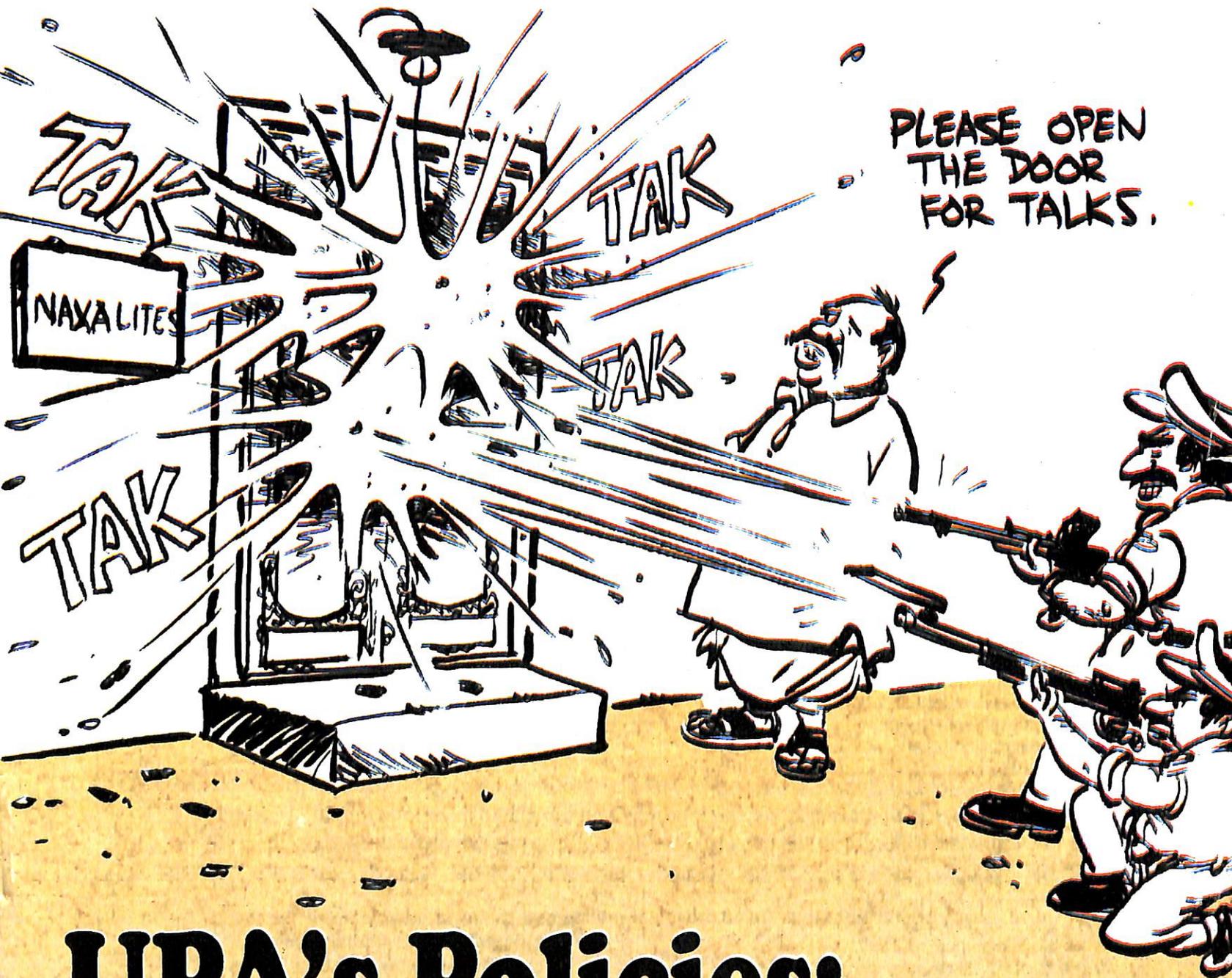


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Counter State's Coordinated Onslaught Policy

Arjun

Mr. Shivraj Patil, the Home Minister of India, is playing two roles at a time, which will, no doubt, boomerang on him, whether he wishes it or not. He is coaxing the CMs on the one hand and on the other oiling the wheels of his own ministry and also the armed forces. In the first and second weeks of April two prominent decisions and two statements were published and telecast by the electronic media. They were to form a political body of the Naxalite-influenced states' CMs as members, to deal with the problem politically and to be generous in sanctioning more money to modernize the armed forces and carry on reform projects in the 150 districts of the country to attend the core problems of backwardness. Apart from these two decisions, another two statements were made by the PM and the chief of the armed forces. The Prime Minister Mr. Manmohan Singh said that terrorism and left extremism should be dealt with separately; because the two have two different dimensions and that left extremism should be addressed politically too. Another first ever statement of its kind was delivered by the head of the Indian armed forces Mr. Joginder Singh, that the ongoing development, due to escalation of Maoist activities in some parts of the country, disturbs the armed forces, which will not be possible for them to watch silently sitting as spectators, when the Naxalites' destructive acts were going at such a high pitch.

