maoists are preventing children from going to schools, using them in various war-related activities, and so on. They exhibit photos of young boys and girls in our guerilla camps and conclude that they are used by us for fighting the enemy. Shame be on these liars and distorters! They do not even have the minimum honesty and integrity to verify the facts before telecasting such falsehoods. Besides these deliberate distorters and liars, there are also some well-meaning friends and human rights organizations who to are misled by this propaganda. At the same time, the employment of young boys and girls under 15 as SPOs in Chhattisgarh is conveniently forgotten by the very same people who cry hoarse about the non-existent child soldiers in the Maoist PLGA.

I can confidently tell you that there is not a single child soldier in our PLGA. Boys and girls in the villages do create problems when our PLGA squads visit them. They want to come with us and even parents request us to take them and teach them as there are no schools in the villages, or, even where there are schools, there are no teachers. So we take them to our camps and use the period to teach them basic knowledge—the three essential Rs. Then they go back home. They do PT exercises

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but no arms are given to these youngsters. It is these photos of children doing exercises that some channels have been showing and claiming that these are child soldiers. Our Party is a highly disciplined party with proletarian values and culture unlike the lawless lumpen goons of the ruling class parties who have the sole aim of gaining power and money. Even if a single case of recruiting someone who is under 16 years of age comes to the notice of any Party committee action is taken promptly. 16 years is the minimum age for joining the PLGA. One may debate on this as the minimum age in the armed forces and police is 18 years. We have already explained in several interviews why 16 years is good enough in the conditions obtaining in the war zones where children are associated with the Party and the people’s army from a very young age. We can proudly say that

the adivasis have received basic education only after our Party gained a foothold in these areas. Successive reactionary governments, whichever party they belonged to, have done absolutely nothing in this regard even though they were in existence for almost six decades. And now light has dawned upon rulers and they talk of development! Can there be greater hypocrisy than this?

Moreover, why are Manmohans, Chidambarams and all the ostriches refuse to free the children held captive in millions of sweatshops, quarries, and innumerable other places and send them to school? The children in the Maoist areas are a small fraction of the total child population in the country. What prevents the rulers from stopping child labour and providing education to them? And even worse, why are these gentlemen allowing their mercenary forces who call themselves C-60 commandos to rape pre-teen girls like the 13-year-old girl in Pavarvel village in Dhanora tehsil in Gadchiroli district, and leaving Munna Singh Thakur and other rapists scot-free even after they are identified by the victim?

“Terrorism and “Left-wing extremism” are used by the reactionary ruling classes as a pretext to step up their fascist offensive on the people at large. This is necessary for the reactionary rulers in order to enforce their imperialist-dictated, anti-people, market fundamentalist, policies on a reluctant population.”

Q: There have been several reports of extortion by your armed cadre. Some media reports allege that extortion money by Maoists reaches a whopping Rs. 2500 crores annually.

Azad: This is again a part of the dirty propaganda war of lies and falsehood unleashed by the reactionary rulers who thrive on extortion. These rulers have more than a trillion dollars (almost 50 lakh crores) of black money sucked from the surplus produced by the Indian toiling masses and also siphoned off from the funds meant for the people. The top one per cent of the Indian population—the fatty layer thriving on fraud and extortion—wallow in filthy luxury, possess palatial buildings and what have you. Sonia, Manmohan, Chidambaram and the leaders of the major parliamentary parties are the political representatives of this filthy parasitical class. They have no right to speak against the selfless, dedicated revolutionaries who have given up everything to serve the people, literally live among the people, and have become martyrs for the people’s cause.

The extortion money you are talking about is perhaps the money which the reactionaries could not extort from the people due to Maoist presence. In all the Maoist-controlled areas the local police, the government bureaucrats, forest contractors and other exploiters are unable to procure money from the people. They might have calculated how much they had lost due to the ongoing people’s war and hence concluded that this money is going into the hands of the Maoists.

As far as our funds are concerned, we rely mainly on the people. We also collect taxes from the traders and others in our areas of dominance but it is nominal. This is not extortion. Extortion means what the political leaders, government bureaucrats, encounter specialists and police officials collect through coercion and intimidation from businessmen and people from all walks of life. The entire world knows who are the extortionists and yet the very same extortionists and other pseudo-intellectuals have the audacity to accuse the Maoists as extortionists. One is reminded of a thief himself shouting “Thief! Thief!” There are cases of extortion by state-sponsored pseudo-Naxalites like TPC, JPC, PLFI and so on who share the booty with the police officials.

Some of the pseudo-intellectuals and police top brass even allege that Maoists derive huge income from narcotics business as the DGP of Chhattisgarh, Vishwa Ranjan, has been doing. If our Party had some legality we could have sued this rogue for spreading lies and defaming the Party. The fact is, it is the police who had encouraged the cultivation of ganja in Malkangiri and when the Maoists tried to stop it, the disgruntled elements from the ganja growers were turned into their informers by the police and used against us.

Q: Lastly, what is your Party’s call to the people at large?

Azad: We appeal to the people of our country to stand up boldly against this unjust cruel war on the poorest of the poor waged by the central and state governments in the name of suppressing red terror. **The only terror that is terrifying the people of our country is state terror, saffron terror, and the terror of the exploiters and oppressors. Violence is a structural feature of our society: it is an inbuilt, inherent characteristic of the existing unjust, authoritarian, hierarchical, oppressive and rotten society. Just think of it! A mere five per cent of the country’s population**

oppresses and suppresses the remaining 95 per cent through extremely brutal violence reminding us of unthinkable medieval brutalities. All tools for perpetrating violence are monopolized by the ruling classes and their representative state apparatus. The poorest sections of the society, who live a life of extreme misery and destitution, are forced into meek submission to the exploiters as they have no means to fight the violent repressive tools in the hands of the state. It is these hungry and angry masses who form the backbone of our revolution. Their violence is only defensive violence or counter-violence to the eternal state violence. Every peace-loving democratic citizen of this country should realize this truth and defend the revolutionary violence of the oppressed led by the CPI(Maoist).

*"It is time for every Indian to raise these crucial questions and declare boldly: **"Stop this brutal war against the people! Not in my name, fascist Chidambaram!"**"*

We must all ask the question: who is spreading terror? Whose policies have led to the suicides of two lakh farmers in just one decade? Who has been spreading insecurity and pushing the vast majority to live under daily fear of hunger and starvation? Who is artificially hoarding essential commodities and terrorizing the people? Who is snatching the lands from the adivasis, dalits, poor and middle peasants and handing them over to a few rich business houses and MNCs? Who is indulging in the massacre of religious minorities with the aim of ethnic cleansing and creating terror among the 20 crore minority communities? Who is setting up vigilante gangs and unleashing a brutal reign of terror, butchering adivasis, raping women, destroying property, and displacing over one lakh adivasis in just two districts of Dantewada and Bijapur? Who is abducting Maoists and supporters of revolution, cruelly torturing them and murdering them? Who is a terrorist? And who has given Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram clique the right to wage war on the Maoists?

It is time for every Indian to raise these crucial questions and declare boldly: **"Stop this brutal war against the people! Not in my name, fascist Chidambaram!"** It is the organized resistance of the people and people alone that can stop this brutal war waged by Delhi's war-mongers—Sonia, Manmohan and Chidambaram—and the warlords in the states, for serving the class interests of their masters. This alone can ensure that the biggest traitors who publicly mortgage the interests of our beloved motherland to their imperialist masters—the Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram fascist clique—can never achieve their fond dreams of handing over huge chunks of our land to the imperialist marauders and their comprador agents in India.

Terrorism and "Left-wing extremism" are used by the reactionary ruling classes as a pretext to step up their fascist offensive on the people at large. This is necessary for the reactionary rulers in order to enforce their imperialist-dictated, anti-people, market fundamentalist, policies on a reluctant population.

We also call upon the policemen, who are sent to suppress their brothers and sisters for the benefit of a handful of exploiters and oppressors, to understand the conspiracies of the ruling classes, and appeal to them to desist from opening fire upon our own people. We have nothing against them so long as they cooperate with us and do not harm the people. We also call on them to join the revolutionary ranks or to help us through various means to defeat the cruel war being waged by a handful of hawks against the overwhelming majority of the Indian people.

Finally, we appeal to the media to verify the facts before propagating them and not to be carried away by the outright lies, deliberate distortions, baseless allegations, and the incessant mud-slinging by the police, bureaucrats, political leaders, and some so-called political analysts, who have unleashed a dirty psychological war against the Maoists and the revolutionary movement. The rulers have launched an all-out multi-pronged war and are engaged in a vicious propaganda campaign against us. You know that our Party has been banned and our members and supporters are constantly being hunted. Hence, we have hardly any scope to explain our stand-point to the people of our country and answer the unending baseless allegations against us. **Let us not make truth a casualty during this war.** We hope the media will provide some democratic space to the other version of the Maoist revolutionaries while leaving the ultimate judgement to the people themselves.

News from the battlefield

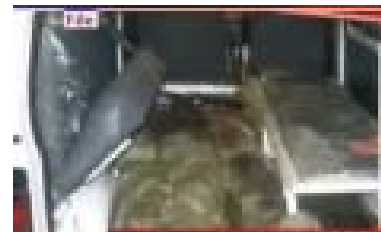
Maoist Guerrillas carry out a daring counter-offensive against Commando forces in Gadchiroli

On October 8, the day when the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met in New Delhi and approved the Centre's plan to launch the biggest-ever military offensive against the Maoists, PLGA guerrillas carried out a daring attack on the Laheri PS in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra wiping out 20 policemen. The police station is situated in the dense jungle about 20 km from the tehsil town of Bhamragadh. Most of the dead policemen belonged to the notorious elite anti-Naxal C-60 commando force which had been creating a reign of terror in the entire district. Several more commandos were injured in the Maoist attack. The guerrillas took away several sophisticated arms and ammunition from the commandos. The attack came just five days before the Assembly elections in the state. A 40-member C-60 commando party was moving in the Bhamragadh jungle as part of its mission of achieving area domination when it was taken by surprise by the Maoist guerrillas who carried out the ambush around noon. The Maoists did not suffer a single casualty in the exchange of fire with the commandos following the ambush.



The Laheri attack is the fourth major tactical counter-offensive in the district by Maoist guerrillas in the past eight months. The first major attack was carried out in February near Markegaon village in the same tehsil of Dhanora in which 15 policemen were wiped out. The second attack in Mungner wiped out three C-60 commandos in the month of May. Though the casualties were less the daring attack on a big commando party shook the entire police force. The third attack on May 21 wiped out 16 policemen near Tavvetola village in the same tehsil. With the attack on October 8, the total number of policemen wiped out since February reached 55.

The C-60 commando force was set up with the sole purpose of suppressing the Maoist movement in the state of Maharashtra. Ever since its formation, the commandos have been unleashing a brutal reign of terror in Gadchiroli, Gondia, Chandrapur and Bhandara districts. They have also been carrying out combing operations along the borders with the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh jointly with the Grey Hounds and STF of the respective states. They had illegally abducted several adivasi youth, tortured and murdered many, committed rapes of adivasi women, and destroyed the property of the poor adivasi villagers. The most infamous and brutal of these were the gang-rape of a 13-year-old girl in Pavarvel village in Dhanora tehsil and the gang-rape and murder of 52-year-old Mynabai of Kosimi village in Gyrapatti PS in the same tehsil. By enforcing the programme of gaonbandi on the villagers these policemen have been desperately trying to prevent the Maoist guerrillas from entering the villagers. In the colonial style of the British imperialists, the Maharashtra government and the district police officials have introduced the system of collective punitive action if any village was found to be entertaining the Maoists or supporting them in any manner.



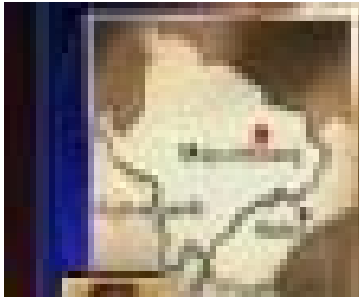
As the atrocities by these mercenary forces became unbearable several adivasi peasants were compelled to leave the villages and search for their livelihood elsewhere. Seething with anger several adivasi youth joined the revolutionary ranks to wage war against these repressive forces of the state. Thus with the mounting state repression the Maoists too stepped up their revolutionary counter-violence. **It is not difficult for anyone barring those who stand with the exploiters and oppressors that the series of attacks carried out by Maoist guerrillas in Gadchiroli against the special police forces are in defence of the adivasi people whose lives had become extremely insecure and precarious due to the indescribable atrocities by the police, particularly the C-60 commandos. Needless to say, it is only through such brave resistance that the people can gain some democratic space and it has been proved in thousands of villages in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Maharashtra where the people had been living a relatively peaceful lives whenever they succeeded in repulsing the attacks by the central and state forces.**

Some well-meaning intellectuals, civil rights activists, and other democratic organizations and individuals too have expressed grave apprehensions regarding the attacks on policemen by Maoist guerrillas. We call upon these friends of the people to understand the concrete conditions under which we are taking up such retaliatory actions or revolutionary counter-violence. The commonly heard argument that violence begets counter-violence and this increasing spiral of violence would only brutalise all those who indulge in it is untenable and flawed. Likewise, another argument floated by so-called neutral forces in this cruel class war that the common people are caught in the cross-fire between the Maoists and the police is also equally flawed. The people who suffer indescribable atrocities know better and it is their demand that the Maoists should deal effective blows on the forces that are unleashing brutal terror on the people. That is why entire families are coming to join the Party and PLGA. Families are sending their sons and daughters happily into the PLGA contrary to the vicious propaganda by the boot-lickers of the reactionaries that Maoists are recruiting young boys and girls forcefully and are coercing the families to send at least one member.

The more these state-hired mercenary forces, specially trained in oppressing and terrorizing the people, continue their atrocities on the people the more tactical counter-offensives the Maoists and the people will be compelled to take. It is the centre and state governments, and those leading the governments—the Manmohan Singhs, Chidambarams, Raman Singhs, Buddhadebs, Naveen Patnaiks, et al—who are solely responsible for the ensuing casualties of poor policemen who are made into cannon fodder for the interests of a handful of billionaires and millionaires.

Three policemen wiped out in Mayurbhanj in Orissa

On October 14, Maoist guerrillas attacked Sudam Marandi at a football match in Mayurbhanj district of Orissa. Sudam Marandi survived the attack but three policemen were wiped out in the daring strike by the guerrillas.



Daring Attack by Maoist guerrillas on Sankrail PS in West Mednipur: Two police officers annihilated, SHO captured and released in exchange for 22 tribal women

Even as over 6000 central and state police have been carrying out massive combing operations in Lalgargh and the surrounding areas, and a greater number is deployed in the three districts of West Midnapore, Purulia and Bankura to stamp out the Maoist movement, Maoist guerrillas, by carrying out a daring day-light attack on a police station, delivered a slap in the face of the social-fascists ruling West Bengal and the khadi fascist regime of Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram at the Centre. The Maoist simultaneously attacked the Sankrail PS and a bank in the afternoon of October 20, annihilated two police officers and captured the station house officer Atindranath Dutta. Around a million rupees were seized from the bank without harming anyone. They also seized the weapons of the policemen present in the station.

The Maoists declared that the officer in-charge of the PS was being treated as a POW and would be released only after releasing the adivasi women above 45 years of age who were arrested and placed behind bars in the wake of the Maoist attack on the convoy of the chief minister Buddhadeb on November 2 last year. One of the Polit Bureau members of CPI(Maoist), comrade Koteswara Rao, was in continuous contact with the media and placed the demands for the release of innocent adivasi women who were languishing in jails for almost an year and against whom false cases of sedition, arms act, etc were foisted by the police. Though Buddha's social fascist government was reluctant to accede to the demands in the beginning, it had to come down after growing pressure from police



Women out at last! Social- fascist Buddhadeb govt says they were waging war against the state!!

associations and people across the state. The decapitation of a Jharkhand special branch inspector, Francis Induvar, which took place a fortnight earlier, was still fresh in public mind, and the increasing pressure for the release of the tribals forced the government to let them out on bail on 22 October. Thus after 55 hours of captivity, the Inspector in-charge Sankrail PS was released after the government fulfilled the just demand of the Maoists by releasing 22 adivasis of which 21 were women.

The drama following the release of the tribal women was amusing and also reflected the hypocrisy and cheap politicking by the various ruling class parties. The release of the adivasi women was immediately condemned by the Congress and a few other parties as well as by a section of the media which dubbed it as an outright surrender by the West Bengal government to the Maoists. They described it as a sign of weakness of the government and wailed that this would encourage more such acts by the Maoists in future. They forgot for a moment how a state committee member of the erstwhile CPI(ML)[People's War] was air-dropped in the forest when Sudheer Kumar, the AP Youth Congress president and son of the then Union Minister in the Congress government, Shiv Shankar, was captured by the Maoists in 1991.

Interestingly, Buddhadeb, Biman Bose and other representatives of the CPI(M) retorted that they did not give in to Maoist demands, that they had not released anyone but had only granted bail to the adivasi women since it was quite harmless if they were released, that they would arrest Kishenji at the



Sankrail OC Atindranath with POW written on poster

earliest, and so on. How did the social-fascists suddenly realize that keeping the adivasi women in jail was not warranted and that they did not pose any threat to peace by staying outside? Then why did they lock these poor hapless adivasi women charging them with sedition and waging war against the state, attempting to murder policemen, and so on? Will these social fascist gangsters pay compensation to these women for having locked them up for months together on false charges and causing terrible mental trauma to them and their families? And will they punish the police officers who had beaten up these women and filed the false cases? What is so shameful in admitting the universally-known fact that Buddhadeb's social fascist government had to yield to the demands of the Maoists?

What Sankrail raid and its aftermath reveal

The episode revealed two important things: one, the terrible plight of adivasis, particularly women, under the social fascist regime in West Bengal; two, the superiority of guerrilla tactics and the ability of the Maoists to bring the state to its knees even in the midst of the severest repression unleashed by the reactionary rulers.

To elaborate on the first point, the fact that middle-aged and old-aged adivasi women have been locked up for waging war against the mighty state speaks volumes about the indiscriminate violence, persecution and harassment of the adivasis by the Indian state. Could these unarmed women wage war against the state that has 12 lakh Army, an equal number of para-military and even a greater number of police force? A report on Oct 24 revealed how a 70-year-old woman who was not even in a position to walk properly was charged with the attempted murder of the policemen and locked up in jail since September 2009 (See the heart-rending report under the caption "From the Newspapers").

What had appeared in the papers is only the tip of the ice-berg. Stories of torture, abduction, rapes, mental harassment, and murders of innocent unarmed adivasis run into several volumes if properly recorded.

The persecution of the adivasis is unimaginable to the non-adivasis of our country. The one lakh



cases against the adivasis which the government of Jharkhand decided to withdraw upon the instruction of the Union Home Ministry reflects this horrifying plight of the hapless adivasis to light. All these cases are petty and are related to collection of fire-wood or minor forest produce by the adivasis which is in fact their inalienable right but the forest officials and the policemen pounce on them and suck their blood like leaches. The adivasi women are sexually exploited by these same officials and other non-adivasi outsiders. The reactionary rulers, whether they belong to the khadi brand, saffron brand or the red brand, are one and the same when it comes to exploiting and oppressing the adivasis and plundering the wealth of the adivasi-inhabited regions even it meant massive displacement and ruination of their lives and the environment.

Interestingly, while 70-year Sudharani Baske and other women have been waging war against the state, Chidambaram on the other hand, repeatedly denies that the Indian state, which has sent over two lakh central and state police forces to the areas of armed struggle by the Maoists, is waging war! He even thinks it atrocious to term this massive military operation against the Maoists an offensive!! War by unarmed adivasi women against the state, but Gandhigiri by the hundreds of thousands of police and para-military forces armed to the teeth with the most sophisticated weapons and IAF choppers. Such is the logic of the Prime Minister and the Home Minister. By the words of this khadi-clad saint, one would tend to think that he might perhaps have instructed the two-lakh and odd khaki and olive-green forces sent to Maoist areas to sit on satyagraha to change the hearts and minds of the Maoists.

As regards the second point that comes out prominently in the wake of the Sankrail incident is the ability of the Maoists to strike at the state by resorting to guerrilla warfare. It shows that the massive offensive by the Centre and states cannot suppress the Maoists but will only create great suffering to the vast masses of people. Nearly four months after launching their much-hyped Operation Lalgarh by mobilizing a huge specially-trained anti-Naxal force the rulers failed to cause any damage to the Maoists. What they did was to arrest and harass the ordinary innocent people on the plea of aiding the Maoists. The Lalgarh operation had strengthened the armed strength of the Maoists due to the persecution and harassment of the adivasi youth by the trigger-happy policemen. The war waged by the reactionary rulers against the oppressed people will only further strengthen the Maoists and their PLGA.

Four CISF jawans wiped out in Maoist ambush in Dantewada

Maoist guerrillas wiped out four Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel, including a sub-inspector and a head constable, by blowing up a patrol vehicle near Bacheli in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh on October 25.

A batch of six CISF jawans left for the Rajabungalow area, about 10km from Bacheli, where the National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) has iron ore mines. When the jawans were returning to Bacheli, about 450km south of Raipur, the guerrillas detonated a powerful landmine that blew up the vehicle passing through a hilly terrain around 5pm.



The scene of ambush in Dantewada

“The explosion was very powerful. It tossed the jeep several feet high in the air before it landed and broke into pieces, killing four CISF jawans on the spot,” Amresh Kumar Mishra, the Dantewada superintendent of police, said.

The guerrillas opened fire soon after the blast and later retreated safely into the forests, Two other jawans injured in the blast were rushed to the NMDC hospital in Bachel where the condition of one was critical. In the same area, a Maoist commander, Raju, was murdered and three Maoists were arrested by security forces last month. The Centre, which has been on a killing spree in Dantewada, Bijapur, Kanker, Narayanpur, Bastar and Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh that claimed around 60 adivasi lives in just 40 days since the commencement of the brutal operation Green Hunt on September 17, has immediately condemned the ambush as “wanton, mindless and pre-meditated, the violence” by the CPI (Maoist) in Dantewada. Instead of citing scriptures like the devil, these fascist rulers should first put an end to the state violence on unarmed people which has made life a veritable hell in vast tracts of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and other states. If the rulers step up their military offensive such counter-attacks will increase and the sole responsibility for the ensuing casualties of policemen lies with the callous rulers themselves who are using the poor policemen as cannon fodder in this unjust war against the people.

Release comrades Ravi Sharma and Anuradha unconditionally

On Oct 10, two state-level comrades—Ravi Sharma aka Arjun, Mahesh and Anuradha aka Rajitha—were illegally abducted by the notorious APSIB and Jharkhand police from Patna on October 9th. It was only after protests by several civil rights and democratic organizations, a habeas corpus petition in the AP High Court by their parents, and finally a threat by the CPI(Maoist) to call for bandh in Jharkhand, that the lawless goons in khaki uniform admitted that the two were arrested and produced them in the court on the 14th. They had shamelessly floated a story that comrade Ravi had escaped on Oct 10 after being arrested by the AP police when the vehicle in which he was being taken was stopped by JVM-P activists during bandh in Hazaribagh but latter arrested him from a village in the same district. Thus the ‘rule of law’ of Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram’s fascist regime allowed the khaki goons to detain the Maoist leaders in their illegal custody for six days before showing their arrests.

The audacity of the police in first denying the arrest even after the issue was raised by civil rights activists and others, but again producing them in the court after a few days speaks volumes on the respect these goons have for the Indian Constitution by which they swear day in and day out in the most hypocritical manner. The media, which goes on non-stop propaganda when a police official or a political leader is captured by the Maoists, does not make this gross violation of the fundamental rights of a citizen by the so-called law-enforcing agencies into an issue. The illegal detentions of hundreds of activists and sympathisers of the Maoist movement, thousands of ordinary people residing in the areas of armed struggle, are non-issues for the media run by money-bags.

Comrade Ravi Sharma was an active member of the AP Civil Liberties Committee during the early 1990s and later joined the revolutionary movement as a professional revolutionary. He was an agricultural scientist but left his career to take a more active part in the revolution. He worked in Bihar for several years at the zonal and state level. Comrade Anuradha was a bank employee from Andhra Pradesh who left her job to work as a full-timer for the women’s organization, Chaithanya Mahila Samakhya (CMS). She joined is actively organizing the women’s movement in other parts of the country and hence the government, which cannot tolerate any type of legal movement by the Maoists, has arrested comrade Anuradha to scuttle the revolutionary women’s movement in the country. Although she does not have any criminal cases pending against her the police have managed to foist several cases on her after the arrest so as to ensure that she does not easily get bail.

Maoist Bandh against counter-revolutionary war by the Centre

A bandh was called by the CPI(Maoist) in the five states of Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Orissa on Oct 12-13 to protest against the growing offensive by the Congress-led UPA government at the Centre and the various state governments forces and the police atrocities on innocent adivasis and sympathizers of revolution.



Pictures of bandh impact

The bandh was successfully observed in most parts of the five states and brought to a standstill the road and rail services, mining and industrial activity, business and government establishments. In Hussaingunj in Gaya and Pariiya in Aurangabad mobile towers were blasted. In Lakhisarai, part of the Vanshipur railway station was burnt down. In Munger, a block bhavan in Sangrampur was blasted. In Sitamarhi a bus was burnt down near Kharsoli chowk after getting all the passengers out. Violent incidents took place wherever the police tried to foil the bandh by using brute force. Home Minister Chidambaram wailed that extensive damage was done to government and private establishments and that at least 21 violent attacks on economic targets were hit by the Maoists during the bandh.

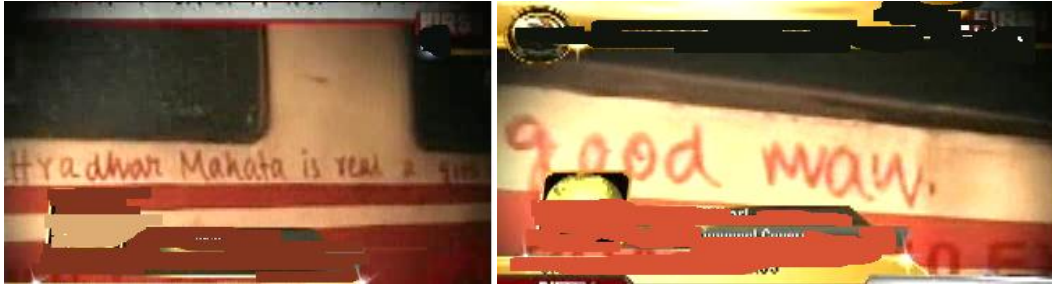
On October 15, reacting to the Maoist offensives during the two-day bandh in the five states in protest against police atrocities, the Home Ministry charged that the “so-called armed liberation struggle, ostensibly meant to lead to betterment of the lives of the common citizen, especially the tribal people, has, in two days, set back development efforts of the government and private investors”. But the Home Ministry conveniently hushed up the reasons behind the bandh by Maoists and the heinous attempts by the administration to foil the bandh through threats and intimidation. Every bandh called by Maoists this year was against illegal detention or fake encounters of Maoist leaders and cadres by the police or increasing police atrocities. Obviously, if the police stick to the constitutional laws, respect the fundamental rights of the citizens and produce the arrested within 24 hours there would not have been any need for the bandhs and attacks on the economic or other targets. If Chidambaram realizes this at least now and rein in his khaki-clad goons instead of unleashing propaganda against Maoist violence then things would certainly improve.

Hold-up of Rajdhani aggravates the dog-fights among the reactionary ruling classes: Adivasis have the last laugh!

What was actually a simple protest by the adivasis belonging to the People’s Committee against Police Atrocities (PCPA) against the ever-increasing atrocities by the state police and central paramilitary forces on the adivasi community in Jangalmahal, turned out to be an endless dirty drama of mutual mud-slinging by the reactionary ruling class parties—the CPI(M)-led Left Front, Trinamul Congress and the Congress party. If the adivasis had “hijacked” a train for five hours these reactionary parliamentary parties have hijacked the entire country holding the vast majority in utter poverty and misery.

The Rajadhani Express from Bhubaneswar to Delhi was stopped by around 1000 adivasis armed with bows and arrows and detained it for around five hours in Banstala Halt station near Jhargram. The act was a part of their peaceful protest during the bandh called by the PCPA on October 27 demanding the release of their leader Chhatradhar Mahato and a halt to the continuing atrocities by the police under the social fascist regime in West Bengal led by the CPI(M). The adivasis were also infuriated that the railways did not heed the bandh called by the PCPA and hence stopped the train. The “blockade” of the train was planned on a day when a sizeable section of the district police had fanned out along the 7 km stretch from Panskura in East Midnapore to Chowringhee, the gateway to Midnapore town, to oversee the route by which chief secretary Ashok Mohan Chakrabarti, director general of police Bhupinder Singh, and five other senior IAS officers were coming to Midnapore from Kolkata. A huge police force was also deployed to escort the convoy from Chowringhee to Midnapore town.

The reaction to such incident was on expected lines. The media kept barking that it was a train hijack by Maoists and “pro-Maoist PCPA” armed with sophisticated weapons had spread terror by holding hostage 800 passengers. Some cried out that it was a VIP train that was hijacked implying that it wouldn't have mattered much if it was an ordinary train, and even showed pictures of hooded terrorists armed with rifles stopping the train creating an impression of a dacoit gang. While the passengers narrated that they had no problem whatsoever from the protestors and that they behaved well, the media went into hysteria howling Maoist mayhem, five hours of terror, and such trash. Bu the most amusing thing was the dog-fights the five-hour train hold-up had generated which do not seem to subside for some more days.



As the dog-fights intensify the adivasis and the Maoist revolutionaries have learnt how to pit these dogs against each other by carrying out such a simple act. One single shot with a country-made gun at a CRPF or police camp in the interior forest area was sufficient to keep them firing all through the night while the guerrillas witnessed with amusement the extreme nervousness of these 'brave' soldiers. The train stoppage too looked similar. A single act had brought the various parliamentary swines hitting out at each other, hurling charges and counter-charges endlessly and becoming objects of ridicule in the eyes of the people.

Prakash Karat and Sitaram Yechuri charged the Trinamul Congress of being hand in glove with the Maoists in organizing the train hold-up. These leaders, who exhibit an intellectual air, revealed their utter foolishness an mental immaturity when they questioned how a train speeding at 120 km an hour could be stopped without the connivance of the railway authorities, or why no FIR was files by the railway authorities against the PCPA when the latter itself had claimed responsibility for stopping the train, and so on. These representatives of the social fascists cried hoarse that the Congress and Trinamul at the centre were in league with the Maoists to unseat the Left Front government in West Bengal and to come to power in the next Assembly elections. Their brains saturated with the single point programme of parliamentary politicking, they are just incapable of understanding why the people, particularly the adivasis, are up in arms against their social fascist rule and even their demands are incomprehensible to their conspiratorial petty brains. Like every fascist regime the CPI(M)-led Left Front too has resorted to massive suppression of a mass people's movement like the adivasi movement in Lalgarh, arrested its popular leader Chhatradhar Mahato thereby provoking the ire of the adivasis, has been carrying out brutal reign of terror on the adivasi community, and left them with no other option than to take up arms. Karat-Yechuri-Budhaddeb gang has also let loose its private vigilante gang, the harmad bahini, to murder and harass adivasis and Maoist revolutionaries.

Mamata Banerjee, on her part, launched her usual senseless tirade charging that Buddhaddeb was the biggest Maoist! She said that the CPI(M) was in league with the Maoists and that was why the Buddhaddeb government did not take steps to arrest Maoist leader Kishenji when he was speaking to the media continuously over the phone and meeting them. She demanded that the army be deployed in the areas of Maoist dominance in the state and to seize all the illegal arms piled up by the CPI(M) goons.

A section of the media let out squeals that Maoists would gain by the infighting among the ruling class parties. A vigorous campaign was launched for bringing about unity among these ruling factions so as to deal effectively with the Maoists. If one train stoppage has led to such dog-fights within the ruling classes, how would the situation be as the revolutionary movement intensifies and takes on several more important targets? In this entire drama following the Rajdhani episode it is the poor adivasi who had the last laugh.

Increasing suicides and frustration among the mercenary forces deployed in the guerrilla zones of central and eastern India

The nervousness, the fear, and frustration are writ large on the faces of the poor policemen and jawans belonging to the central forces who are sent by the Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram fascist clique to suppress the Maoist movement and the adivasis in central and eastern India. The latest suicide on October 30 by Dhananjay Singh of ASF hailing from Siwan, Bihar, who was deployed in Amabeda police station in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh, reflects the mental condition of these helpless pawns in the cruel class war waged for the benefit of a handful of parasitic plunderers like the Tatas, Mittals, Essar, Jindals, POSCO, Vedanta etc. The poorest sections of the society who join the police and other armed forces for their livelihood are systematically dehumanized, brutalized and transformed into killing machines and deployed against their own people.



A policeman in barrack, 13 cops, 1 room, toilet, no doors

In the current war being waged by the reactionary rulers against the Maoists and the adivasis, thousands of central forces are sent to the interior areas of central and eastern India to be used as cannon fodder. A considerable number of these central forces are airdropped in the dense jungles and are ordered to fight the Maoists there. Knowing nothing about the terrain and with absolutely no co-operation from the local people, these forces get panicky at the slightest sound in the forest. They open fire at the rustle of leaves and end up shooting down a cow or monkeys on the trees. They live in constant fear of attack by the Maoist guerrillas who had entrenched themselves in the area for over three decades. And one ambush by the Maoists would throw these forces into total confusion. Those who manage to flee after an ambush or encounter with Maoist guerrillas simply do not know where to go; they do not know the terrain, language, and get no co-operation from the local people. There are instances of some jawans getting lost in the wilderness of the jungle. Notwithstanding the training in jungle warfare imparted by the Indian Army officers, which they feel is of little help in a hostile environment, nervousness stalks these soldiers.

Moreover, they have problems concerning their basic necessities; rations too are in short supply at times due to the fear of ambushes by the Maoists on the police parties transporting rations, drinking water is unavailable or scarce. People refuse to provide them with water even when it is available and also other essentials. Some jawans reported that they are not able to get oil for cooking or lighting as the people refuse to give them. Malaria too scares these jawans and reports are pouring in about scores of jawans being admitted into hospitals in Jagdalpur, Kanker, Narayanpur, Rajnandgaon etc. The mental trauma that these poor jawans are undergoing is terrible. And this is one reason why they become so inhuman when they raid a village or come across someone in the forest. Not knowing why and what for they are fighting; for whose interests they are fighting; not knowing the enemy against whom they are supposed to be fighting; being totally ignorant of how long they will be fighting; and apprehensive whether they will be lucky enough to see their families again who live in states as far as Haryana or Nagaland; the personnel of these central forces and the special commando forces wish to be transferred out from these areas at the earliest. Hundreds of applications seeking transfer are pouring into the offices of the commandants and police chiefs. A considerable number of jawans have applied for leaves and refuse to undergo jungle warfare training, or go to the Maoist areas where they are newly posted. But those who are brought to the area from far-off states have no option but to fight this war on behalf of the reactionary rulers. Some of them who are not in a position to withstand the mental trauma are resorting to suicide. There is an occasional case of shooting dead their superior officers when their requests for transfer are not heeded.

The adivasis look at this war as a war waged by an enemy country. The behavior, the language barrier, the inhuman atrocities carried out by these repressive forces deployed in the adivasi areas reinforces this perception of an alien force invading their territory. Hence the people will fight unto the last man and woman and will inflict heavy losses to the mercenary forces deployed in their areas. As the casualties mount, the central forces will get even more demoralized. Today one Dhanjay Singh, or around thirty others, if we count the suicide incidents in the past few months, had shot themselves not knowing what else they could do as frustrated individuals. But tomorrow they will erupt into a massive revolt against the cruel exploiters and oppressors who have been using them to suppress the people for their own selfish class interests. These policemen too will teach a lesson to Sonia, Manmohan, Chidambaram, GK Pillai, Raman Singh, Vishwa Ranjan and other hawks who are using them as cannon fodder in a war against their own people.

News from the counter-revolutionary camp

Cabinet nod for anti-Naxal Plan

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCTOBER 09, 2009

New Delhi: India's biggest armed offensive against Naxalites got a push on Thursday (Oct 8).

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) cleared the home ministry-driven coordinated offensive against Maoists that will see deployment of nearly 75,000 central security personnel. The personnel are being trained alongside the army to fight the Naxals and regain control of the so-called liberated zones across the dense jungles of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and Maharashtra.

Indian Air Force (IAF) choppers will assist in movement of forces – for operations or rescue and evacuation – and have Garud commandos onboard in case of a Naxalite attack.

"It is not that we will be undertaking free for all Rambo-like operations," said Air Chief Marshal P.V. Naik, who had asked for the defence ministry's permission to shoot down Naxalites in self-defence.

"We have received a proposal from the IAF. We are examining it", Defence Minister AK Antony said.

The CSS, the top security panel chaired by the Prime Minister, however is learnt to have given its in-principle nod to the home ministry strategy plan on Thursday evening, on a day Naxalites killed 17 policemen in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district.

"The CCS discussed the Naxalite situation for two hours," National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan said after the meeting of the highest policy body – Antony and Home Minister P.



LIMITED OFFENCE ON NAXALS
Air Chief Marshal P.V. Naik, Chief of Air Staff
Itching for aerial bombardment: Rambo style

Chidambaram are among the other members-for decisions related to national security. The offensive, which will see the largest mobilization ever of central forces outside the north-east and Jammu and Kashmir, is expected to gather momentum after the Maharashtra elections when the government moves the full complement of the available forces, nearly 40,000 personnel, into the states. The central forces would focus on the heavily forested areas along inter-state borders of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand and Bihar. Home Ministry officials, however, made it clear that only the first part of the offensive would be fought with guns. The next, was to deliver a big dose of development.

The War Strategy and the Five-Year plan of the Centre

The November Offensive

- The offensive will be spread over the next five years
- A Special Forces school, a Special Forces unit and an army brigade HQ will be set up near Bilaspur. The Bde HQ will participate in anti-Maoist ops in the future. The army is looking for 1,800 acres of land to set up the infrastructure.
- The IAF is looking for 300 acres for its base
- MHA is sitting on a plan to redeploy the Rashtriya Rifles
- For now, 27 battalions of the Border Security Force and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police will be moved into Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Maharashtra
- The paramilitary forces will be supported by six Mi-17 IAF choppers
- The helicopters will have on board the IAF's special force, the GARUDS, to secure the chopper and conduct combat search and rescue operations
- The offensive will be in seven phases. Each phase has been marked areawise as Operating Areas (OAs).

OA-1 involves moving along a north-south axis from Kanker, Chhattisgarh, and on an east-west axis from Gadchiroli in Maharashtra and span the Abuj Marh forests used by the Maoists as a training centre and logistics base

With each part of the operation designated areawise as OAs or Operating Areas, the November Offensive will mark the first phase. A two-pronged attack, it will begin simultaneously in the Kanker district of Chhattisgarh and Gadchiroli in Maharashtra, together characterised as OA1. The objective is to proceed on a north-to-south axis from Kanker and a west-to-east axis from Gadchiroli, and meet at the 6,000 sq km swathe of forest called the Abuj Marh, which is “unknown jungle” in the local Gondi dialect of the tribals (see map). Indeed, the Marh is an impenetrable forest that has not even been mapped for revenue records and has therefore served as a major training and logistics base for the Maoists for years. The strategy now is to push ahead, hit Abuj Marh and then hold ground.