Why suddenly have all the heads at the Centre and state levels been singing the same whining song? Why are the PM, the HM, the DM (Defence Minister) and the army's chief concentrating on Naxalism? The reason is that the ever-increasing political, economic, social and cultural crises is a result of deepening of the contradiction between the haves and the have nots, and within the ruling classes day in and day out. Due to this sharpening contradiction an atmosphere of dissatisfaction of the common people has increased and the impact of the Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG) policies is affecting the common man of this country. Such people would naturally think of actively participating in the revolution being spearheaded by the Maoists. The ruling classes understand this clearly that the CPI (Maoist) are bound to emerge as a leader of the oppressed, and that this possibility of gaining acceptance among the people

doubled after the merger of the erstwhile two Naxalite parties. So, as a class they have begun launching onslaughts on these movements to ensure safety to themselves and leave the oppressed masses leaderless in their upsurges, which will be inevitable due to the all-round crisis the system is facing.

Unfolding Events Before and in the Aftermath of the CMs' Conference

The Central government generally calls army commanders' and the CMs' conferences to discuss internal security or internal defense where heads of military, civil and political administration put forward their opinions to evaluate strategy and steps to be followed. For the last 10 years the South and Central commands of the Indian armed forces and the concerned states' officials have been placing their reports on Naxalism. In 1995-96 the DGP of AP reported in such a meeting that they had been working to yield results as to how successfully coverts would work from inside. These efforts were not successful, but some elements turned hostile to the revolutionary party and helped the enemy, which resulted in some losses to the revolutionary movement. The efforts from the enemy side continued in AP and Maharashtra. At the time of the so-called peace talks in 2004 too, the state government was engaged in preparing many more coverts and informers. This was checked, in many ways, by the revolutionary masses and the Maoists, even then some elements remained inside and have been causing loss to the movement. The states' prescription was that such a policy of creating enemy's spies from the ranks of the revolutionaries would break the underground structure and liquidate the main leadership.

This policy has been going on for the last one-decade and more. Some new decisions too have been taken by the government in the latest conferences conforming to the low-intensity-conflicts(LIC) principles laid down by US intelligence. Generally, the enemy too analyzes the developments of the movement and takes new decisions when it is felt that the level of the movement is reaching a certain higher phase.

According to the doctrine of LIC wars, the first phase lies in their preparations against rebellions/insurgencies. The 2nd phase will take into consideration the

guerrilla warfare phase where small unit operations are used against guerrilla activities. The guerrillas usually operate with small units. Small units can cover more territory and with the advantage of rushing extra forces and if necessary helicopters can also be put into service to coordinate the supplies and to evacuate the wounded or the dead.

When the movement passes through the first to reach the second phase, the war against the movement too goes on to move on to the 2nd phase. So the government will fight vigorously to crush the movement at the 2nd phase. If it is not pushed back at this phase, the state's military and political experts think, that the guerrilla forces will form large units and their activities will continue and expand to newer areas.

Before the merger of the two erstwhile Naxalite parties each had planned to cross the second phase; and of course, the merger itself boosted the morale of the revolutionaries and the oppressed masses. This process could culminate to complete the 2nd phase and develop the movement towards the establishment of base areas and a regular army. So, the South and Central commands of the Indian armed forces and the CMs of the concerned-states assessed it that there is a great threat to the internal security, which should be addressed immediately. Lt. Gen. Ram Subramanyam (Central Command), Lt. Gen. B.S. Takhar (Southern Command) and the chief of staff of central and southern command Lt. Gen. Ashok Vasudeva and Lt. Gen. Ashok Kapur presented papers in the said commanders' conference.

According to the chief of army's speech, already they were keeping close touch with the Home Ministry and giving advices from time to time on Naxalism. While the army is preparing its units for any assistance that the civil authorities may require in future, the Home Ministry is pursuing the idea to form Joint Operation Groups (JOG), where army top brass will lead and guide the JOG. To prepare army units and its commanders to fight against Naxalism, the central and the Southern Commands of the Indian army will introduce classes on Naxalism from now onwards.