OA1 secured, it'll serve as a logistics base for the next phase of operations—OA2—to be conducted in the Maoist-affected districts of Dantewada, Narayanpur, Bijapur and Bastar. Orissa's bordering districts won't conduct any offensive operations, with troops being deployed only in a defensive posture to hold ground and prevent Maoists fleeing Chhattisgarh from entering the forests there.



Preparations have been under way for a while. As a major step, however, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) cleared a pending proposal of the army headquarters to set up a special forces school, a special forces unit and a brigade HQ in Chhattisgarh. “The army wanted 1,800 acres of land, and we identified Bilaspur as the area for setting up the brigade headquarters,” Vishwa Ranjan, the director-general of police, Chhattisgarh, told *Outlook*. “As of now, Indian army officials are scouting around for contiguous land and the district collector has been instructed to help them set up the headquarters.” Bilaspur is Chhattisgarh's third-largest city, and also the headquarters of the South Central Railway. With this, the army will be set to play a role beyond its present responsibility of training paramilitary forces like the Border Security Force (BSF) and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

The Indian air force too will, for the first time, have a task cut out for it in anti-Maoist operations. Six Russian Mi-17 helicopters have been earmarked to aid the paramilitary forces on ground. Two each will be placed in Nagpur in Maharashtra, Orissa and Jagdalpur, the district headquarters of Bastar, to aid troops in conducting operations in inaccessible areas as well as casualty evacuation. The choppers will also carry the IAF's special forces—the Garuds—to secure the aircraft and conduct combat search and rescue operations. According to sources in the air headquarters, the CCS also agreed that the air force choppers will have the permission to fire back in self-defence.

Besides, the Centre and states are planning to send in nearly 27 battalions (of 800 to 1,000 men each) of the BSF and ITBP into Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Maharashtra to augment existing troops. The MHA is also sitting on a plan to redeploy the elite Rashtriya Rifles in the area once the brigade HQ is set up. A specialised force raised by the army to combat insurgency in Kashmir, RR will be diverted from Jammu & Kashmir “once the situation is more stable in Kashmir”, a senior official of the Union ministry of home affairs told *Outlook*. The BSF and RR, unlike other paramilitary forces, have heavy weaponry like medium-range machine guns, mortars and rocket launchers. This will take the new offensive to an altogether different level.

With things drifting thus, police casualties had begun to mount in the recent past, compounded as their woes were by lack of adequate training and equipment. The deployment of the Central Reserve Police Force proved to be another disaster. Ill-equipped and ill-trained for the job, many of its personnel lost their lives in mines and IEDs laid on village roads by the Maoists. Understandably, the CRPF panicked and restricted its men from operating beyond a radius of 5 km beyond their camps, which has now been revised to a radius of 8 km. (On War Footing, Saikat Datta, *Outlook*, Oct 26, 2009)

Anti-naxal offensive to begin in 11 places

Strategy in place. Government plans to clear forests of heavily armed cadre

Hindustan Times 10 Oct 2009 : Alope Tikku

New Delhi: India's bloody battles against the Maoists will be fought in eleven theatres along borders of Naxal-infested states like Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand besides smaller, simultaneous operations through the vast swathe of dense jungles that the Maoists call the Red Corridor.

India has 2.5 million people living under the shadow of the about 5,600 well-trained and equally well armed Naxals. "This is their fighting core besides thousands of militia," a senior security officer said.



The government expects to wipe out the military component of the Naxals between 12 to 36 months. Already, there are reports of the Maoists moving deeper into jungles – and their leaders into strongholds like the Abujmarh jungles of Chhattisgarh – in anticipation of the onslaught.

The anti-naxal surge cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) on Thursday plans to clear the forests of the heavily armed naxal cadre and deliver a heavy close of development that will bring schools, health services, police stations and road building exercises.

"We hope that literally within 30 days of security forces moving in and dominating the area, we should be able to restore civil administration there," Home Secretary GK Pillai declared on Friday.

But this exercise could be painfully slow and cost hundreds of lives. India has 223 districts under naxal influence, only half of them witness naxal violence.

The government has a Rs. 7,300 crore infrastructure development plan for naxal-affected areas under various schemes. Pillai expects to spend nearly Rs. 1,000 crore on the naxal-infested regions this year.

Senior government sources told HT that the home ministry had received support from the CCS on taking the naxal battle to the next level, into naxal strongholds like the forests of Bastar where the naxal writ runs.

While state police forces assisted by the central forces would carry out operations in their respective areas, the home ministry has drawn up a heavy plan to dominate the eleven tri-junctions and bi-junctions-interstate borders between two or three states like Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra.

To begin with, six districts of four states – Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and Maharashtra – have been selected to implement the action plan.

Over the next few weeks, the government hopes to raise the additional strength of central security forces to 35,000 personnel who would clear out territory and hand them back to a mix of paramilitary and state armed police personnel.

ITBP to get 15 new battalions

Three recruit centres will impart lessons in advanced weapons, motor transport and communication respectively

Express news service : New Delhi, October 19,2009

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), the force guarding the 3,499-km-long India-China border, is all set to get an addition of 18,000 men to its 55,000-odd work force and a major strengthening of its border posts.

Union Home Minister P Chidambaram announced on Friday that his ministry was considering a restructuring plan for the ITBP which included "15 new service battalions, three recruit training centres, a counter-insurgency and jungle warfare school, a high-altitude medical training centre and measures to strengthen border posts". "Added requirements for advanced communication systems, surveillance equipment, water craft, specialized vehicles and modern weaponry are also under consideration," the Home Minister said, speaking at the 48th Raising day of the force.

ITBP's high-altitude medical training centre will be established at Leh and will impart specialized training to doctors and medical professionals. The force's counter-insurgency and jungle warfare school will be set up in Uttarakashi, the three recruit training centers will impart training to ITBP men in advanced weapons, motor transport and communication, respectively.

"In order to keep the morale, motivation and efficiency levels of the jawans high, the government has recently raised various monetary allowances due to CPMF personnel, including the hardship-based allowance. Further, proposals for special rations and better high-altitude clothing, on par with those provided to the defence forces, have also been approved," Chidambaram said.

He also said that the system of advances and withdrawals from the provident fund was long-standing problem that the CPMF jawan faced. "Hence, a time limit of 26-30 days has been fixed and

procedures streamlined so that unnecessary delays and obstacles are obliterated. Various bottlenecks in the process of procurement and acquisition of essential items have also been an impediment to the modernization of the CPMFs. Therefore, the MHA has enhanced the delegation of financial powers to the DGs of the CPMFs," he said.

The Home Minister also said that the country was "going through a difficult phase" in terms of cross-border terror, situation in Jammu and Kashmir, insurgency in North-East and Left wing extremism in various states, but the government was confident of having the strength and capacity to overcome these challenges.

Chhattisgarh to induct 'Gram chowkidars' as informers

Raipur: In a bid to strengthen intelligence network in naxal-hit regions of the state. Chhattisgarh Government has decided to include 'Gram Chowkidars' (village guards) as informers. By handing over responsibility of informers to the Gram Chowkidars, the government hopes to tackle naxal problem and strengthen security in the villages, officials said.

The shortfall in the intelligence network has been hampering the state police to an extent in fighting the naxals so much so that during the past four years, around 1,400 people, including police officers, have lost their lives. Police officers say that due to shortcoming in the network, it takes a long time to receive information.

The naxals, on the other hand, employ even women and children as informers, the officials said.

It is also difficult to get information about naxal activities from villagers because of the fear they have created, they said, 'Gram chowkidars' in each village will be given a register wherein they would be required to note details of people coming from outside the state and incidents happening in the region, including theft and fraud. The chowkidars will be required to submit the register to the nearest police station on a weekly basis. – PTI

Inviting Reds to surrender

Ahead of Centre's offensive, states draw up surrender policies

Vijay Swaroop and B. Vijay Murty

PATNA/JAMSHEDPUR: As the central government plans to deploy paramilitary soldiers against Naxal strongholds gains momentum, state governments are announcing surrender policies to spur the rebels to give up arms.

Fresh incentives for the rebels who surrender could open up ways of dealing with the 42-year old Naxalite insurgency, described by the Prime Minister as India's biggest internal security crisis.

The Bihar government has decided to revise its surrender and rehabilitation policy for Naxalites following a lukewarm response from the rebels. During the last three years only 64 naxals have surrendered in Bihar.

Nearly 30 out of 38 districts in Bihar are affected by Naxal violence.

The surrender policy "would be made better attuned to needs and open to new ideas," Bihar Director General of Police Anand Shankar said on Thursday.

"It would incorporate some facilities to those who eschew violence and would be introduced soon."

Possible changes could include raising the maximum-one-time financial assistance at point of surrender from Rs 2 lakh to Rs. 2.5 lakh and increasing the payment for surrendered weapons from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 3 lakh.

Police sources said the new surrender policy would be waived on the pattern of Jharkhand (see box) which is more generous on some counts than Bihar.

But Jharkhand has seen limited success. Only 18 rebels surrendered between 2006 and February 2009. Not a single rebel has surrendered since the new policy was announced in February this year.

The central government provides money for surrender policies as part of its Security Related Expenditure scheme for states affected by Insurgencies.

In most cases state governments offer incentives over and above the grants assured by New Delhi.

| FAREWELL TO ARMS | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|----------------|
| | Bihar's existing policy | Jharkhand's new policy | Central policy |
| Financial support | Rs. 2 lakh | Rs. 2.5 lakh | Rs. 1.5 lakh |
| Stipand | None | High ranking naxal leaders can get upto Rs. 12 lakh | none |
| weapon incentive | Max. Rs.25,000 | | |
| Housing | House under IAY | Free house plot | none |
| Bank loans | no bank loan | bank loan to start business with state sharing 50% burden | none |
| insurance | no cover | insurance cover | none |
| Rebels surrendered from '06 to Feb '09 | 64 | 18 | |

TIMES NOW OR LIES NOW!

One wonders how a channel that calls itself one of the leading English news channels in the country can become a medium for spreading the worst kind of lies and slander against the Maoist movement. Anyone watching this channel called *Times Now* would prefer it to be called *Lies Now*. This rabidly anti-people channel has been in the forefront of the Indian state's counter-revolutionary campaign against the Maoists and the most downtrodden and the poorest sections of our society. It is with the assistance of such anti-people, pro-fascist media that Chidambaram and his likes have been able to carry out their aggressive suppression campaign audaciously. It is the intellectuals like Arnab Go(ebel)swamy who spearhead such campaigns of lies that lend legitimacy to the worst crimes against humanity committed by Nazi soldiers under Hitler against the Jews, the Zionist terrorists under successive fascist regimes in Israel, the US Marines against Iraqis, Afghans and other oppressed people in several countries in the world, and nearer home to the persecution of the religious minorities by the saffron brigade and the Indian state.

This channel had telecast a programme named "*Whose war is it anyway?*" on October 10. This show is a classic instance of journalistic hypocrisy and falsehoods. For instance, speaking about Maoist violence and blood-lust, it shows the photographs of wailing women and children of the people who were killed in Khagaria on October 2. **It surpasses Goebbels by attributing this incident to the Maoists. That too a full week after the Chief Minister of Bihar, Nitish Kumar, and the top police brass had categorically denied any Maoist link with the incident. And these professional liars are continuing to repeat the lie even after three weeks. For rabid anti-Maoists and die-hard liars like Arnab Go(ebel)swamy and his team of unethical reporters who are a blot to the field of journalism, no proof or verification of facts is needed in their relentless, vicious tirade against the Maoists. They act as the judge, the prosecutor and the executioner.** They have the least respect for the democratic processes or the laws of the land.



Arnab Goebelswamy: Obsessed with the sole slogan borrowed from George Bush- "if you are not with us, you are with the Maoist-terrorists"

They have taken up the task of blackmailing anyone who raises a voice against state terrorism, have been desperately trying to isolate the intellectuals and citizens who show concern about the growing state violence, and have been helping the state to implicate the concerned intellectuals in false cases of sedition and waging war against the state. In a word, these liars are doing all they can to suppress the voices of dissent against the war waged by the state against the poorest and downtrodden sections of society.

Needless to say, these loyal dogs serving the fatty 5 per cent of the Indian population who live off the blood, sweat and toil of the majority, can see nothing wrong if a 70-year old adivasi woman's breasts

are cut off by the CRPF and SPOs in Dantewada, if old-aged adivasi men like Madvi Joga and Madvi Deva are murdered in Gachhanapalli during the Operation Green Hunt on September 17, or if the tongue and fingers of a two-year-old are cut off by the SPOs. For these rogues who have nothing but contempt for the toiling masses, even genocide does not make news. But one Induvar's decapitation raises their blood pressure to alarming levels and they use the visual to emotionalise the people and gain legitimacy to their unjust brutal war against the adivasis and Maoist revolutionaries. Their democracy is the democracy of the slave-holding class which has the least concern for nine-tenths of the population against whom terrible, heart-rending, horrifying atrocities by the state-hired police, para-military, SPOs and vigilante gangs are taking place daily, hourly. Arnab Goebelswamy's world is the world of the tiny corporate elite while the vast masses of the Indian people, on behalf of whom he pretends to speak in the most hypocritical manner, are mere slaves.

What should the citizen do when the media becomes a conduit for spreading outright lies in defence of the reactionary rulers, deliberately distorts facts and runs a heinous, vicious campaign against people's movements, pro-people intelligentsia, and civil rights and social activists? Do not such media personnel who consciously spread a canard of lies deserve punishment in the hands of the people?

Whose War is it Any way?

The TV channel, *Times Now*, produced a 30-minute programme with the above title and telecast it repeatedly on October 10. It tried by all means—through graphic depiction of lies and falsehoods such as scenes of women and children crying uncontrollably in the wake of the killings in Khagaria with which the Maoists were in no way related, alleging that Maoists were deriving revenues from the production and sale of narcotics, visual of a man hung from a tree for three days by supposed Maoists for having not paid the funds demanded, and so on—to prove that the Maoists are terrorists waging a bad war against all that is good in the contemporary society. It also tried desperately to emotionalise the viewers by repeatedly showing visuals of a decapitated Inspector Induvar who was annihilated by the Maoists in Jharkhand for his espionage activity against them. It showed visuals of blown-up tracks and scenes of bandhs by Maoists and made vain attempts to show that Maoists were against development which, it believes or was just trying to make the people believe, is supposed to be taking place everywhere in the country except in the areas under Maoist control. The people's war waged by the Maoists, according to this channel, is nothing but terrorism bereft of all ideology and politics and is reduced to a one-point programme of extortion and murderous attacks. Hence anyone who ventures to describe the CPI(Maoist) as a political party is viewed with suspicion of being a sympathizer of the Maoists and is pushed into the camp of the Maoists. It has adopted the slogan of George Bush: "*Either you are with us or with the terrorists.*"

To those who are watching the unfolding events in the country, particularly after the Congress-led UPA government came back to power for a second time, there is not an iota of doubt as to whose war it is. Only the die-hard agents of the imperialists and the big business houses would say, as the *Times Now* had done, that the war waged by the Indian rulers is a just one.

Just as the invasion of Iraq and the war against the Iraqi people left none in doubt that the war was for oil despite all the propaganda by George Bush about weapons of mass destruction, so does the present war by Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram clique leave none in doubt that it is a war for plundering the vast mineral and forest wealth of the so-called Red Corridor. Iraq was needed for the Halliburtons and other plunderers; the "Red Corridor" is needed for the Tatas, Mittals, Essar, Jindals and the imperialist MNCs. This is a war waged by the Indian corporate bosses for plundering the wealth of the adivasis. Lohandiguda has exposed the hoax of consensus and consent by the villagers. It was at gun-point that the consent was obtained. Tatas' blood-lust took 13 tribal lives in Kalinga Nagar. The hoax of *jan sunwayi* of October 12 was nakedly exposed by a section of the press as one can see from the report of Ajay Sahi in *Outlook*.

UP Police to get a chopper to keep eye on Naxalite activity

Bhupendra Pandey: Lucknow October 20

Uttar Pradesh police will soon acquire a Rs 25 crore Dhruv advanced light helicopter for surveillance in Naxal-affected areas, quick movement of commandos and evacuation. The nine-seater HAL-built helicopter can be modified to carry up to 12 passengers. During relief and rescue operations, it can carry two stretchers and four medicos, an official said.



“The helicopter will be handed over to the police soon. Its availability with the police force would help in quickening response time of the specialized forces to attend to emergency situations,” UP Police Chief Karamvir Singh said. The order for purchasing the helicopter has already been placed, ADG AK Jain said. “the civil aviation department is looking after the procedure regarding the purchase,” Jain said, “Main purpose of getting the helicopter is to strengthen the vigilance in Naxal-affected areas of Uttar Pradesh. An aerial watch on the jungles would help the police forces in targeting the naxals.” Till now, IAF helicopters helped the police with aerial surveillance of Naxal-affected and also assisted in relief and rescue operations.

Asked about the UP Police’s strategy to tackle Naxals in the state, Singh said the police had “developed a relaxed approach, with the notion that Naxals groups are active merely in adjacent states and they are not intruding in our jurisdiction”. “They suddenly appear and cause a major loss to state machinery and lives of police forces,” Sing said. Singh said that contrary to popular belief that only three districts—Chandauli, Mirzapur and Sonbhadra—were Naxal-affected, the menace had spread to other parts of the state as well. “Areas bordering MP in Mahoba and Chitrakoot district of UP have become new targets for Naxal groups. They are targeting the oppressed sections in these districts for fresh recruitment,” Singh said.

VOICES AGAINST CENTRE’S WAR ON THE PEOPLE

Widespread condemnation and protests against the military offensive by the Indian state in central and eastern India

There has been widespread condemnation of the country-wide coordinated simultaneous offensive planned by the Union Government and the various state governments against the Maoists and the poor adivasis in central and eastern India. We are publishing some statements and appeals by democratic and peace-loving people in India and abroad.

Statement against Government of India’s planned military offensive in adivasi-populated regions: National and international signatories

October 12, 2009

The following statement is taken from the Sanhati website. Sanhati, according to its website, is a collective of activists/academics who have been working in solidarity with peoples’ movements in India by providing information and analysis. It took the initiative to bring together voices from around the world against the Government of India’s planned military offensive in Central India. A statement and a background note were drafted by Sanhati in consultation with Indian activists, and duly circulated for endorsement. Readers are encouraged to endorse by mailing sanhatiindia [at] sanhati [dot] com with full name and affiliation.

To
Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister, Government of India,
South Block, Raisina Hill, New Delhi, India-110 011.

We are deeply concerned by the Indian government's plans for launching an unprecedented military offensive by army and paramilitary forces in the adivasi (indigenous people)-populated regions of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal states. The stated objective of the offensive is to "liberate" these areas from the influence of Maoist rebels. Such a military campaign will endanger the lives and livelihoods of millions of the poorest people living in those areas, resulting in massive displacement, destitution and human rights violation of ordinary citizens. To hunt down the poorest of Indian citizens in the name of trying to curb the shadow of an insurgency is both counter-productive and vicious. The ongoing campaigns by paramilitary forces, buttressed by anti-rebel militias, organised and funded by government agencies, have already created a civil war like situation in some parts of Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, with hundreds killed and thousands displaced. The proposed armed offensive will not only aggravate the poverty, hunger, humiliation and insecurity of the adivasi people, but also spread it over a larger region.

Grinding poverty and abysmal living conditions that has been the lot of India's adivasi population has been complemented by increasing state violence since the neoliberal turn in the policy framework of the Indian state in the early 1990s. Whatever little access the poor had to forests, land, rivers, common pastures, village tanks and other common property resources has come under increasing attack by the Indian state in the guise of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and other "development" projects related to mining, industrial development, Information Technology parks, etc. The geographical terrain, where the government's military offensive is planned to be carried out, is very rich in natural resources like minerals, forest wealth and water, and has been the target of large scale appropriation by several corporations. The desperate resistance of the local indigenous people against their displacement and dispossession has in many cases prevented the government-backed corporations from making inroads into these areas. We fear that the government's offensive is also an attempt to crush such popular resistances in order to facilitate the entry and operation of these corporations and to pave the way for unbridled exploitation of the natural resources and the people of these regions. It is the widening levels of disparity and the continuing problems of social deprivation and structural violence, and the state repression on the non-violent resistance of the poor and marginalized against their dispossession, which gives rise to social anger and unrest and takes the form of political violence by the poor. Instead of addressing the source of the problem, the Indian state has decided to launch a military offensive to deal with this problem: kill the poor and not the poverty, seems to be the implicit slogan of the Indian government.

We feel that it would deliver a crippling blow to Indian democracy if the government tries to subjugate its own people militarily without addressing their grievances. Even as the short-term military success of such a venture is very doubtful, enormous misery for the common people is not in doubt, as has been witnessed in the case of numerous insurgent movements in the world. We urge the Indian government to immediately withdraw the armed forces and stop all plans for carrying out such military operations that has the potential for triggering a civil war which will inflict widespread misery on the poorest and most vulnerable section of the Indian population and clear the way for the plundering of their resources by corporations. We call upon all democratic-minded people to join us in this appeal.

The statement was endorsed by hundreds of eminent personalities and democratic intellectuals in India and abroad.

The signatories included writer Arundhati Roy, Prof. Amit Bhaduri, Sandeep Pandey, Arundhati Dhuru, of N.A.P.M., India, Mahashweta Devi, Social Activist and Writer, Manoranjan Mohanty, Supreme Court Advocate Prashant Bhushan, Prof Nandini Sundar, Supreme Court Advocate Colin Gonzalves, Social Activist Arvind Kejriwal, Swapna Banerjee-Guha, University of Mumbai, Anand Patwardhan, Film Maker, Dipankar Bhattachararya, General Secretary, C PI (M-L) Liberation, Bernard D'Mello, Associate Editor, (EPW), Sumit Sarkar, Retired Professor Delhi University, Tanika Sarkar, Professor of History, J.N.U., Gautam Navlakha, , EPWeekly, Madhu Bhaduri, Ex-ambassador Sumanta Banerjee, Writer, Dr. Vandana Shiva, Environmental Activist, M.V. Ramana, Princeton University, USA, Dipanjan Rai Chaudhari, Retired Professor, Presidency College, G. N. Saibaba, University of Delhi, Amit Bhattacharyya, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, D.N. Jha, University of Delhi, Paromita Vohra, Devi Pictures, Sunil Shanbag, Theater Director, Saroj Giri, Delhi University, Sudeshna Banerjee, Jadavpur University, Achin Chakraborty, Institute of Development Studies,

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BACKGROUND NOTE

It has been widely reported in the press that the Indian government is planning an unprecedented military offensive against alleged Maoist rebels, using paramilitary and counter-insurgency forces, possibly the Indian Armed Forces and even the Indian Air Force. This military operation is going to be carried out in the forested and semi-forested rural areas of the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Maharashtra, populated mainly by the tribal (indigenous) people of India. Reportedly, the offensive has been planned in consultation with US counter-insurgency agencies. To put the Indian government's proposed military offensive in proper perspective one needs to understand the economic, social and political background to the conflict. In particular, there are three dimensions of the crisis that needs to be emphasized, because it is often overlooked: (a) the development failure of the post-colonial Indian state, (b) the continued existence and often exacerbation of the structural violence faced by the poor and marginalized, and (c) the full-scale assault on the meager resource base of the peasantry and the tribal (indigenous people) in the name of "development". Let us look at each of these in turn, but before we do so it needs to be stressed that the facts we mention below are not novel; they are well-known if only conveniently forgotten. Most of these facts were pointed out by the April 2008 Report of the Expert Group of the Planning Commission of the Indian Government (headed by retired civil servant D. Bandopadhyay) to study "development challenges in extremist affected areas".

The post-colonial Indian State, both in its earlier Nehruvian and the more recent neoliberal variant, has failed miserably to solve the basic problems of poverty, employment and income, housing, primary health care, education and inequality and social discrimination of the people of the country. The utter failure of the development strategy of the post-colonial State is the ground on which the current conflict arises. To recount some well known but oft-forgotten facts, recall that about 77 percent of the Indian population in 2004-05 had a per capita daily consumption expenditure of less than Rs. 20; that is less than 50 cents by the current nominal exchange rate between the rupee and the US dollar and about \$2 in purchasing power parity terms. According to the 2001 Census, even 62 years after political independence, only about 42 percent of Indian households have access to electricity. About 80 percent of the households do not have access to safe drinking water; that is a staggering 800 million people lacking access to potable water.

What is the condition of the working people in the country? 93 percent of the workforce, the overwhelming majority of the working people in India, are what the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) called "informal workers"; these workers lack any employment security, work security and social security. About 58 percent of them work in the agricultural sector and the rest is engaged in manufacturing and services. Wages are very low and working conditions extremely onerous, leading to persistent and deep poverty, which has been increasing over the last decade and a half in absolute terms: the number of what the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) called the "poor and vulnerable" increased from 811 million in 1999-00 to 836 million in 2004-05. Since majority of the working people still work in the agricultural sector, the economic stagnation in agriculture is a major cause for the continued poverty of the vast majority of the people. Since the Indian state did not undertake land

reforms in any meaningful sense, the distribution of land remains extremely skewed to this day. Close to 60 percent of rural households are effectively landless; and extreme economic vulnerability and despair among the small and marginal peasantry has resulted in the largest wave of suicides in history: between 1997 and 2007, 182,936 farmers committed suicide. This is the economic setting of the current conflict.

But in this sea of poverty and misery, there are two sections of the population that are much worse off than the rest: the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) population. On almost all indicators of social well being, the SCs and STs are worse off than the general population: poverty rates are higher, landlessness is higher, infant mortality rates are higher, levels of formal education are lower, and so on. To understand this differential in social and economic deprivation we need to look at the second aspect of the current crisis that we had alluded to: structural violence.

There are two dimensions of this structural violence: (a) oppression, humiliation and discrimination along the lines of caste and ethnicity and (b) regular harassment, violence and torture by arms of the State. For the SC and ST population, therefore, the violence of poverty, hunger and abysmal living conditions has been complemented and worsened by the structural violence that they encounter daily. It is the combination of the two, general poverty and the brutality and injustice of the age old caste system, kept alive by countless social practices despite numerous legislative measures by the Indian state, that makes this the most economically deprived and socially marginalized section of the Indian population. This social discrimination, humiliation and oppression is of course very faithfully reflected in the behavior of the police and other law-enforcing agencies of the State towards the poor SC and ST population, who are constantly harassed, beaten up and arrested on the slightest pretext. For this population, therefore, the State has not only totally neglected their economic and social development, it is an oppressor and exploiter. While the SC and ST population together account for close to a quarter of the Indian population, they are the overwhelming majority in the areas where the Indian government proposes to carry out its military offensive against alleged Maoist rebels. This, then, is the social background of the current conflict.

This brings us to the third dimension of the problem: unprecedented attack on the access of the marginalized and poor to common property resources. Compounding the persistent poverty and the continuing structural violence has been the State's recent attempt to usurp the meager resource base of the poor and marginalized, a resource base that was so far largely outside the ambit of the market. The neoliberal turn in the policy framework of the Indian state since the mid 1980s has, therefore, only further worsened the problems of economic vulnerability and social deprivation. Whatever little access the poor had to forests, land, rivers, common pastures, village tanks and other common property resources to cushion their inevitable slide into poverty and immiserization has come under increasing attack by the Indian state in the guise of so-called development projects: Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and other "development" projects related to mining, industrial development, Information Technology parks, etc. Despite numerous protests from people and warnings from academics, the Indian State has gone ahead with the establishment of 531 SEZs. The SEZs are areas of the country where labour and tax laws have been consciously weakened, if not totally abrogated by the State to "attract" foreign and domestic capital; SEZs, almost by definition, require a large and compact tract of land, and thus inevitably mean the loss of land, and thus livelihood, by the peasantry. To the best of our knowledge, there have been no serious, rigorous cost-benefit analysis of these projects to date; but this does not prevent the government from claiming that the benefits of these projects, in terms of employment generation and income growth, will far outweigh the costs of revenue loss from foregone taxes and lost livelihoods due to the assault on land.

The opposition to the acquisition of land for these SEZ and similar projects have another dimension to it. Dr. Walter Fernandes, who has studied the process of displacement in post-independence India in great detail, suggests that around 60 million people have faced displacement between 1947 and 2004; this process of displacement has involved about 25 million hectares of land, which includes 7 million hectares of forests and 6 million hectares of other common property resources. How many of these displaced people have been resettled? Only one in every three. Thus, there is every reason for people not to believe the government's claims that those displaced from their land will be, in any meaningful sense, resettled. This is one of the most basic reasons for the opposition to displacement and dispossession.

But, how have the rich done during this period of unmitigated disaster for the poor? While the poor have seen their incomes and purchasing power tumble down precipitously in real terms, the rich have,

by all accounts, prospered beyond their wildest dreams since the onset of the liberalization of the Indian economy. There is widespread evidence from recent research that the levels of income and wealth inequality in India has increased steadily and drastically since the mid 1980s. A rough overview of this growing inequality is found by juxtaposing two well known facts: (a) in 2004-05, 77 percent of the population spent less than Rs. 20 a day on consumption expenditure; and (b) according to the annual World Wealth Report released by Merrill Lynch and Capgemini in 2008, the millionaire population in India grew in 2007 by 22.6 per cent from the previous year, which is higher than in any other country in the world.

It is, thus, the development disaster of the Indian State, the widening levels of disparity and the continuing problems of social deprivation and structural violence when compounded by the all-out effort to restrict access to common property resources that, according to the Expert Group of the Planning Commission, give rise to social anger, desperation and unrest. In almost all cases the affected people try to ventilate their grievances using peaceful means of protest; they take our processions, they sit on demonstrations, they submit petitions. The response of the State is remarkably consistent in all these cases: it cracks down on the peaceful protestors, sends in armed goons to attack the people, slaps false charges against the leaders and arrests them and often also resorts to police firing and violence to terrorize the people. We only need to remember Singur, Nandigram, Kalinganagar and countless other instances where peaceful and democratic forms of protest were crushed by the state with ruthless force. It is, thus, the action of the State that blocks off all forms of democratic protest and forces the poor and dispossessed to take up arms to defend their rights, as has been pointed out by social activists like Arundhati Roy. The Indian government's proposed military offensive will repeat that story all over again. Instead of addressing the source of the conflict, instead of addressing the genuine grievances of the marginalized people along the three dimensions that we have pointed to, the Indian state seems to have decided to opt for the extremely myopic option of launching a military offensive.

It is also worth remembering that the geographical terrain, where the government's military offensive is planned, is very well-endowed with natural resources like minerals, forest wealth, biodiversity and water resources, and has of late been the target of systematic usurpation by several large, both Indian and foreign, corporations. So far, the resistance of the local indigenous people against their displacement and dispossession has prevented the government-backed corporates from exploiting the natural resources for their own profits and without regard to ecological and social concerns. We fear that the government's offensive is also an attempt to crush such democratic and popular resistance against dispossession and impoverishment; the whole move seems to be geared towards facilitating the entry and operation of these large corporations and paving the way for unbridled exploitation of the natural resources and people of these regions.

Citizens' Initiative for Peace calls on both sides to hold fire

The Citizens' Initiative for Peace, an organization of democratic and peace-loving concerned citizens, met in New Delhi on October 20 and voiced their protest against the growing state violence on the adivasis and Maoist revolutionaries. They condemned the attitude of the UPA government at the Centre and the various state governments towards the people's struggles taking place across the country. The speakers categorically stated that war being waged by the Centre through its paramilitary forces and the special commando forces in the states will only lead to further escalation of violence in the country.

They reiterated their stand that war or military offensive by the Indian state is not a solution to the problems faced by the adivasis and the basic issues raised by the Maoist revolutionaries, that state violence cannot contain the revolutionary violence, but on the contrary, will take the levels of violence to an entirely new stage. Hence they asserted that only unconditional talks between the two sides can lead to a way out of the current impasse. They said asking the Naxalites to lay down arms is one-sided and impractical and both sides should hold fire i.e., desist from using arms thereby creating an atmosphere conducive for talks. They appealed to the Prime Minister and the Home Minister to abandon their pre-condition of laying down arms by Naxalites for holding talks. The speakers included several eminent personalities and social activists like retired Admiral Ramdas, Justice Sawant, Magsaysay award winner Aruna Roy, NAPM leader Medha Patkar and others. ■

Interview with Arundhati Roy by CNN-IBN

CNN-IBN *Naxal leader Kishenji has said clearly that there will be more violence. In this violent climate, how can you expect the Government of India to reach out and call for a dialogue which is what you, Arundhati Roy and other civil rights activists are asking for. What about asking the Naxals to abjure violence.*

Arundhati Roy: I saw the letter which Mr Chidambaram has written asking whether civil society groups can persuade the Naxals to abjure violence. I think it is a bit disingenuous, because this binary which has been created – of the Naxals on one side and the Government on the other side and the human rights activists in the middle – is a simplification of a very, very complex picture. I don't think there is anything as human rights activists for they all belong to different groups. There is a whole range of non-violent, democratic resistances which are all being called Naxal which are all being asked to negotiate. So if the Government wants to negotiate with the Naxals, then it should specifically negotiate with them.



CNN-IBN *The Government is very specifically asking citizen groups to speak to the CPI-Maoists and to bring them into the political mainstream. What's wrong with that?*

Arundhati Roy: I am not a citizens' group. I am an activist.

CNN-IBN *But you are a citizens' group that came out publicly on Tuesday and asked that the offensive should be called off.*

Arundhati Roy: Of course. You have to look at this historically in terms of why this has happened. For 30 years in places like Chhattisgarh, there have been Naxals. Why is the situation now being made to sound like there is this huge upsurge? The real fact is – and I believe this – that it is the Government that wants a war to clear out the forest areas because there is a huge backlog of MoUs in Jharkhand as well as Chhattisgarh that are not being activated.

CNN-IBN *The Home Minister told CNN-IBN about a month ago – in answer to this very same question – that the Government would like to do development work in these areas, but when we build roads the Naxals blow them up, when we build schools the Naxals blow them up, they mine everything and they do not allow development to take place. You say it is binary but it is also a bit chicken and egg. What is the Government of India supposed to do if the force that is opposed to them is taking arms, is beheading policemen, is resorting to violence?*

Arundhati Roy: Himanshu Kumar – who lives in Dantewada – on Tuesday asked the Government under the Right to Information Act that which anganwadi worker, which teacher, which person who does any kind of social development work has ever been killed by the Naxals and the answer was none. What Mr Chidambaram means by development is not what the people living in that area mean by development. I have been to Dantewada and I have seen the roads that are being built. Let me tell you those are not roads that are being built for adivasi (tribal) people to walk on. But I am against the mining of roads.

CNN-IBN *Do you accept that the violence must end in that sense? The Home Minister said very clearly – 'as far as I can see, the only hurdle to holding talks with the CPI-Maoists is the violence which stalks the area in which they operate'. Now, surely they must give up arms.*

Arundhati Roy: That is what I am saying is disingenuous. When the attack is from the Government forces – a Government which is bringing in the Army and the Air Force, calling for war on the poorest people in the country – it becomes tough. And this is when they are willing to talk to China, they are willing to talk to Pakistan. What kind of policy is this?

CNN-IBN *But who has the weapons? The Government of India says the Naxals have the weapons.*

Arundhati Roy: The Government has the weapons.

CNN-IBN *So do the Naxals. The Naxals are well-armed now.*

Arundhati Roy: How do you know that?

CNN-IBN *You say that poor people are dying but the Naxals have also lost the moral rights that they had 10-20 years ago. When they kill children, when they kill women, who is responsible?*

Arundhati Roy: Nobody ever talks about the violence that goes unnoticed. In Dantewada there are 644 villages that have been emptied. From 2005 there are 3.5 lakh people that have gone missing.

CNN-IBN *One violence does not justify the other.*

Arundhati Roy: It does not. But you are making an equivalent of somebody who has air power and nuclear power and armies against poor people.

CNN-IBN *Arundhati Roy says that not one anganwadi worker has been killed but we do know that 659 people have died because of them of which 259 were police officers and 400 civilians, so just to*

come back to our original question Gladson, do you think coming back to the talks table is even a remote possibility right now?

Gladson Dungdung: We have to come to the real issue. Why is the Government shouting in Jharkhand? Take my case. My parents were brutally murdered, 20 acres of land was taken away for a dam but we were not compensated. If I had joined the Naxals, who would have been responsible? Today I came to know that the Government of India is going to start an assault from tomorrow onwards, CRPF is ready in the Singhbhum region of Jharkhand and that is a low-Naxal infested area, the highest being Palamu. They are starting in Singhbhum because the Jharkhand government has signed 102 MoUs most of them for this region.

CNN-IBN *Are you saying that the Government of India is essentially batting for large corporate MNCs who want the forest land cleared?*

Gladson Dungdung: Yes, yes.

CNN-IBN *But that maybe true of a particular part possibly but it can't be true of an entire Red Corridor which has now been formed from Chhattisgarh to West Bengal.*

Arundhati Roy: If you look at the mineral deposits in this so-called Red Corridor, you will see that this is true. The Jindals, the Tatas, SR – all these companies have MoUs. The year that the Salwa Judum was started was the year when several of these MoUs were signed.

CNN-IBN *But then why don't they come into the democratic process and take up these causes. This is a point that the Home Minister has made time and again that the Naxals must come into the fold of the Indian democratic process. But if they don't have any faith in the state, then naturally the Indian state will be forced to strike back.*

Arundhati Roy: I want to say two things. One is that we are using this term Naxal very, very loosely. The Government has very clearly said that all the people who were with the Salwa Judum – which is a form of strategic hamleting that was used in the Vietnam war – are with them and the rest are not with the Government.

CNN-IBN *The Salwa Judum was perhaps of a policy of some previous government because we have not seen much of the Salwa Judum in the last few years. This is the same Government which in 2004 went into talks with the Naxal groups.*

Arundhati Roy: That is just not true and the person who runs the Salwa Judum is a Congress man. There is a river called the Indravati and across it is Pakistan and all of us are being told that if you cross the river we are free to shoot you.

CNN-IBN *Answer the central question. Why aren't Naxals made to come into the democratic process? Let us raise the issue of land displacement but through democratic dialogue.*

Arundhati Roy: Let us look at the democratic process. The Indian elections cost more than the American elections. Ninety-nine per cent of independent candidates lost. Most of the MPs are millionaires. Now you are going to tell someone like Gladson here to come and join the process when he hasn't got any money to buy space in the media, any money to get from corporations.

CNN-IBN *So if there are elections for example in Jharkhand – in a couple of months like they are – you believe that no one is ready to come into the electoral process to have their voices heard? If they have so much popular support, if issues like land displacement are critical, then why not come into the electoral process?*

Gladson Dungdung: Last time when the government representatives were in Jharkhand, many people connected with the displacement went and started a dialogue process. But neither Shibu Soren, nor the governor – no one listened.

CNN-IBN *I know the Home Minister is watching the programme right now because we told him you would be on it. What is it that you would like to tell him?*

Gladson Dungdung: I will say that if you want to address the issue of Naxalites then you first address the economic, social and cultural injustice which has been done to the adivasis and address the developmental issues.

CNN-IBN *To this Mr Chidambaram is going to say that if you want these issues addressed and development, then abjure the gun. That comes first – give up the gun and then we will talk.*

Arundhati Roy: You have a security force that runs into tens of thousands, heavily armed, surrounding an area. You have all these MoUs. If you look at a map of India, the minerals, forests and tribals are all stacked up on top of each other. And if you say that we are surrounding a forest and we have all these weapons trained on you and you have vigilante groups and peoples' militia going into villages raping and killing women – something which the Salwa Judum does as a policy – and then you are saying abjure the gun, we will come and take over your land, how much sense does that make?