The CMs' conference too deliberated on Naxalism as its main and principal agenda, where it took key decisions to intensify the onslaught of the state. The states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and four other states were identified as an immediate

potential threat to the existing system from the Maoists. Actually the political objective of launching low intensity conflicts was figured out as a basic military decision at every level. So at this juncture the ruling classes opine to form a political body too to guide the military body, which was existing and functioning under the home department's guidance. So in the history of the Maoist movement in India for the first time a political body with CMs was formed and the HM and the DM will coordinate the decisions and the operations for the first time. Till now the HM was coordinating all the Naxalite-related movements and chalking out political decisions. These are the main new developments in comparison to the CMs' meet of last Sept 21 at Hyderabad. Irrespective of the political parties, the CMs belonging to the various states spoke in one voice to combat so-called left extremism.

The prime minister, the home minister, the defence minister spoke on the grand occasion of the said conference. They agreed to develop a uniform strategy and to institutionalize all the arrangements which would be necessary to combat left extremism. The UPA government continued its earlier stand on 'peace talks' arguing that the problems and demands of Naxalism are local in nature; so talks at the central level is not necessary and states should act firmly with effective and sustained police action and talks can only be initiated "wherever feasible". This policy was informed to the CMs at the Conference.

Unity Among the Ruling Classes

Irrespective of the parties they belong, all the CMs fell in the line and accepted the proposal of the Congress-led UPA government's new policy on the Maoists. Earlier, during the BJP-led NDA government's tenure too all the ruling classes had done the same. Those heads of states or parties too had been talking on Naxalism. Mrs. Sonia Gandhi is the chairperson of the UPA and president of the Congress Party, Mr. Sudharshan the head of the RSS, Mr. Susheel Kumar Shinde the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Chandrashekar Rao, the president of the *Telengana Rajya Samiti*, Kesava Rao, President of the APCC, Sunil Dutt MP, the media owners and the editors, the central and state leadership of the CPI, the CPI(M), the CPI(ML)(Liberation) and other, revisionist so-called ML parties; in a word, from the main leadership of the ruling class parties and chiefs of administrative departments to the police and paramilitary

Two factors primarily affect the initiative of the Indian ruling classes against the revolutionary movement. The first is their growing dog-fights, as can be seen in its extreme form in Bihar, within the BJP, within the top echelons of the bureaucracy and also within big business. This will only grow with the increasing crisis in the economy. The second is the extreme impoverisation of the masses, due to the policies of 'economic reforms', will result in mass outbursts against the rulers.

commanders to the Indian army commanders all are now openly expressing the need to mobilize the forces for ruthless repression on the one hand, and on the other to concentrate on developmental activity in the affected areas.

The anti-communist brain, Mr. Narayanan, was selected as the National Security Adviser and Mr. E.S.Laxminara Simhan, an IB officer selected by him, is his assistant. These two intelligence officers are desperately co-ordinating the new onslaught policy of the Centre guided by the department of state of the US government. The FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) is paddling behind the curtain to guide Indian internal security affairs. The US general policy was formulated to check insurgencies, revolutions in any country in the name of Foreign Internal Defence (FID) in Asia, Africa and Latin American countries. This can be visible in the latest statement of the American Ambassador or Condelleeza Rice's statement or in the declaration of the American State dept. going beyond the limit of civility to include the CPI(Maoist) and the ULFA in its 'terror' list.

It is to protect their joint interests that such steps are taken. As a press release of the CPI(Maoist) says: "*In order to achieve undisputed Global hegemony and to plunder the resources of the Third World countries without any hindrance, the US imperialists have to first stamp out every type of armed resistance to its domination and oppression. And such armed*

resistance by the Maoist forces, national liberation forces, and other anti-imperialist democratic movements all over the world has been growing rapidly, shaking US imperialism. The heroic fighters in Iraq are not giving even breathing space to the US-British occupation forces who had captured Iraq with the evil designs of robbing its oil-wealth and suppressing defiance by the Saddam regime..... The proscription of a Party in India and declaring it as terrorist should be a matter of grave concern to all those who believe in national sovereignty, democracy and independence. Our Party, of course, has always been saying that there is no real independence, sovereignty and democracy in India and that the rulers of the country are spineless compradors shamelessly serving the imperialists and surrendering the country's interests at the feet of their imperialist masters. And now it is once again proved by the silence of the ruling class parties when the US imperialists are interfering directly in the affairs of our country by declaring a revolutionary Party in India as 'terrorist'." The Statement ends with a call to "all the democratic forces and anti-imperialist masses of our country to strongly condemn the declaration of our Party as 'terrorist' by the US imperialists led by the No. 1 terrorist, George W Bush, and to oppose its interference in the internal affairs of our country. We also call upon the people to expose and oppose the collusion of the traitorous UPA government at the Centre led by the Congress party with the US imperialists and their joint plans to suppress the revolutionary and democratic movements in India in rivers of blood."