CNN-IBN *So then we are in a zero sum game. One form of violence is going to be responded to by another form of violence.*

Arundhati Roy: I think these people need to be promised that there will be no displacement, that all these MoUs will be made public, get a clear idea of the development planned for this area, have people at public forums discuss these issues and take up the opinion of those of Ground Zero and then you can talk.

CNN-IBN *So your answer to the Government's request of citizens' groups – that it is their responsibility to bring groups like the CPI-Maoists into the political mainstream – is that this is not possible.*

Arundhati Roy: How can I say it, who am I to say it? I think it is the Government's responsibility. These groups are complex.

CNN-IBN *You want the Government to take the entire responsibility? Shouldn't civil society and activists be taking some of this responsibility?*

Arundhati Roy: They are taking the responsibility of bringing out these issues, but they are not the people who have been voted to power.

CNN-IBN *Let's leave the last word to Gladson.*

Gladson Dungdung: See the problem is that two decades ago what Rajiv Gandhi used to say that only 15 per cent of the money used to reach the poor is the same thing that Rahul Gandhi is saying now. That means they have not done anything.

CNN-IBN *You are saying that the democratic process has remained unchanged in this country for the last 25 years.*

Gladson Dungdung: Yes. Another thing when Priyanka Gandhi meets the killer of Rajiv Gandhi, she becomes the messiah for the people – or is at least projected like that. When someone like Binayak Sen treats an adivasi, he becomes a Naxal supporter. How is this fair?

CNN-IBN *It's a complex issue. It will require a long time to address but obviously we need to look at the shades of gray and there are many shades of gray in what is being positioned – as some believe – as a binary issue with the Naxals on the one side and the State on the other. It will require people like you Arundhati Roy to perhaps reach out to Mr Chidambaram and have a dialogue but not in a spirit of confrontation but in the hope that you can reach a solution. You need solutions now and the violence must end from both sides.*

“For one, intellectuals—despite that word being the latest swear word for the government and media—must try and provide history and context to the situation. The Union home minister is talking of a “clear and hold” operation, after which he hopes to introduce development in the region. What he does not explain is what prevented development for 62 years or what hinders it in areas where the Naxalites are not active. Spending enormous resources on waging war rather than battling hunger—especially in a drought year—shows the government's perverse priorities.

“At a recent conference with director-generals of police, the prime minister asked why Naxalism showed no signs of abating despite the deployment of ‘Cobras’ and other paramilitaries. The crucial word that neither the prime minister nor the home minister mention is “justice”. **While the home ministry spends taxpayers' money calling Naxalites “cold-blooded murderers”, not a word is said about the hundreds of victims, including children and old people, murdered by the security forces and Salwa Judum vigilantes.** These are citizens too, and their deaths are equally horrific. But no newspaper carries photos of them, no inquiry is held, their relatives get no compensation. Human rights activists are repeatedly called upon to condemn the Maoists, even if their statements are blacked out. However, **I have yet to see one instance when the home minister has acknowledged, leave alone condemned, the increasing number of encounters faked by the police. You cannot speak of violence by one side while remaining silent on the other.**

When people are attacked and see no hope from the state, who else will they turn to but insurgents? If a rape victim complains to the SP asking for an FIR to be filed, and his only response is to actually ask the rapists for their explanation, what is she supposed to do?

“When the home minister says that the Maoists are “the gravest challenge to our way of life”, he must clarify which “way of life” he means—the right of ministers to live in five star hotels while 50 per cent of Indians are below the poverty line in terms of calorie intake, the right of companies to fraudulently and forcibly acquire land, the right of farmers to commit suicide? If “our” way of life depends on exploiting the resources that the adivasis of Chhattisgarh live on, taking their lives falls perfectly into place. For many years, the Naxalite movement was seen as a socio-economic problem. By ignoring this aspect of it completely, and instead repeatedly terming it the “greatest national security threat”, the government has only added to that security threat. **(Nandini Sundar, Why Everyone Speaks The Flowing Language Of Blood, Outlook Oct 26, 2009)**

"If there were no mines here, then some violence, or underdevelopment wouldn't have mattered to the government. It wants mining in these areas, that's why the crackdown is being arranged."—Himanshu Kumar, Vanvasi Chetna Ashram, Dantewada

"In Chhattisgarh, central para-military, state police and state-abetted vigilantes-of Salwa Judum—have burnt homes to make a point. Women have been raped and killed. I came across an instance in Bijapur of forces bull-doing a suspected Maoist sympathizer and his preteen son. They beat the man, stabbed him, gouged out his eyes, cut open his chest, cut off his limbs, and smashed his head. His wife and two smaller children were made to watch. Of the older boy there's been no news since that day in October 2005.

"In February 2007, I heard Chhattisgarh's Chief Minister Raman Singh boast to a room full of police and intelligence officials: "Salwa Judum is showing Gandhi is alive, showing non-violence is alive." He smoothly added: "Salwa Judum is like the fragrance of the forest in summer."

"Torture, custodial deaths and faked encounters of captured rebels and those suspected of helping them are recorded across Maoist-affected states. It breeds a terrible loop of action and reaction....It's a war that India has sired and festered, and helped to evolve and grow. The key triggers for revolt—skewed development, corruption, and social discrimination—show few signs of lessening. And so, brutality on behalf of different perceptions of the greater common good will get worse."

(Sudeep Chakravarti, Author of *Red Sun: Travels in Naxalite Country*, in *Hindustan Times*, Oct 09, 2009)

Hold unconditional talks with Maoists: Arundhati

New Delhi, October 26, 2009: Supporting unconditional talks with Maoists, Booker Prize winner and activist Arundhati Roy has alleged that "economic interests" in mineral-rich States have driven the government and establishment to launch action against them.

"My fear is that because of this economic interest the government and establishment actually needs a war. It needs to militarise. For that it needs an enemy. And so in a way what the Muslims were to the BJP, the Maoists are to the Congress ... ," Ms. Roy said in an interview with Karan Thapar in his Devil's Advocate programme for CNN-IBN channel.

"If I was a person who is being dispossessed, whose wife has been raped, who is being pushed [out] of his land and who is being faced with this 'police force,' I would say that I am justified in taking up arms. If that is the only way I have to defend myself," she said when asked whether the armed struggle was justified.

"We should stop thinking about who is justified ... You have an army of very poor people being faced down by an army of the rich that are corporate-backed. I am sorry but it is like that. So you can't extract morality from the heinous act of violence that each commits against the other," she said. — PTI

"On October 12, 2009, police swarmed the district collector's office in Jagdalpur, a small town in south Chhattisgarh. They were there to prevent thousands of villagers from storming a *jan sunwai* (public hearing) called to debate the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for a proposed Tata steel plant in the district. Legally, this meeting should have been open to all, especially to the 6,000-odd people of the 10 villages near Jagdalpur that the steel plant will gobble up.

"THERE IS strong resistance in at least six of these 10 villages to be displaced from their lands for the project. Most people have refused to accept compensation for land. Four of these six villages (Kumbli, Dhuragaon, Takaraguda and Sirisguda) passed resolutions in *gram sabhas* during October 2-6 asking the district administration to postpone the public hearing due to the climate of uncertainty created by Operation Green Hunt. About 1,000 letters on these resolutions were sent to the district collector.

"Of course, the district collector didn't postpone the hearing. Instead, the police set up barricades along the 30-km stretch from the villages to Jagdalpur, and stopped all buses so that villagers who might protest the Tatas' project don't reach the public hearing. About 25 villagers, led by former CPI MLA Manish Kunjam, did reach the public hearing. "We asked them, where would the effluence from the steel plant be dumped?" Kunjam told me over the phone. "They had no answer." Kunjam says the

Tatas' EIA report (prepared by Dastur & Co) has failed to meet the standards set by two crucial policies that govern the displacement of tribals for industrial projects: the National Rehabilitation Policy and the Panchayat Extension to the Scheduled Areas Act.

.....While the media highlighted the Naxals' beheading of policemen, allegations that the police and Salwa Judum- SPOS have been killing tribals and creating terror in Bastar forests have been consigned to the media's black hole. Sitting through the night to take their testimonies, Kumar prepared a list of people who have been killed in two attacks in the last three weeks, on September 17-18 and then on October 1. Here are just some of them:

- **SPOs killed Madvi Deva of village Gachhanpalli at a rivulet on September 17. Another village's Patel claimed seeing Deva being buried in the Chintagupha police station compound.**
- **CRPF men and SPOs cut off the breasts of 70-year-old Dudhi Muye, an invalid who could not walk, and stabbed her to death on September 17.**
- **CRPF and SPOs caught Madkami Muke of village Gachhanpalli and tied her up with her own sari. They beat, stabbed and shot her husband in front of her. Muke saw the attackers stab and shoot Madvi Joga, 60, in his field. She saw them strip 35-year-old Madvi Hidma, stab and shoot her.**
- **Also in Gompad village, four of a family — Madvi Bajar, 45, his wife Madvi Subbi, his married daughter, Kartam Kanni, 20, and younger daughter Madvi Mutti, 15 — were killed by SPOs. The attackers cut off the tongue and fingers of Kartam Kanni's two-year-old son.**
- **Muchaki Aanda of Bhandarpadar village and his nephew, Madvi Deva, were returning from Andhra Pradesh when the police caught them. They were hacked to death with axes and knives, their bodies dumped near corn fields. Two villagers informed Deva's mother, Madvi Joge, of their killing.**

On October 11, Kumar and several other activists and lawyers travelled south of Dantewada to visit Nendra village. Until last year, Nendra had been a ghost town, after the Salwa Judum burnt it down two years ago, forcing residents to flee. Kumar's NGO, Vanvasi Chetna Ashram (VCA), had had it rebuilt and persuaded the villagers to return. Within hours of the activists' visit to the village, news of their presence spread quickly. More than 200 people from villages nearby assembled there, converting the meeting into a people's tribunal. Since September the SPOs have killed wantonly in Nendra. Six people have gone missing.

In the last two months, as a precursor to Operation Green Hunt, police have harassed VCA activists. One volunteer has been jailed and tortured on false charges. Ironically, the Naxals, too, distrust Kumar, especially because of his efforts to repopulate the villages burnt down by Salwa Judum. You see, the people of those villages have found an answer away from both the Naxals and the Indian State, in Kumar's Gandhian methods of resistance. Many of those who have gone back to their villages had been eager to turn the Naxals away.

But now, of course, the renewed Salwa Judum violence and Operation Green Hunt could once again quickly fatten the Naxals' enrollment registers. Such is the scale of the Indian State's violence that it is turning even Kumar increasingly despondent. "I stare dumbly at all these people who come to me, the old man who saw his daughter raped and son shot dead, the young wife who was raped repeatedly, the family whose house was burnt down," Kumar said to me one night on the phone from Dantewada, unable to sleep. "They keep saying to me: help us. I keep quiet. Because how do I help them?"

And then, he added: "I am too much a son of Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave to ever leave the path of nonviolence. But I look at these people and wonder, if I were a tribal person, raped, shot, abused, humiliated, wouldn't I, too, pick up the gun to defend my family, my home, my lands, my forests?" (Ajit Sahi, *From the eyes of Dantewada*, Tehelka Magazine, Oct 24, 2009)

According to Dantewada-based Gandhian Himanshu Kumar, "a reply obtained under the Right to Information Act revealed that Naxalites had not killed a single teacher, health worker or social worker in Chhattisgarh in the recent past but only targeted the police force."

Lalu against any 'violent repression'

Express News Service : Kolkata, October 8

Rashtriya Janata Dal Chief Lalu Prasad Yadav has opposed the idea of "any violent repression" against Maoists. "I do not support any kind of violent repression against Naxals. I am against the proposed air strike because such repression will not solve the problem," said Yadav while talking to reporters before attending a party programme in Kolkata on Oct 8.

"India is the land of non-violence. An amicable solution is required to solve the problem, it is evident that social injustice is the root cause of Naxal insurgency. Tortured people are taking help of the Maoists. The government should initiate in dialogue with the Naxals," he said.

"West Bengal is the breeding ground of Naxalism. Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal spread the politics from Bengal. In Bihar, Naxalism has infiltrated from Bengal," he added.

While opposing the Union government's strategy to counter Maoists, Yadav also attacked it for failing to tackle price hike across the country. He said the government was totally inefficient and was not mindful of the people's sufferings.

"Be ready for big fight against price rise. Every essential commodity has gone beyond the capacity of poor and middle class. This government has failed to tackle price rise. This government should go," he said.

Bardhan talks push

The Telegraph

Kolkata, Oct. 23: CPI general secretary A.B. Bardhan today urged the Centre and the state to initiate talks with Maoists without setting conditions — a stand different from that of partner CPM which wants the rebels to lay down their arms first.

"Both the government and the Maoists should come forward for a dialogue without preconditions," Bardhan said.

His stress on talks without "preconditions" indicated the difference between the CPI and the CPM, the bigger partner in the Left Front whose stand is at one with that of Union home minister P. Chidambaram.

The difference between the two front partners was also evident from Bardhan's opposition to even restricted use of the army and the air force during the Centre's planned anti-Maoist crackdown. The CPM has remained evasive on the issue, leaving it for Delhi to decide.

"The army should not be used against our countrymen. Police and paramilitary forces are enough to deal with internal security," the CPI leader said.

Bardhan's call for talks came a day after the state government secured release of a police officer in exchange for bail to 14 tribal women.

The CPI and the CPM also differ on the use of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act in Bengal and the ban on the CPI (Maoist) under this law.

The CPI leader, however, endorsed the need for security forces in Lalgurh to contain Maoist violence. He also stressed the need to redress the grievances of people facing "exploitation and lack of development in tribal areas".

Bardhan expressed relief over the release of Atindranath Dutta, the officer in charge of Sankrail, but cautioned that the government's swap deal with the rebels could become a "precedent".

He also accused Trinamul Congress chief Mamata Banerjee of helping the Maoists indirectly.

Bandimukti Committee, a civil liberties forum, today pointed out that the government had heeded armed Maoists and freed tribals while ignoring the same plea by rights groups for months. "It would send a signal that the government responds positively only to armed intervention and it (the government) has to bear its ramifications," the committee's Sujato Bhadra said.

From the Newspapers

The wrong track

The Statesman, October 29, 2009

Let's assume for a moment that every compartment of Tuesday's Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express had had an armed jawan on board. On this basis, there may have been about 20 armed railway policemen on hand to protect passengers. It is doubtful in the extreme if they would have been able to prevent tracks being blocked, or indeed overpowered several hundred tribals who surrounded the train. All they might have achieved is some loss of lives ~ their own, and those of the attackers and passengers. Assuming the policemen had sanction, and governments the gumption to open fire in these circumstances, the train would still have been besieged. Ultimate responsibility for thwarting such attacks rests with the police on ground, and the intelligence apparatus of the State government. Both failed on Tuesday, as they have consistently over the past few months. The reason is that the government is unable to penetrate people's movements; it has lost credibility with the tribal, and its public relations initiatives have been identified as insincere charades. This was the first battle that tribals won.

They, and the Maoists who supported them, won a second battle decisively on Tuesday. Fulminations of television anchors notwithstanding, they managed to garner considerable sympathy ~ first from passengers on the train they captured, then from others by releasing them without causing any hurt. It took a young boy on board the Rajdhani to convey this message to the governments of India and West Bengal. Poignantly, he told an interviewer that his captors had been good to him and to others on the train, and all that they wanted was for their demands to be considered. That these demands exist is testament to the failure of governance, to the massive diversion of development funds over years, nay decades, by the political class, including Communists. If popular support turns in favour of the protestors, and against the government, we will have to brace for greater upheavals. The Maoists are winning a third battle, and this victory it seems will come by default. By failing to draw a distinction between the tribals and Adivasis, the destitute and the dispossessed on the one hand, and the Maoists on the other, the state and the media are falling into a trap. In effect, we are adding to the Maoist ranks every tribal with a grievance. It won't be long before we push them all into the Maoist corner, even if their demand is only for a fair share of the development pie, and without any ideological underpinnings. The objective of government initiatives must be to isolate the Maoist, not populate his army.

The Maoist has won a fourth and possibly decisive battle in creating a Compact Revolutionary Zone that the government does not really recognize. Whether we like it or not, it is a geographical reality. Piecemeal approaches, or state-specific counter-moves are unlikely to work. As much as the Home Minister seeks a unified strategic command to combat Maoists, the Prime Minister must consider a similar structure to battle the causes of this unrest, in other words a single, bipartisan command structure to take up development. This suggestion might get the noses of some Chief Ministers out of joint. It is, though, the price they may have to pay for never having looked beyond their noses. Truly, India faces a mammoth challenge. So far, it hasn't handled it very well.

Assembly-line news

The Hindu, October 11, 2009

Sevanti Ninan

With tweets and blogs as props, our TV news programmes are so similar to each other that it is becoming difficult to tell them apart.....

The consensus by which complexity eludes our news channels, both Hindi and English, is partly inherent in the medium. Communications theorists tell us that TV loses viewers if it strays from footage or viewpoints which have the broadest appeal. So you select, amplify and distort, all in one breathless process which top anchors have mastered. It is a skill which brings them their very fat pay cheques.

But in India the oversimplification is also a genetic construct, to do with class, cheerful inexperience, or world view or with coming out of an incubator called NDTV. The crutch that the new communication

technologies provide – first sms, then blogs, now tweets – also contribute to this, while providing the illusion of feedback.

Convergence

Television news and Twitter are combining to tell us what to think. And the more channels you have, the more they converge on big news days. On the framing of the debate, the terminology, the studio guests invited the use of Twitter. After a couple of hours of listening to our highly-paid anchors conducts an orchestra of controversy with tweets as their props, one couldn't remember any more who had uttered which nugget of wisdom. "Naxalites have their own brand of justice which is injustice." Was that Arnab Goswami or P. Chidambaram?

"It is time to end the intellectual sympathy that naxals often enjoy?" That was Barkha Dutt but could as well have been Sagarika Ghose. "It is a sad fact that a section of civil society romanticizes them." That last was definitely P. Chidambaram, but how much like him all the other had begun to sound. "Human rights advocates now have to choose which side they are on. Democracy, debate and the rule of law or are they on the side of people who kill in cold blood?" May be that too was Mr. Chidambaram. Or was it Barkha? Or one of the others?

Still hanging in there

The tweets on the screen have not replaced the sms polls. Sagarika Ghose: Are naxals becoming India's new Taliban? Eighty-nine per cent are saying yes! Barkha Dutt: 68.42 per cent are saying it is time for intellectuals to end their sympathy for naxals!

There is also some wondrous consensus that the english new channels maintain in terms of whom we are allowed to listen to. For the last two weeks the naxal view has been represented by the revolutionary writer Varavara Rao, regardless of which channel and which show we may be tuned to. If it is human rights it is Gautam Navlakha. Unless the topic is Gujarat in which case it is Teesta Setalvad. If it's the BJP view on naxals it is Ravi Shankar Prasad and I know his arguments backwards by now. That is, when it isn't Chandan Mitra or Swapan Dasgupta. Call it the golden rule to television predictability.

Last Tuesday it was a prime time full of righteous labeling on the TV screen. "Are Naxalites barbarians or social activists?" "Cold blooded murder is not acceptable." But cold blooded looping of barely obscured footage is? The beheaded inspector at whose fate shrill indignation soared all evening, was turned, lifted and transferred to a truck – was it 50 times or 100? – on Tuesday, with the blurred visual of the decapitated head. On *Times Now* ceaselessly, but also repeatedly on CNN-IBN.