No doubt contradictions among the ruling classes are increasing but to counter the Maoists at this juncture they are singing the same tune. Even on the question of the 'Peace Talks' in Andhra Pradesh and in the tall talks of the CMs of various states regarding Naxalism, the common thread that binds all hues of parliamentary political parties and personages is how to set into operation the tactics of low-intensity conflict. Arguments and counter arguments within the ruling classes to pull out from the talks in AP or to initiate talks with the Naxalites in other states or Shivraj's statement on talks in the states (provinces) are nothing but vague chatterings. At the time of the AP 'Peace-Talks' the BJP chief Mr. Advani criticized the Congress arguing that the Centre should leave the talks to the states, there is no coordinated policy

and so on. But when he was the Home Minister, under his 'successful' guidance, States themselves were asked to hold talks. The home department's annual report for the year 2003-04 in point No. 3.148 clearly said that "*states are free to engage Naxal outfits in peace dialogue within the framework of the Constitution and the Central Government will render the necessary help and assistance in this regard.*" Now at the aforesaid CMs' Conference all parties' representatives ratified the same policy of the NDA period.

To legitimate its act the state will always put different types of arguments. Whatever the arguments be it will push its armed forces into action in large numbers at every bend in the road. The ongoing people's war waged by the Maoists is a war of liberation for the oppressed. Naturally a party, no matter which class it belongs to will always safeguard its class interest first then it will accept any thing else. Under certain circumstances both the war waging classes may come to the truce table, but if that breaks that need not indicate any major contradictions among the ruling classes to safeguard their interests. One should not get misguided while studying the contradictions among the ruling classes. To misguide the masses by dangling some promise of gain, even if it may be temporary, the ruling class parties will take different stands in different states and at the Centre. No doubt, in a period of growing economic crisis, the contradictions among the ruling classes will further increase due to their battle for power and sharing the loot. It reflects the ongoing situation in our country.

The UP CM may have contradiction with the Centre and the other parties, but when the revolutionary movement extends to UP, as a latecomer in the battle against the Maoists, he has launched the most brutal attacks in Mirzapur district and elsewhere and are doing aggressive preparations to suppress the revolutionary movement further. Ms Jayalalitha, the CM of Tamilnadu, though she is facing weak resistance or mass movements of the revolutionaries in TN she always acts extremely aggressively. Regarding the CPI(M) there is nothing new to say as it has always suppressed the revolutionary movement in West Bengal. The two main ruling parties the Congress and the BJP, whatever differences they may have, regarding the revolutionaries that is confined to the mere tenor of their language. In comparison to the NDA government and its boss Advani, the UPA's Queen Maker, her loyal pet, the PM, and her trusted Home and Defence Ministers

are all playing their cards more systematically and in a planned way with a long-term perspective. The bureaucracy, which plays a crucial role in policy making, is busy preparing the plans for coordinated counter-insurgency actions.

Actually when the guerrilla war sustains and grows to new areas, the ruling classes come closer and closer in their acts, only their way of expression or the language in addressing the Naxalite problem may differ. The revolutionary movement is not a temporary outburst or spontaneous movement of the masses but always it will be an organized and conscious one. Any revolutionary Marxist party would intervene in all the people's movements to consolidate and to extend their influence.

So, as a class they always support their class brethren, which can be seen by what India is now doing in Nepal and the US is doing in South Asia. So also the Pakistan rulers and their Indian counterparts are helping each other to suppress the nationality struggles, the Kashmiri people's struggle or the struggles in the North-East or else where. The arch rivals in Andhra Pradesh, Chandrababu Naidu and Rajashekhar Reddy, are helping each other to safeguard even their personal interests and assets. The factional fight within the parliamentary parties is adjustable, fluid and non-antagonistic for each other. The revolutionary forces would have to be alert to the unfolding situation to prepare the masses and all its forces to wage a bitter struggle. For this a broader political education movement is needed to understand the enemy who is waiting at the gate to disarm, to liquidate and to give a big blow, as it will not give a chance to the people to breathe undisturbed. For this, certain policies were laid down at in the commanders' and the CMs' Conferences.