On the former, our self-appointed interlocutor was intoning as is his wont, "Indai wants answers." On the Taliban style Naxal beheading, he added. Don't use words like Taliban, bristled Navlakha. But Goswami was hardly the only one. "*Lal Taliban ka kahar*" is what the Hindi channels were calling it. From *NDTV 24x7* to *Headlines Today* to *Aajtak*. It became in an instant, the adjective of the evening.

Goswami wanted to know if this was a Maoist revenge for the arrests of Kobad Ghandy and others whose release had been demanded in return for releasing the kidnapped inspector. Navlakha cautioned against jumping to conclusions and reminded him, "your channel has been wrong twice in recent memory." He tried to give examples but wasn't allowed to get far. "I want responses to the present situation," said Goswami with the air he had adopted of stern calling to account. Adding pompously, "We have a serious internal security issue here."

Confusing scenario

"Sinister Maoist tactics silence sympathizers," said the legend on the TV screen, though Navlakha was far from silence. By the end of the evening P. Chidambaram was telling Barkha Dutt that he didn't know where the theory about release and revenge came from, the BJP government had told the Centre that there was no demand for the swap of any prisoner. Navlakha will have to wait for another appearance on a *Times Now* show to say I told you so.

When news is increasingly about anchor-driven formulations and views, and the views are of those who use Twitter and sms, the India that wants answers becomes an almost mythical construct. When you further consider that the ratings – for whatever they are worth – are the most miniscule for English news channels, you can only marvel at the moral certitude of Those Who Preside. But then you have to remind yourself that the certitude is a posture acquired because it sells, it is we who are being made fools of.

Home Minister will hold talks with the Maoists

By Priyadarshan, New Delhi, 21 October 2009

(free translation from Hindi)

Home Minister P. Chidambaram is immersed in preparations for a fresh offensive against the Maoists. Like a carrier of peace before this *Mahabharat*, he is tossing up the last warning: *Maoists should abjure violence and come to the negotiating table.*

But why should the Maoists go for talks and what does the Home minister finally want to talk? Is Maoism a reaction resulting from some local dissatisfaction which can be addressed through some promises or some development package? In fact, the liberalization which had prompted the Home Minister to take up arms against the Naxalites has another side which thinks that by singing the tune of development the Naxals or the Maoist forces can be driven back.

It is essential to understand that Maoism is a complete ideology. This ideology does not have faith on the parliamentary democracy itself. Overthrowing the existing structure of parliamentary democracy is one of their ultimate objectives. Because without destroying this pillar of rule it is not possible to eliminate the capitalist system in which exploitation and oppression are inherent parts. This ideology believes that the local resistance will gradually assume a massive form, and become transformed into such a widespread people's movement that even the Army will refuse to suppress it and ultimately it will establish one-party communist system.

Although this might look like a quixotic dream in the eyes of the others, the Maoists are working precisely with this perspective. Their corridor, spread across ten states, has now become well-known, and the Indian Air Force, in a way, has refused to take part in operations against the people.

Let us return to the root issue involved. Now there is no direct means left before Chidambaram on how he will grapple with the Maoists. The political forces that Chidambaram is taking along to confront the Maoists are so infamous, corrupt, inefficient, criminal, violent in their character that any operation against the Maoists loses all credibility. The state violence in all its forms becomes far more horrifying. It has all the instruments of suppression—from the smallest to the biggest. It has all the means of exploitation—from development to the powerful guns. If it constructs aerodromes for itself it evicts the adivasis. If it builds power plants for itself, it results in darkness in adivasi homes. If it implements massive irrigation projects, it displaces adivasis.

This is the kind of exploitation that is carried out through government Acts, and through the yardstick of laws and progress. The other face of exploitation is even more horrifying. The source of this lies in the indiscriminate plunder of the resources of these regions. Everyone—from the officers of various departments to the paid gangs of political leaders—is involved in this work. These forces steal the costly timber from the forest, control the mineral wealth under the shadow of their guns, and openly resort to extortion. They make a caricature of the labour laws and if any poor worker tries to remind them of these he would be taught a lesson that could even end up in murder. The story of the mafia gangs of Koilanchal in Jharkhand is an open secret. It was forces such as these who were behind the murder of working class leader Shankar Guha Niyogi in Chhattisgarh several years ago.

The question is: why and how do the perpetrators of this terrible oppression and exploitation go scot-free? Where do they go?

The answer is: they go into the corridors of politics. Chidambaram, who has come forward to unleash a campaign against the Naxalites, forgets that his Parliament is filled with notorious leaders. And that outside the Parliament this notoriety is even more disturbing and terrifying. His ministers and leaders provide protection to criminals involved in petty crimes and to mafia gangs. In turn, these criminals work for them. The police, who are meant to be for the security of the people at large, think only of the interests of a few. It is clear that the biggest blow resulting from this is felt by that section which is alienated.

If we look from this angle, we find that those who carry out plunder from within the Parliament are more dangerous than the Naxalites who reject Parliamentary democracy ideologically. Parliamentary politics have been actually transformed by these people into an anti-people phenomenon. The law and constitution have become an umbrella for protecting them. This is the reason why a violent ideology like Naxalism is becoming popular among the poor and adivasis.

There is another aspect to this entire crisis. The people who are ruling our country today are part of the very same minority that was loyal to the British during the period of colonial rule in India and became their representatives in the period of Indian independence. This minority has divided India

into two parts in the name of development. On one side is that tiny, shining India which competes with the richest in the world, while on the other side is the vast, destitute India to look at which these people do not even have time. The adivasis residing in the interior jungles from Andhra Pradesh to Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are the biggest examples of this miserable India. These people are suffering a type of racial alienation. These are the people who work as the army of the Naxalites and pose a big challenge before the Indian nation-state.

However, if the same attitude of the Indian nation-state persists, and the gap between the rich and the poor in India continues, then any day this Naxalite movement will spread from the jungles of Palamau and Abhujmad and extend to Delhi and Mumbai. **Those who are becoming panicky at seeing Maoists like Kobad Ghandy in Delhi would get more panicky when they see that those doing the work of cleaning for them, those who are pulling rickshaws, those who are carrying the filth, those who are selling vegetables for them, and many such unknown, innocent-looking people stand up against them. The 40-50 lakh people out of the one crore and a quarter population of Delhi, who live in slums, are the dormant army of the Naxals that can rise up any day.**

If we have to save ourselves from such a day of anarchy, then it is necessary for the Home Minister to set right his home before throwing stones at the Naxal areas. **He is proceeding to carry out a military campaign against the Naxalites but this is not going to be an easy task. This is because in the forests and villages where these operations are to take place it is not easy to distinguish between a common citizen and a Naxalite.** In spite of it if there is going to be a campaign then it will be similar to what the Sri Lankan army did in Sri Lanka to eliminate the LTTE. Are we prepared for such genocide against our own people? If not, then we must think of other options.

'We were jailed by cops on false charges'
Tribal women swapped for cop recount tales of horror

Caesar Manal TNN Jhargram (West Midnapore):

They came out of the prison and looked around in awe at the army of journalists, totally unaware of the high-tension drama that took place over the last three days that led to their release. One of them, a 70-year old widow, stepped back in fear and clutched the woman who was helping her walk. She is accused of trying to murder police personnel.

After being locked up in jail for nearly one-and-a-half months on serious charges – ranging from attempt to murder to sedition and waging war against the state – the tribal women didn't quite know how to react to their freedom. Like their arrest, their release was also a mystery to them. They were not aware that the Maoists had negotiated their release.

The Lalgarh women's first worry was how to get back home. No one had any money for the bus fare. And no family member had come to meet them – they are all hiding for fear of being branded Maoists as well. Most of the 23 women bailed out in exchange for the release of abducted sub-inspector Atindranath Dutta had never left Lalgarh before this and were on the verge of tears.

Their lawyer Mrinal Chowdhury stepped in in the nick of time, gave them some money and helped them catch the right bus home. This group of 14 tribal women, released at noon on Friday, was arrested from Bansber village near Kantapahari on September 3, 2009. Their ages range from 22 to 70 years and all of them resembled the simple village folk from this impoverished part of the country. They were hesitant to speak at first. When one opened up, they all did, in a flood of emotion.

"Security personnel regularly ransacked our homes in the name of 'search operations.' Do we look like Maoists? But we never objected. They would verbally abuse us and damage whatever little we owned. By the time they left, we would not even have our earthen pots and pans to cook a meal. Police would keep asking about the 'people from jungle'. How were we to know their exact location? When we told them this, they dragged us away. They claimed that we had tried to beat them up" said 22-year old Phoolmani Soren.

It is difficult to visualize this frail, undernourished woman attacking heavily-armed security men. When arrested she left behind a two-year-old son with her husband – a daily wage-earner. "I don't know how my husband managed. He may have left the child with neighbors when he went out in search of work." She said, wiping away tears.

Beside her stood 70-year-old Sudharani Baske, who cannot walk properly due to her age and lack of medical attention. She has been charged with attempt to murder for 'trying to assault' security personnel. She was in no position to even understand the questions thrown at her. The plight of others – like Pratima Patra, Nilima Hansda and Padmarani Baske – was similar. While in prison, nobody from their families could come to serve them food or ask about their well-being. One of them pointed to a piece of clothing that a fellow inmate had given her out of pity.

"You cannot imagine what we are going through. Our men cannot stay in the villages for fear of being picked up by the security men. If they enter the forests, they will be branded Maoists and arrested," one of them said.

Excerpts from Media sources

The following are a few excerpts from KPS Gill's interview with Harinder Baweja published in Tehelka magazine dated October 24, 2009, under the caption: **'Do We Want Our Troops To Get Stuck Like The Americans In Afghanistan?'**



"When you have political leaders saying that development should be part of the response mechanism, ask them what they mean by development in Chhattisgarh. How does a good road affect a man who has no transport whatsoever? Of what use is the road for a tribal with two bare feet? I remember having a debate with one of the officers in Chhattisgarh and I said, if I, as a youngster, find a job at the end of a bad road, I wouldn't mind a bad road. We are in a great, vicious circle of violence because today development is corruption-driven. So how is the government going to face what is called the challenge of the Naxalite?"

"It's not just about flying in commandos and battalions. What about the communities? In Chhattisgarh, it is about the Baniya-tribal relationship. It is as exploitative as was the Jat Sikh-Baniya relationship in Punjab. You need protection laws.

A recent law took away the rights of the tribals. Now, restoring the rights of the tribals is taking long time. Why is it taking such a long time? Why can't you restore the rights?"

take Jharkhand, where you have a governor whose foremost achievement is corruption. I have always maintained that corruption and operations against organisations of this nature cannot go together. An honest response is critical. I know what the police officer in charge of Bastar was doing. He was taking Rs 35,000 per man to transfer them out of Bastar. This was in the knowledge of everyone. And do you know who transfers constables? The state secretariat does. The chief minister would say he was taking the advice of the sub-inspectors on how to tackle the Naxalites. I am sorry, but the state and its leadership do not have the required mental calibre or an intellectual grasp of the ground situation. Everyone is telling lies from the ground level up. It is for the commander responsible to assess the situation on a daily basis.

You think Op Green Hunt should be stalled?

This is not the way to do operations. You were there during Black Thunder. These fellows — MK Narayanan and Ved Marwah — claim they conducted the operation. Did they even know what was going on? When I called Rajiv Gandhi, he called it the Gill Plan. Operation Black Thunder was named 20 days after it happened. Operation Green Hunt is going to be a big failure. Who is the State hunting? And once an operation fails, it is a very difficult task to repeat it. This is what the American forces are facing in Afghanistan. We need to consider: do we want to be in a similar situation?

"Delhi has a large number of theorists. I don't know who is advising Home Minister P Chidambaram, but he is clearly not on the right track. He should read Green Mansions by WH Hudson to understand Chhattisgarh."

"In fact, we are creating a fertile field for Naxalite propaganda even in urban areas because of youth unemployment.

"What do the tribals in Chhattisgarh want? They want education, they want good drinking water, two square meals a day and protection from diseases like malaria and proper ownership rights. They don't want Operation Green Hunt. Governments should not be falling into intellectual traps devised by the Naxals. The government should be spending time devising a proper development model for the tribals. Till then, the Naxals will be in a position to expand their areas of influence and operation. If there was any compelling ideology, the Naxals wouldn't have to use violence to convince their subjects that they are right."

Excerpts from an Interview to Frontline by Ajay Sahni, Executive Director, Institute of Conflict Management, Delhi

The idea that I can send very good fighting men like trained Cobras and Jharkhand Jaguars is nonsense. First of all, I find the entire nomenclature of this discourse offensive.

Green Hunt, Cobra, Jaguars, and the mildest of these is Greyhounds. Is this what we want the state to be seen as – predatory animals, and hunters? There is some fundamental problem in our conception. I will train a special group of commandos, and they will go everywhere because, after all, who can beat a Rambo?

“.....the Maoist is not going to confront you in your areas of strength. I believe that Lalgarh is the best example you have had of this. So much was said about it that it is going to be the decisive battle with the Maoists but they simply walked away from you. And then when they figured out where the actual deployments of forces were, they started walking back in.

Basically, you have to understand that if you squeeze, you also have to contain. If you only squeeze, they will simply squeeze out or overflow into other areas.

Prepare your ground, get a smoke-screen up and then get to the beehive. This is a five-year plan on a very conservative estimate. And if you are killing a larger number of Maoists even now, you are probably killing the wrong people because you are killing without intelligence inputs and they are always poorly located without any local knowledge. Around the year 2000, when I used to talk to some very wise men sitting in the security establishment, everyone used to dismiss this as a problem of Telangana.

The contention was that it cannot go to coastal Andhra Pradesh and south Andhra. They used to give me a lot of sociological analysis for this argument. Now see, the Maoists are everywhere. As I said, you squeeze and they will overflow into other areas. It was your squeeze in Andhra Pradesh that made it necessary for their lead teams to go not only to Chhattisgarh and Orissa but also to Punjab, Delhi, Kashmir and Nepal. You are forcing them to adopt a more efficient technique and making them understand that they cannot remain concentrated in one region.

This is precisely what you are doing again, except in this case you are going unprepared. Andhra Pradesh had a long period of training, preparation and methods. Yet, the whole orientation in Delhi today is towards a special force. A special force can be efficient only in an environment conducive to its operation.

Responding to the talk of deployment of the Army and the Air Force, Sahni says:

That is completely ludicrous. They should never be involved. The debate is taking place because some people are sucking up to the Ministers saying, ‘we will do it’. Ministers want results and something that can be achieved within a time frame of not more than six months. We are always in such a hurry that all our problems take decades to resolve. You never initiate fundamental and structural changes that are necessary. So, what happens is that after 15 years you find that you have become worse in your capacities and the enemy has grown. From 56 districts in 2001 to 223 districts now, according to the Home Minister’s own statement.

Unless you create general force capability, no special force can be effectively deployed because the first responder is the general police. K.P.S. Gill always says that whether it is terrorism or insurgency, it is a small commander’s war. It is the job of the leadership to empower the small commander. He should have the capacity to respond to a threat.



D. Bandopadhyay, head of the Planning Commission’s expert committee on Naxalism, says: *“New Delhi should ideally relinquish the security-centric view of tackling Naxals and address the causes of legitimate dissent. If it sticks to violent offensives, it might just end up fighting an escalating battle on the internal security front.”*

➡ “The three reasons why Maoist influence is growing is poor governance, non-implementation of the Tribal Bill and the fact that the tribals don’t have rights to natural resources. They should have rights not just over minor forest produce but also major forest produce and that includes the mineral wealth in these areas”.—Digvijay Singh, former chief minister of undivided Madhya Pradesh.

➡ Addressing media persons during his Jharkhand visit **Rahul Gandhi said:** “Naxalism is based on two-pronged issues: in states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, the governments did not reach out to all people and secondly, the resultant less development triggered frustration among younger generation.”

(But still you want the repressive forces to reach out to the people and stamp out this frustration, Mr. Rahul?)

➡ An analysis of investments in Naxal-affected areas by projectstoday.com for *Outlook* clearly reveals the growing business interests at play. Till September '09, Rs 6,69,388 crore of investment had been pledged in the troubled areas—14 per cent of the total pledged investments in the country. Sure, not all these investments will materialise—some big-ticket plans in minerals, metals, power and oil and gas have been stuck for awhile. But significantly, the growth in big business interests here matches the national average. Which is why companies operating in these zones welcome the decision to take on the Maoists frontally. A PSU representative in Chhattisgarh told *Outlook*, “The Salwa Judum was an attempt to battle an unlawful movement through an unlawful agency. It was disastrous, it lacked moral authority. Now, finally, the state has realised its own responsibility.”—**(From Outlook, Oct 26, 2009)**

Chidambaram’s double-speak

“No government of a civilized country will wage war against its own people. What we ask is that Naxalites should abjure violence.”



Our Response: What is it if not war, Mr. Chidambaram, when a quarter-million police and para-military troops are mobilized equipped with the most sophisticated weaponry and aided by air force planes? Or you think it more appropriate to call it genocide?

On October 24 Chidambaram modified his stand saying that the government was not insisting on the Maoists laying down arms as a pre-condition for talks.

“I have not used these words. Besides I am too practical to know that they will not lay down arms. They have to halt violence which means halt the wanton destruction of railway track, roads, telephone towers, school buildings and bridges.”

In his letter to former Lok Sabha speaker Mr. Rabi Ray, the Home Minister said: “Let me state it in carefully chosen words that if any group abjures violence, we are willing to talk to that group about any genuine grievances. This is what the Prime Minister has said. We have not asked them to do anything more. We simply say halt the violence and then we can talk.”

Our Response: Good that you do not insist on laying down arms by Maoists but who is resorting to violence, Mr. Chidambaram? Who has to halt the violence? Who has been abducting, murdering unarmed people, raping women in the areas of Maoist dominance? Will you publicly apologise and set up an enquiry to go into the cold-blooded murder of over 60 adivasis in the past 40 days in Dandakaranya during your blood-thirsty Operation Green Hunt? Will you assure the adivasi people of Dantewada, Bijapur, Kanker, Naryanpur, Bastar, Rajnandgaon and other areas, who are fleeing their homes in thousands unable to withstand the inhuman atrocities perpetrated by your forces, that you will immediately call a halt to the state terror? Is it not hypocrisy and double-speak on your part to ask the Maoists to halt violence when it is only a legitimate response to the brutal state violence that you had unleashed on the entire adivasi community on an unprecedented scale? At least now, stop this double-speak! Halt the state terror! Create an atmosphere of confidence among the people! Withdraw the forces of state terror and take measures to stop the exodus of adivasi

population! Only then, you have the right to ask the Maoists to halt violence if at all there is any violence. Once you give up state violence where is the question of our counter-violence?

☺ Referring to the statement of the Maoists that their objective in attacking the Sankrail police station in West Bengal was weapons and money, Chidambaram hit out at the intellectuals who, he alleged, were voicing support to the Maoists: "Even after this statement, if people romanticize the Naxalites, all I can say is that only God can help them." "Civil society must reflect on the consequences of the path of mindless violence chosen by the CPI(Maoist) and how their actions actually hurt the poor and disadvantaged sections of the people," it said.

Our Response: The warning of Chidambaram to all those sane minds who question state violence and call on the Centre to hold unconditional talks with the Maoists is clear: Either you are with us or you are with the Maoists. Or else nobody can help them except God. This is an ominous pointer to the shape of things to come—the rulers are completing their preparations for an all-out attack on the pro-people democratic intelligentsia and other saner minds. Look out for another Emergency era under the Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram dispensation.

☺ Again, speaking to the media on Oct 24, Chidambaram alleged: "There is certainly evidence of weapons being smuggled from abroad through Myanmar or Bangladesh and possibly Nepal."

Our Response: If we get weapons from abroad where is the need for us to attack stations like Sankrail, Mr. Chidambaram? The fact is: we have to carry out more of such attacks for money and weapons to equip our growing people's army. Our chief source of weapons is the enemy force and it is the state violence which is responsible for our undertaking such actions. The more forces you send for suppressing the revolutionary movement, the more actions we have to take up for the seizure of arms and ammunition. Raids on banks and government treasuries too are essential to fulfill our war needs. You spend the tax-payers' money to provide unlimited arms to the state's armed forces in your bloody brutal war against the people. You obtain weapons from the US, Israel and several European countries. And to confront the military offensive unleashed by you, we have no other option but to seize the arms and other war requirements from your own forces. At least now stop spreading lies that we are getting arms from foreign countries and that we have hundreds of crores of rupees obtained through supposed extortion.

☺ According to the statement of the Home Ministry: "Intelligence inputs have indicated forced recruitment of children by naxals in south Chhattisgarh. Naxalites are also exhorting villagers to provide boys or girls per village for recruitment in their armed squad. " It says: "The attempts by naxal groups to recruit children to carry out armed actions against security personnel is a despicable act."

Our Response: Stop these white lies! Not a single child is recruited into our PLGA. It is the SPOs set up by your satrap in Chhattisgarh, Raman Singh, who has recruited children under 16 years and made them into cannon fodder in the war against their very people. Have a look at the SPOs and immediately free the children from the ranks of this illegitimate vigilante force.

☺ On October 15, reacting to the Maoist offensives during the two-day bandh on October 13/14 in the five states of Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Chhattisgarh against the police atrocities, the Home Ministry charged that the "so-called armed liberation struggle of the Maoists has affected development efforts of the government and private investors as they have been damaging infrastructure like railways and school buildings.

"The so-called armed liberation struggle, ostensibly meant to lead to betterment of the lives of the common citizen, especially the tribal people, has, in two days, set back development efforts of the government and private investors," the Home Ministry statement said.

It said it would take many months to rebuild damaged roads, bridges, railway properties, telecom towers, block offices and school buildings and more resources would be provided for the purpose.

Our Response: There is no need for the Maoists to destroy school and panchayat buildings if you declare publicly that you will never use these premises for accommodating your repressive forces. Withdraw all the forces from the school and panchayat buildings. Apologise for the police lathi-charge on school children and women who were protesting against the occupation of school buildings by the repressive forces in Lalgah and other places. Stop construction of roads for the movement of security forces and start constructing roads for the benefit of the people. And lastly, stop abducting and illegally detaining Maoist

revolutionaries and common people for days without end. Produce the arrested in the court within 24 hours as per the law. Every act of destruction by the Maoists is to protest against illegal detention and police atrocities on the people. Stop these and our violence will stop.



The slaveholding classes of India unleash a War of Lies to justify their Genocide of the rebellious slaves

In a way, the parasitic, leach-like, anti-people and oppressive Indian ruling classes, constituting a tiny filthy upper layer of the Indian society constituting less than 5 per cent of the country's population, remind us of the slave-holding class that had emerged with the dawn of the class-divided society. They have their own separate world completely segregated, insulated from the vast majority of the poor and middle classes. The culture, outlook, attitudes, habits, and even language of this elite class that had hijacked India by using the sugar-coated instrument of Parliamentary democracy, are diametrically opposed to the billion plus poor and middle classes who constitute the real, vibrant India. In the eyes of the filthy rich the vast majority of the Indian people are just the scum of the society who are no more than speaking animals. These leaches have nothing but contempt for the toiling masses and it is only once in five years that the slaves become important for the votes they are said to possess.

Like the elite White Americans who think that world has come to an end if one of their own class is killed, but remain totally insensitive even if there is a genocide of lesser souls from underdeveloped countries or the Blacks from their own homeland, the members of the millionaires club in India become hysterical when the poor hit back after taking centuries of beating. In their eyes the poor dalits, adivasis, women and religious minorities and other downtrodden sections of the society are mere slaves who are not fit to enjoy the rights on an equal footing. The Indian constitution has an inherently anti-people bias and serves as a loyal instrument to provide solid protection to private property at any cost. And where it becomes a hurdle, the rulers can bend it in accordance with their needs or easily circumvent it by simply denying that anything detrimental to the spirit of the Constitution has taken place. By controlling all the instruments of suppression and instruments of propaganda, these classes can distort facts, fabricate white lies and manufacture consent.

By calling the Maoists to halt violence Manmohan, Chidambaram and their likes have been creating the impression in public mind that Maoists are the cause for the current violence across the country. The fact is, every act of counter-violence by the Maoists is a legitimate response to the unbridled brutal violence unleashed by the state that goes on an every day, every hour. A section of the media is reinforcing the myth that Maoists are indulging in "senseless, mindless" violence. **To the reactionary rulers, to their intellectual and media accomplices, there is nothing horrifying when the CRPF and the SPOs deployed in Dantewada cut off the breasts of a 70-year-old Dudhi Muye and stabbing her to death in Gachhanapalli village, or cutting off the tongue and fingers of Kartami Kanni's two-year-old son, or murdering in cold blood an entire family of four in Gompad village—Madvi Bajar, his wife Madvi Subbi, their daughters, 20-year-old Kartam kanni and 15-year-old Madvi Mutti after committing atrocities on them, and innumerable crimes against humanity in the vast adivasi-inhabited belt extending from West Midnapur-Bankura-Purulia in West Bengal to Srikakulam-Vishakhapatnam-Vizianagarm in North Andhra and Khammam-Warangal-Karimnagar-Adilabad in North Telengana.** In the eyes of the intellectuals who serve the slave-holders—the Arnabs, Swapandas Guptas, Chandan Mitras—these voiceless adivasi victims of brutal state violence are not human beings at all; they are only talking tools as in the slave-holding society.

Manmohan and Chidambaram, while being conspicuously silent about these inhuman crimes by their lawless goons, keep on barking that Maoists are indulging in "senseless" violence, and pretend that they are committed to democracy and peaceful solution to all issues of the people. And they have the cheek to utter these lies even as they withdraw more troops from the borders with China and Pakistan and deploy them in the adivasi areas to step up such atrocities as described above. Such is the class character of these hypocritical, anti-people rulers of our country.

Some Misconceptions regarding Maoist movement

CPI(Maoist) General Secretary, Comrade Ganapathi, answers the questions raised by intellectuals related to the Maoist movement

(A vicious campaign is unleashed by the reactionary ruling classes and a section of the media against the Maoist movement through skilful interweaving of lies and falsehoods; distortion of facts and incidents in a bid to isolate the Maoists from the democratic forces. Civil rights organisations and democratic forces are sought to be cornered by repeatedly pointing to some minor mistakes committed by Maoists and also citing some incidents completely pulled out of context. The aim of this vicious deliberately-orchestrated campaign against the Maoist movement is to gain legitimacy to the brutal military offensive and war against the adivasi uprisings and the ongoing people's war led by the CPI(Maoist). This incessant propaganda by a section of the reactionary anti-people media has created some doubts in the minds of even some well-meaning intellectuals and well-wishers of the revolution. Most of these questions are similar to those raised by some intellectuals belonging to the Independent Citizens' Initiative in 2006. Hence we are reproducing below relevant parts from the answer given by the General Secretary of the CPI(Maoist) to the questions raised by the Independent Citizens' Initiative three years ago. These have as much relevance today as three years ago.)

There is no level playing field in the merciless class war between the cruelly exploited, brutally oppressed majority on the one hand, and the fatty upper five per cent of our society bulging at the expense of the hundreds of millions of poor on the other. In a class-divided society there cannot be any absolute truth. The truth of the oppressed is different from the truth of the oppressor. This has been true right from the time of Spartacus and the unsung slave heroes who waged struggle against slavery. Either you were with the slaves, in which case Spartacus and the rebels represented a just cause and truth, or you were with the slave owners for whom the revolts were merely the unjust acts of the slaves who had strayed from their duty of serving their masters. Likewise if Bhagat Singh was a hero for the Indian people he was the greatest terrorist and villain for the British colonialists.

In class conflicts, unlike in ordinary sport, it is impossible to have an impartial referee who cries foul whenever there is a violation of the rules by either side. For class war is no game played out between equals based on rules that apply to both sides equally. It is an unequal war between the mighty militarised state that stands in defence of the propertied classes and their "right" to exploit the majority at will, and the vast majority of the wretched of the earth—hungry, homeless, emaciated, docile, helpless masses—who, in the eyes of the ruling elites, are not much distinct from the slaves of bygone millennia. Rules are preset by these very same exploiters through their Constitution with enough provisions for violating the same. Those who imagine themselves to be impartial referees in class war and try to set the rules equally for both sides will ultimately end up as apologists for the oppressors, in spite of their good intentions and sincere attitude. Anyone who thinks that he/she is being impartial in a class-divided society is only a victim of his/her fanciful imagination.

You have condemned both types of violence, i.e., violence unleashed by the state and salwa judum goons at the behest of the imperialist MNCs, big corporate houses like Essar and Tata, unscrupulous traders, contractors, as well as collaborationist adivasi leaders who had become part of the ruling elites, on awakened adivasi masses who are struggling for their just rights and liberation under the leadership of our Party on one hand, and the legitimate revolutionary violence resorted to by the oppressed adivasis on the other. You held both sides responsible for the unfortunate situation. How can you equate the violence of the oppressor with the legitimate violent response of the voiceless oppressed? Whom would such a stand help ultimately? Would it not provide added strength to the oppressors and help perpetuate their domination? All these have to be pondered over by democratic-minded intellectuals. We sincerely appeal to you to stand more firmly on the side of the oppressed and then it will not be much difficult to find answers to most of the seemingly perplexing questions.

Now we shall try to answer your points very briefly:

1. You had called on us to declare a cease-fire and enter into a dialogue with the government. You were dismayed that we had not responded to your call and had even escalated the violence. You also queried whether we are prepared for a dialogue? When the enemies of the people have a single agenda of suppressing the struggling masses through ever-increasing brute force, where does dialogue come in? **In fact, ever since 1998 we had always been responding positively for a**

dialogue on the issues of the people provided the government cried a halt to its repression and oppression of adivasis and created a conducive atmosphere for dialogue by withdrawing the police and para-military camps from the countryside, punish the guilty officers responsible for murders and rapes, and so on.

Today, along with the above demands, other demands such as: immediate disbanding of salwa judum, punishment to the perpetrators of atrocities on the people, suspension of the Public Security Act, 2006, removing obstructions on adivasis who want to go back to their villages from the so-called relief camps have also come to the fore. Is there any justness in asking us to one-sidedly declare a cease-fire and go for dialogue without the government first creating a conducive atmosphere? The talks in AP in 2004 had exposed the hypocrisy and heinous game plans of the Indian ruling classes when the government refused to extend the cease-fire, commenced brutal attacks and created conditions which made second round of talks impossible under YSR's Congress regime. These bitter lessons have naturally become a deterrent for talks anywhere in the country. To ask us to declare cease-fire even as the exploiting classes continue their cruel barbaric campaign against the people means asking us to commit suicide. It is like the poor lamb believing the butcher. We appeal to you to think over the dangerous implications of your call for a cease-fire from our side in today's conditions.

2. You conveyed your worry at our "*casual attitude towards taking away life*". Deaths of members of the marriage party returning from Gadchiroli or of the traders in Kanker were unfortunate incidents that occurred due to mistaken identity. No revolutionary would ever think of committing such attacks on innocent people. *** Social scientists and investigative journalists do not stop at mere facts that happen. They would go into the causes behind these incidents, the history and ideology of those who committed such acts, and the overall prevalent atmosphere that triggered such incidents.** Such incidents are exceptions in our long-drawn revolutionary struggle spanning over 25 years in Dandakaranya. Our ideology and politics teach us to protect the people as the pupil of our eyes. We value life and peace as no other party or even a humanist does. It is our love and commitment to the people that had drawn us away from our homes and families and goads us on to sacrifice our lives so as the vast majority can live in peace. To accuse us of having a casual attitude towards taking away life is a myth fabricated by the bourgeois media. Our society including the sharpest critics of the ruling classes are bound to be influenced at least to some extent by this subtle propaganda. With greater care and more meticulous planning we assure you that we shall strive to avoid such unfortunate incidents in future.

We are as much grieved as you when policemen are killed in our ambushes and raids. We made several appeals to the policemen and their families not to kill innocent people or launch attacks on our cadre. We had issued leaflets appealing the Naga battalion jawans, CRPF jawans to defy orders from their superiors and to desist from attacks. We have composed a number of songs describing the plight of poor and unemployed youth who are forced to join police force due to lack of alternative employment. Whenever we attack the police we try to minimise bloodshed. We had never killed any policeman who surrendered. We do not harbour any anger towards ordinary policemen but would anyone expect us to remain silent when people are tortured, killed, women are raped, houses and property destroyed by the police-para-military-salwa judum goondas? We stand for the defence of the people's rights and it is for this reason we are compelled to attack those who are snatching away people's right to live. You would not have suggested a reconsideration of the strategy of people's war itself just because a few mistakes were committed had you known why, in the first place, we had taken up arms.

3. Regarding the *jan adalat* in Manikonta village, the first point we would like to place before you is that those who were punished were not villagers as you describe them but were paid SPOs and SJ goons who had committed terrible atrocities on the people in the name of salwa judum. A retribution of that order is a necessity to control these goons. Common people, generally speaking, do not go to the extent of killing those who had committed crimes. The fact that hundreds of people who were present in the *jan adalat* resorted to this extreme measure shows the pent-up anger and righteous indignation of the people intimidated since June 2005 without a let up.

You had questioned for evidence that due process was followed in the *jan adalats*. Before such a question is placed we request you to examine the so-called justice system that is being implemented by the state in Dantewara-Bastar region or anywhere in our country for that matter. Does due process mean engaging professional lawyers (who turn out very often to be unethical professional liars) to prove one's crime (which is the rarest thing that can happen in our country if you see real-life criminals occupying highest positions of power while hundreds of thousands of innocent languish in jails without trial for years without end). When it is a universally known fact that nine out of ten cases do not get

justice through the so-called courts of law why should you find fault with people when they themselves punish the culprits as in the *jan adalats* held under the leadership of our Party? The very fact that out of the 57 people taken away by the jan militia led by our PLGA from the concentration camp and 44 of them were let off after due investigation of their deeds speaks of the fairness of the jan adalats unlike the so-called courts of law that let off the real culprits and throw the innocents for long years into jails. Moreover, if we see our past history you will find that several times we had let off even police officers after detaining them for days when their crimes were not proved in the investigation. Many anti-social elements were simply censured and let off. It is only the most notorious anti-people criminal-lumpen elements and proven agents of the enemy who were given the highest punishment of death.

In principle, we are against death penalty and our new system that would evolve after the seizure of power will scrap death sentence. But now the oppressed people and the revolutionaries are compelled to resort to it for our defence as even our very survival is at stake if proven counter-revolutionaries are allowed to create havoc with people's lives and pass on information about our movements to the police. And as for evidence let me tell you that the excellent evidence collected by us—recorded cassettes of the entire investigation in the jan adalat which we had placed by the side of the dead bodies for the world to know—had been taken away by the police. We request you to bring pressure on the government and also ask the courts to direct the police to produce the cassettes. That would answer your question about evidence for due process. If you are ready to collect live evidence then thousands of people in Dantewara are prepared to place the facts before you whenever you come.

4. It is a baseless allegation that we had laid mines all over. People, to defend their very existence, are compelled to plant mines here and there in order to check the influx of hundreds of state forces and SJ goons who are creating a reign of terror in the villages. Neither is this indiscriminate or on an extensive scale. We also do not believe we can prevent *salwa judum* by using mines. We are with the world people in condemning the use of mines and all other weapons of mass destruction that create more "collateral damage" to borrow the phrase from the greatest terrorist of our time, George Bush Jr., and we stand for total ban of these weapons. If the indiscriminate use of grenades, mortars and aerial bombing by the state's forces which are deployed in thousands in Dantewara-Bastar region killing or wounding hundreds of people is stopped then there is no need for us to use this weapon.

We believe that it is people, and people alone, who can smash *salwa judum* through mass political movements and mass armed retaliation. Weapons are used by our PLGA and the people's militia as they have to confront an enemy armed with the deadliest of weapons that are used for suppressing the just and peaceful movements of the people. In fact it is the *salwa judum* and the large-scale atrocities by the police and para-military forces that had led the people to arm themselves en mass and build armed defence system for their self-defence. They have every right to defend themselves with whatever kinds of weapons available.

5. As regards training minors under 18 years in the use of arms, we wish to make it clear that our policy and the PLGA constitution stipulate that no one should be taken into the army without attaining 16 years of age. And this age limit is strictly followed while recruiting. In the specific conditions prevailing in the war zone children attain mental and political maturity by the time they complete 16 because they are directly or indirectly involved in the revolutionary activity from their very childhood. They receive basic education and political training early in their lives and have organisational experience as members of balala sangham (children's associations).

But now the enemy has changed the entire situation in this region by pursuing a policy of "*kill all, burn all, destroy all*" not sparing even children and old people who are forced to flee the villages and stay in forests and have to arm themselves for their self-defence. When the enemy is erasing every norm of international law, the oppressed people have the full right to arm themselves and fight. Making a fuss over age makes no meaning in a situation where the enemies of the people are targeting children too without any mercy. If the boys and girls do not do resist with arms they will be eliminated completely. The intellectuals of the civil society should understand this most inhumane and cruel situation created by the enemy and take the side of the people instead of pushing them more into defensive by raising all sorts of idealistic objections.

As for destroying schools used by the CRPF as their camps, neither the people nor our Party think it is wrong. The schools, once they are occupied by these forces, are transformed into torture chambers and concentration camps and there is no hope that they will once again be used as schools in the near future. Moreover, in many villages that did not have a school for the past six decades after the so-called Independence, new RCC school buildings are now coming up on a war footing for providing the needed infrastructure for the 'carpet security system'. People living in the villages know

for what purpose these buildings are being built. That is why they have decided to destroy them and our Party fully stands by the people.

Education of the adivasis is not affected by destruction of school buildings used by the security forces but by the destruction of entire villages (upto 900 villages had been uprooted since June 2005) by the state police, para-military forces and salwa judum goondas with active police support. In mid-July thousands of students whose education was disturbed by salwa judum goondas came into the streets demanding education and gave slogans against police-judum gangs for depriving them of education. We must all demand the immediate withdrawal of all police-CRPF camps from schools and colleges in villages and towns, stop the destruction of villages and killing of teachers and students by judum goons, allow people to go back to their villages from the so-called rehabilitation centres, and to provide all facilities for education. While destruction of school buildings had taken place in a few villages where people's very existence has become a question mark you still think that this is affecting the education of the children rather than seeing it in a larger perspective affecting the lives of the entire people. We are curious to hear what you would say of hundreds of other villages which do not have schools although "Maoist threat" does not exist in those villages? It is for you to ponder over whether we are in any way responsible for the lack of education to the children of Dantewara.

6. Another white lie doing the rounds ever since the Maoist movement began to be recognised by a significant section of the people as the only alternative to solve their basic problems is that we are against development and that we obstruct people from exercising their right to vote and to participate in government-sponsored development works. Nothing can be farther from truth. We were surprised to see that you too had fallen prey to this vicious disinformation campaign unleashed by the government and the media controlled by the big moneybags. You wrote: "*Not all the lack of development can be blamed on the government People have a right to vote, to work on road construction schemes, to access panchayat money, all of which your party has opposed.*"

Is it true that we are in anyway responsible for lack of development? **We had never, I repeat never, opposed any schemes of the government if those really helped in ameliorating the lives of the people.** You can verify this assertion of ours through independent investigation and not based on complaints from those bigwigs like Mahendra Karma and his agents among the adivasis and the non-advansi exploiters who feel deprived of the funds that would flow into their pockets if the Maoists were not present.