The social fascist CPI(M) always stands with the Congress. At this juncture the CPI(M) is the best asset in the hands of the government. Better kick-backs, promotions, allocations of resources are given primary importance by the PM, Sonia, Finance Minister and others to please the so-called left leaders. These strange bed-fellows are serving the system as faithful servants and yet the CPM poses among the public that they are the only real fighters. Apart from Bengal this Social Fascism has achieved nothing since Buddha took the reins from Jyoti Basu with their boosted spirit claiming to be the competent person in serving the Indian bourgeoisie and imperialism. This B-team of the Congress too needs to be thoroughly exposed tearing off its

'dissident' veil.

Centre's New Steps

In an attempt to use locals to kill locals — locals to kill their own relatives and people — the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) decided, on Jan. 4th 2005, to increase the recruitment in the para-military forces of locals in the militant and border areas from 10% to 40%. No doubt this 40% will comprise the worst and most lumpen elements of the area, as it is only such a force that will be able to shoot down their own brethren. It is they who will also be widely used to set up a vast intelligence network amongst locals due to their familiarity with them. It is they who will also know more details of every individual in the villages and also the terrain. Of course such an attempt can also back-fire as recruitment, when done on such a large scale of locals, could result in many having sympathies with the revolutionaries. Besides these recruits will soon find that they are being used as cannon fodder, as the bulk of the officer force will be from outsiders, lording it over the local recruits.

On Feb. 5th 2005 the CCS decided the setting up of a Unified Command in each of the nine Naxalite-affected States on the lines of what has been set up in J & K and Assam. The Home Minister, Shivraj Patil, said that the Unified Command would be headed by the Chief Minister of the State and would have senior officials of the Central para-military forces and the State police in it. The States earmarked for such a de-facto military rule were UP, Bihar, MP, Chhathisgarh, Orissa, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, AP and West Bengal. Later this structure was decided to be called the Joint Operation Group whose task would be "*not only to control Naxalite violence, but also to enter and smash Naxalite strongholds*".

The ruling Congress party also set up a specific Task Force to investigate the Naxalite movement in the various States. In mid-February this Task Force presented in person its findings to the Congress President, Sonia Gandhi at a lengthy three hour sitting.

And then on April 15th 2005 the highest ever meeting on internal security was held which specifically focused on the Naxalite movement, which is now being put as the number one threat to so-called internal security. This was a Conference of the Chief Ministers of primarily the Naxalite-affected states, hosted by the Central Home Minister. Such importance was given to this meeting that the Prime Minister who was only to inaugurate it, sat through the entire day — long meeting. Significantly the Conference was also attended by the

Defence Minister indicating that the army would be further involved in counter-insurgency and suppressing discontent. The Conference decided to set up a Committee of Chief Minister of Naxal-affected States "to initiate and pursue a coordinated approach to tackling the extremist violence and activities. The Committee will be headed by the Union Home Minister and will have nine Chief Ministers". Patil further stated that "the committee will periodically meet and decide upon the steps to check Naxal activity. It will take inputs from the coordination centre, headed by the Union Home Secretary and also take into account socio-economic, developments, and political factors behind the spread of Naxal violence". The Conference further resolved that "for better coordination to fight the menace of Naxalism it was suggested that an integrated monitoring cell be created in the PMO to keep constant watch over the situation".

The Conference also resolved to further build the India Reserve Battalion by providing employment to youth from the affected areas and that greater central assistance will be given for this purpose. It further resolved that all Central funds for the Police Modernisation Scheme will be fully utilized and that the State government will contribute an equivalent amount. It said "therefore, the States will devise ways and means and set up a monitoring mechanism, at the Chief Minister and Chief secretary levels, to ensure that funds released by the Central Government for upgradation of the security and intelligence apparatus at the State level are promptly and fully utilized and the desired output achieved".

So, such are the massive long-term and immediate preparations going on by the Central rulers to curb all discontent particularly that which is most organised and most effective. But this is not all. Equal amounts of preparations are being undertaken at the State level to beef up the police force, equip and train them for more effective counter-insurgency operations and heighten their intelligence network. This can be seen in all the states where the Maoists have a presence. In this the AP police force and their Greyhounds, which have the maximum notoriety, are used as the model and the chief training outpost. The beefing up of the police forces can be seen in all the States of Maoist activity.