Our party spokesperson had already explained what model of development our Party stands for which has been published in the EPW and hence I will not elaborate much on this aspect. The main point is that we oppose any development that plays havoc with the lives of the people. You might have known how an Essar and a Tata managed to get the consent of the adivasis by holding fake gram sabhas at gun point (see *Down to Earth* October 31, 2006). There is immense wealth in the areas inhabited by adivasis from Jharkhand to AP and all the big guns have their greedy eyes fixed on this wealth. Hence they leave no stone unturned to grab this wealth even if it means massacring the indigenous people, razing entire villages to the ground and suspending all fundamental rights of the people. In just the three states Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa over three lakh crores of rupees are likely to be pumped in to extract several times more wealth to fill the coffers of these steel and aluminium barons of India and imperialist countries. And the so-called advansi leaders like Karma expect fat commissions and bribes from their masters for clearing the areas of Maoists. This is the logic behind *salwa judum*.

We haven't placed a blanket ban on all kinds of roads and railway lines. We oppose the laying of only those roads and railway lines that are meant for looting the wealth from the region and for enemy troop movement. It is an open secret that the railway line from Waltair to Kirandul was meant for looting the raw material from Bastar to the imperialist countries like Japan just as the British did during their colonial rule. The proposed line from Raoghat to Jagdalpur is meant for the same purpose. Would you, as enlightened intellectuals support these mega-development projects that result in underdevelopment and misery for the vast masses?

We support the just demand of the adivasis that the raw materials of the region belong to them, that they should not be displaced from their homes due to so-called development projects such as mines and steel plants, and that roads and railway lines should not be laid for looting the wealth from the region. We stand in the forefront of their struggle against these huge projects and the roads and railway lines meant for draining the wealth from the advansi areas. We expect support from democratic intellectuals like you to prevent wealth from flowing out of the advansi regions and from our country itself. We have our own model of development which you can see in the areas where we had

established the real democratic rule of the masses. You know very well that most of the development funds do not reach the really needy. So much about the story of development.

Even more amusing is the charge against us that we prevent people from voting. The very same marauders who trample underfoot all the fundamental rights of the people guaranteed by our so-called Constitution, lament when the Maoists take up election boycott campaign. **Here we wish to make it clear that people have not only the right to vote but also the right to boycott. But this right is snatched away at gunpoint by the rulers who deploy huge contingents of central forces to intimidate and force people against their will to vote for their very oppressors.** This has been most conspicuous in AP where people are threatened with dire consequences if they dared to boycott and, in several instances, even pulled out of their houses on the polling day and brought to the booths. During the last elections in 2003 and 2004 in Chhattisgarh helicopters were used to create terror and huge para-military force was deployed in the name of preventing the Maoists from foiling the elections. Just as other political parties have the right to campaign for electing them to power the CPI(Maoist) too has the right to call upon the people to boycott the elections that are only meant to suppress them. Never was force used by our Party to prevent people from exercising their franchise. This is easily verifiable from the people in our areas of armed struggle.

Boycott of election is a political tactic of our party to mobilize, organize and rouse the oppressed masses against the rotten system and to make them realise the necessity to destroy it through people's war. It is only then that election of a genuine people's democratic government becomes possible. With this aim, under our party leadership and with the protection of PLGA, the oppressed masses of Dantewara-Bastar region are not only boycotting the election farce imposed by the oppressors, but are also electing their own organs of political power, *Janathana Sarkars*, with deep political conviction.

7. I shall deal with the 7th and 8th questions together as they are closely related. Both these questions the very strategy of people's war and try to set up an artificial wall between our Party and the masses. As one of the great founder-leaders of our Party, comrade Charu Majumdar, pointed out "*People's interests are Party's interests*". There cannot be any other interest for a genuine Communist Party than that of the vast masses. It is not our armed squads that are waging the actual war but the people themselves.

We believe that it is the people, and people alone, who make history. It is they who have to liberate themselves from all kinds of oppression. Tomorrow if the Communist Party itself changes colour and becomes a bureaucratic ruler after capturing power, as it occurred in Russia and China, people will wage a bitter struggle them also. Our Party and armed squads are mere catalysts that help the masses to achieve their liberation. It is the people who are the real heroes and we awaken them and equip them with the scientific theory of Marxism Leninism Maoism. And theory becomes a material force once it is correctly grasped by the masses. Our Party and the PLGA are able to survive the severest repression of the enemy because we are protected by the masses who act as a fortress of steel. One must have a correct dialectical understanding of the interrelationship between the Party and the masses or else mistakes such as separating one from the other are bound to occur.

And when you ask us are we not "*inviting greater repression by taking up armed struggle*", I would say "*Yes. But without armed struggle people will continue to live like slaves without self-respect or dignity and will perish like flies with hunger and destitution.*" That is why the slogan "*better to die in struggle rather than succumbing to hunger!*" has become so popular with the masses. You might be aware of the chilling fact that the number of people who died of hunger and disease in just the past one decade far exceeds (by five times according to an estimate) those who died in all the revolutionary wars that occurred in the last two centuries?

The ruling classes will not abandon political power or their exploitation, oppression and suppression of the people until they are forcefully overthrown. Whether to live a life of slavery and indignity and die of hunger by remaining docile or peaceful protests (we all know the fate of those displaced by Sardar Sarovar project even after two decades of non-violent struggle, just to take one instance), or take up arms to completely eradicate the grounds that give birth to all kinds of suppression and oppression in order to live as free and independent human beings? Our armed struggle is to draw the curtain on pre-history of humankind and herald the dawn of real history where people become the makers of their own destinies and not a handful of moneybags and corporate gangsters.

As for measuring the support our Party enjoys among the masses anyone can easily verify it. The police could not find a single informer in hundreds of villages which made their task of suppression extremely difficult. In fact, it is the immense support that we enjoy among the masses that made the

ruling classes sit up and think of ways and means to suppress us besides deploying the security forces. That was how the heinous strategy of salwa judum evolved by mobilising non-tribal exploiters, lumpen elements among the adivasis who were punished by the jan adalats for their anti-people deeds, and people from villages falling outside the areas of our struggle. It can also be seen in the turnout in the elections with several villages boycotting the polls completely or registering extremely low percentages of votes.

8. We totally agree with your last point that *“there must be a distinction between civilians and combatants”* and that *“those who claim to struggle for the people must struggle responsibly and with full accountability”*. Our Party had always demarcated between civilians and combatants. But you say such a distinction does not exist today. We earnestly appeal to you to point out where we have not made the distinction and we shall certainly correct ourselves if it were true. **We do not consider all those who joined salwa judum or those who are forced to become SPOs as our enemies. Nor are the people who are herded into the so-called relief camps set up by the government to be treated as enemies. We only consider those who unleash brutal attacks against villages with the help of the state’s forces as people’s enemies and punish them.** For outsiders the SPOs might appear as poor adivasis but to the masses of adivasis who had borne the brunt of their cruel attacks the hardcore among the SPOs are even more dangerous and brutal than the police. Any independent and impartial enquiry will bring this truth out. We assure you that we shall take even greater caution in this regard.

Yours sincerely,
Ganapathi,
General Secretary,
CPI(Maoist)
October 10, 2006

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MAOIST)

CENTRAL COMMITTEE



Press Release:

October 22, 2009

**CHIDAMBARAM CANNOT FOOL PEOPLE WITH THE DRAMA OF TALKS
AT GUN-POINT!**

**AS LONG AS STATE TERROR AND MASSACRES OF
UNARMED ADIVASIS CONTINUE THERE IS NO QUESTION OF TALKS !!**

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Home Minister Chidambaram have been putting forth the most absurd proposal for talks with the CPI(Maoist) provided the latter abjured violence. While amassing thousands of para-military forces in the Maoist-dominated areas in the country and carrying out brutal attacks against unarmed adivasi people and the Maoist revolutionaries, they are shamelessly talking of violence by Maoists, like the devil itself citing scriptures. According to the grand plan of the reactionary rulers a total of 75,000 central forces, assisted by tactical air support by IAF choppers, will go to war by the end of this month. An equal number of police forces from the states will join these central forces to carry out the biggest ever military offensive against the Maoist people’s war. While deploying such a huge force, which is greater in size than the armies of most countries in the world, Chidambaram is trying to fool the people that he is not going to war with the Maoists. It is the state terror, saffron terror, and state-sponsored terror that have become the greatest threat to peace and security in our country. The Congress-led UPA government has to its credit the massacre of over 2000 people and Maoist revolutionaries in the past five years. And yet, Manmohan and

Chidambaram have the audacity to say that their government is implementing the “rule of law” and to ask the Maoists to lay down arms and sit for talks.

Asking Maoists to lay down arms as a pre-condition for talks shows the utter ignorance of Manmohan and Chidambaram regarding the historical and socio-economic factors that had given rise to the Maoist movement or are too intoxicated by the brute force they possess by which they dream they can stamp out a movement rooted in the socio-economic causes. **The CC, CPI(Maoist), makes it crystal-clear that laying down arms means a betrayal of the people’s interests. We have taken up arms for the defence of people’s rights and for achieving their liberation from all types of exploitation and oppression. As long as oppression and exploitation exist, people will continue to be armed in ever greater number. However, an agreement could be reached by both sides on a cease-fire if Manmohan and Chidambaram give up their irrational, illogical, impracticable, absurd and obstinate stand that the Maoists should abjure violence.** They should be introspective and decide whether they are prepared to abjure state terror and unbridled violence on the people. If at all they are serious about talks then they should first create a conducive atmosphere by earnestly implementing at least what is guaranteed by the Indian constitution by which they swear. In short—

They should stop illegal abductions of Maoists and people suspected to be supporting Maoists. They should put an immediate halt to tortures and murders of unarmed people, instruct their so-called security forces to desist from raping women in Maoist-dominated areas, abandon their policy of destroying the property of the people and burning adivasi villages. They should withdraw the police and para-military camps from the school buildings, panchayat community buildings and from the interior areas so as to instill a sense of security among the people. They should disband the state-sponsored armed vigilante gangs like salwa judum, sendra, gram suraksha samiti, nagarik suraksha samiti, shanti sena, harmad bahini, and other blood-thirsty gangs that are unconstitutionally established by the police top brass and the ruling class parties. An impartial judicial commission of enquiry should be formed to go into the inhuman atrocities by the police, CRPF, other central forces and the vigilante gangs on Maoists and the people at large and basing on the investigations the culprits should be punished as per the law. All those arrested for being Maoists or on suspicion of aiding the Maoists, the innocent people in particular, should be released unconditionally. They should repeal all draconian laws and Acts such as the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), Chhattisgarh Special Powers Act, etc. They should disband the government-organised concentration camps in the name of rehabilitation of the adivasis displaced from their villages, pay adequate compensation to over two lakh adivasis who were forcibly displaced by the salwa judum gangs and the CRPF-police combine. All those who have become victims of state and state-sponsored terror, i.e., those who were murdered, maimed, raped and pushed into a state of mental trauma should be given adequate compensation.

As for socio-economic issues, the lands of the tribals should be handed back to them wherever they are snatched from them; the mining and other so-called development projects that lead to displacement of the tribals and destruction of their way of life should be immediately disbanded. All the MOUs signed with the imperialist MNCs like Vedanta and the big business houses like the Tatas, Mittals, Essar, Jindal, etc should be scrapped. The lands snatched away from the tribals by unscrupulous landlords, other non-adivasis, and by the government should be restored to their rightful owners. If these are fulfilled, then one can think of talks to discuss on the deeper issues that are blocking the real development of our country.

The CC, CPI(Maoist) unequivocally asserts that the government’s proposal for peace talks is only a propaganda ploy that in no way differs from the peace proposals of Hitler prior to World War II. After the Cabinet Committee on Security had given the final approval for the massive offensive against the Maoists, after the IAF choppers are ready with the Garuda commandos and gunships to pulverize the adivasi areas, these war-mongers are talking of peace! We appeal to all democratic and peace-loving forces to expose the hypocrisy and double-speak of Manmohan, Chidambaram, Raman Singh, Buddhadeb and others and oppose their war preparations against the oppressed downtrodden people of our country who are waging a struggle for land, livelihood and liberation from cruel feudal and imperialist exploitation.

Azad,
Spokesperson,
Central Committee, CPI(Maoist)

Press Statement

27 September 2009

**ILPS CONDEMNS THE ABDUCTION AND TORTURE
AND DEMANDS IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF KOBAD GHANDY**

By Prof. Jose Maria Sison

Chairperson, International Coordinating Committee
International League of Peoples' Struggle

We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, vigorously condemn the abduction, torture and continued illegal detention of Indian political leader Kobad Ghandy. We demand his immediate release from prison as a matter of justice because of the gross violations of his fundamental human rights.

Since his youth, Kobad Ghandy has resolutely and militantly upheld, defended and promoted the Indian people's revolutionary struggle for national liberation and democracy against imperialism and the Indian exploiting classes. He is a steadfast advocate of the historic mission of the working class to build socialism and the international solidarity of peoples against imperialism.

Whatever are his ideological and political ideas, he is guaranteed by the International Bill of Rights and by the bill of rights in the Indian constitution well-defined inviolable human rights, particularly civil and political rights, against illegal arrest and detention and against all forms of torture. The gross violations of his fundamental human rights justify his immediate release.

Contrary to the claims of the police that he was arrested on September 21, Kobad Ghandy was abducted on September 17, kept under illegal detention for four days

and tortured for three days and three nights in the course of interrogation in a safe house. Moreover, he was deprived of his medicine and medical treatment for life-threatening health problems.

We support the campaign of the Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners (CRPP) in spreading information about the circumstances of Kobad Ghandy's abduction and torture, in preventing further harm to his person and in seeking his immediate release. We join the CPPR in making the following urgent demands:

1. Provide immediate medical care to Kobad Ghandy for all his health problems including kidney, cardiac and prostate cancer.
2. Allow him the prescribed diet and safe/boiled water, as provided in the hospitals.
3. Stop all attempts to transfer him to other states under false charges which will endanger his life.
4. Allow a team of specialist doctors to immediately examine and continuously monitor his health condition.
5. Stop all attempts to put him under the illegal narco-analysis which would endanger his life.
6. Shift him to a cell which is not over crowded.
7. Provide him with reading and writing materials.
8. Recognize his status as Political Prisoner.

We call on all member-organizations and allies of the ILPS throughout the world to demand not only the improvement of the conditions of Kobad Ghandy's imprisonment but most importantly his immediate release as a matter of justice because of the gross violations of his fundamental human rights. ###

COMMITTEE FOR THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

185/3, FOURTH FLOOR ZAKIR NAGAR, NEW DELHI-25

Condemn strongly the malicious media trial of Chhatradhar Mahato!

The West Bengal Government cannot violate laws and procedures to deny Chhatradhar Mahato his right to all legally guaranteed safeguards until proven guilty!

The Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners notes with great concern that the government of West Bengal has started unleashing a vicious character assassination campaign against Chhatradhar Mahato, the leader of the People's Committee Against Police Atrocities, that have been spearheading the Lalgarh movement. It is this vicious media trial indulged in by sections of the media and the administration, particularly by Bhupindar Singh, DG Police, Ardhendu Sen, Home Secretary and Ashok Mohan Chakraborty, Chief Secretary, Government of West Bengal, ever since he was abducted and arrested by the Special Task Force of WB police on 26 September 2009 from Lalgarh.

While arresting him, the police had broken law on two grounds. It had violated section 50-A of the Cr.PC by arresting him without providing the arrest memo, explaining reasons of arrest and nine other things which are mandatory under Supreme Court order (Justice D.K. Basu vs. Government of West Bengal, 1996); by posing themselves as scribes which is not permissible under the law, thereby acting as imposters which is punishable under the law; and by planting 20 to 22 cooked-up cases against him and booking him under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act. The CRPP strongly condemn such actions made by the administration and assert that the WB government is indulging in such slander campaigns with the aim of maligning the Lalgarh movement that had already drawn universal acclaim from different parts of the world.

Very recently, it has started another vicious campaign—that of character assassination of this leader of the people's movement. The information that police claimed to have got from Chhatradhar are:

- 1) Mahato has a life insurance policy of Rs.1 crore;
- 2) He owns a house in Mayurbhanj in Orissa;
- 3) That the PCAPA has a bank account;
- 4) A person from Calcutta donated Rs.1.25 lakhs to Mahato's committee;
- 5) Police have got names of 160 sympathizers of the committee, including over 50 from Kolkata.

The DGP said that Mahato made these confessions in custody and also admitted to Maoist links. Rights activists and intellectuals in Kolkata were quick to debunk the claim, saying that the 'confessions' were extracted through coercion (*The Times of India*, 01-10-09; *The telegraph*, 01-10-09).

It goes against the law of this land to leak to the press the so-called confessions made by Chhatradhar Mahato. No confession can stand in a court of law as evidence against the accused. So it is the criminal intent of the senior police officials and the home secretary and the chief secretary to influence the court and the public opinion even before the commencement of the legal proceedings on Mahato in the court of law. This is nothing but condemning someone as guilty through the media even before he is given a chance to defend himself. Besides the violation of the law of the land it is also violation of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights to which India is also a signatory. This vicious media trial would stigmatize the right of Chhatradhar Mahato to be presumed innocent until proven guilty on charges before a court of law. CRPP strongly condemn such vicious propaganda of the state and demand criminal proceedings against all such elements who have misused their positions of power to incriminate illegally a leader of a people's movement. We also demand legal action against all such media houses who have facilitated this despicable act of the government with criminal intent.

Many of these 'charges' that the administration in a despicable manner have been raising through a section of the media have been proved to be patently false with the facts about Chhatradhar Mahato pouring in. First, Chhatradhar does not have such an insurance policy. He himself owns some bighas of ancestral land and used to sell saal leaves. His hut is a broken one; the tube-well in front of his house, like many other tube-wells, hardly works. As he got busy with the movement, he was forced to send his two sons—one reading in Class VI and VII—to sell leaves, which means that the business was not going well. He has an ancestral house in Mayurbhanj. It is a two-storied house, and after division among the members, he was left with only one room in that house. There were times when he literally had to depend on monetary help from the committee to have daily meals. He wears spectacles, one band of which got broken, and he had to go without glasses for days until the committee helped him with money to buy a fresh pair of bands. Journalists who went to his house in

Amlia village know how 'rich' he is. Second, that the committee has a bank account is quite natural and only betrays its transparency. It was well-known and there was nothing secretive about it. Third, the Lalgah Manch(forum) has categorically declared at a press conference held on 1 October in Kolkata that they did try to express their solidarity with the movement by various means, besides sending some money; they are sorry to say that they could not do more. Didn't people send assistance to Spain during the fight against fascist Franco, or to Cuba or to Vietnam? What is illegal then about sending money or medicine to Lalgah? Fourth, if Mahato maintained contact with the Maoists before ban was imposed on the Maoist party, there was nothing illegal about it. What the administration is actually trying to do is somehow to establish the link between Mahato/PCAPA and the Maoists and then to extend that link with the urban intellectuals , students and the Maoists.

That vicious game became clear in the last one or two days. The government officials went on declaring that some Kolkata intellectuals had assisted Mahato not only by donating money, but also by giving advice on the direction of the movement. Those intellectuals would be called for questioning, to be brought to book and might be booked under the UAPA. These are pure threats, acts of intimidation which should not go unprotested and unchallenged. In fact, the WB government has taken the cue from P.Chidambaran, Central Home Minister, who had recently threatened those who, in his eyes, are sympathetic to the cause of the Maoists and arrogantly declared that the government would utilize the services of the media to start a vilification campaign to show how cruel and bad the Maoists are. That is why they have picked up Mahato and through him are trying to tie the link between the urban intellectuals and the Maoists. In this way they have started a sinister campaign not only to demean the Lalgah struggle but also to force the intellectuals to dissociate themselves from the people's movement in Lalgah by constant threats of arrests and other forms of intimidation.

The CRPP strongly denounces such despicable attempts launched against the Lalgah people and the urban intellectuals and calls upon the people both in India and abroad to raise their voice against such attempts and put pressure on the government to release Chhatradhar Mahato and all others prisoners from Lalgah.

In Solidarity,



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