Upgrading Through Modernization of Armed forces

Combining able persons from all the forces like the Civil police, Special state forces, Special elite forces, Paramilitary forces, as a main combatant group is the main form of state upgrading at this juncture in AP, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Orissa, West Bengal, Karnataka, UP, etc. Allotment of funds to modernize these forces is another important aspect, which the Centre and State governments are adopting. Let us take a look at some events.

AP has been the focus for building the most cruel, sophisticated and deadly genocidal forces in the whole country. From the recruitment of men, funds, training, combat, modernization, to the terroristic greyhound forces, the AP rulers have mastered counter-insurgency techniques with the aid of the Israeli and US mafia. Now the force is being used to train elite commandos of, not only other states, but also Nepal. Whatever may be the tactical strong points of the elite forces, its main weak point is that they will not station themselves in local areas where their operations are continuous. So, the government is now preparing 4 new battalions of an Indian Reserve Police Force, and has allocated Rs. 350 crore for modernization (in the last two decades more than Rs. 3,000 crore was spent on this force) and 5 to 7 battalions of paramilitary have been requisitioned by the state government of AP to face the Maoists. Apart from this 7 new battalions of APSP (Andhra Pradesh Special Forces, which are primarily engaged against the revolutionaries) have been formed exclusively with Adivasi youth. As revolutionaries have a strong base amongst Adivasis, they plan to use Adivasis to kill Adivasis.

Whereas in Chhattisgarh 6 battalions of paramilitary force are stationed and a new special force of 5 battalions have been formed after the formation of the new Chhattisgarh state and some more battalions of para-military forces, a huge amount of money to the tune of Rs. 500 crore for modernization and Rs.2,000 crore for new projects in Naxalites areas were requisitioned by the Chhattisgarh Government from the Centre. To train up the forces the central government has newly opened a training school at Kanker (Chhattisgarh State) to train the personnel in jungle warfare and anti-insurgency as a part of long-term war preparations to face the peasant upsurges. The Central Govt. has recently

planned to send to Chhattisgarh counter insurgency forces operating in Nagaland due to their expertise in jungle war-fare.

So, also in Karnataka the effort is to nip the movement in the bud itself. The anti-Veerapan forces of the STF are now being used against the Maoists. And in February the Karnataka CM announced the constitution of two special police squads to comb the hill ranges and plains, led by officers of the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police. And in the forests where the Maoists are operating it decided to spend huge amounts to re-settle the 1,300 families in the Kudremukh National Park at the rate of Rs.11 lakhs per family. Of the Rs.23 crores to be spent in the first phase the Centre has already given Rs.18 crores. The State government also sanctioned Rs.3 crores for tribals in the districts of Chickmangalur and Udipi.

In neighbouring Tamilnadu the fascist CM, Jayalalitha, is spending huge amounts for the upgradation of the police forces and their welfare. She announced in mid-March of this year the formation of two new battalions at a cost of Rs.12 crores. For huge benefits to the police she has allocated a huge Rs1,340 crores to the police in the current State budget. An additional 4,000 quarters will be built for the police, a special 'school of excellence' will be set up for police children, and there will be upgradation of 242 posts of sub-inspector to inspector, the upgradation of 629 posts of head Constable to Special sub-inspector, etc, etc.

The modernization of the state and the central forces as considered through the successive two budget allotments of the Congress government itself is meant for suppressing the rapidly growing mass upsurges coming up as an inevitable reaction to the regressive economic policies of the ruling classes.

In the year 1988-89 actual expenditure for this purpose was Rs. 1,193 crore and in 2003-04 it soared to as high as Rs. 7,799 crore under the NDA's rule. The Congress, the CPM and the RJD together, the main forces in the UPA-led Congress government, have allocated Rs. 10,757 crore in 2004-05 budget and Rs. 12,552 crore was allocated in the 2005-06 budget. The earlier NDA government, and now the UPA government are both implementing World Bank, imperialist diktats, whereby the upgrading of the armed/police forces is increasing simultaneously to the withdrawal of subsidies in agriculture, health, education, family welfare and such other departmental work which are related to public welfare.

In the current phase of repression as a part of Combat Support (C.S), the state and

Special Forces are getting the help of helicopters. In the last assembly and parliamentary elections this practice turned out to be a regular feature. Arial surveys are taking place to send Indian Armed forces directly to those struggling areas. This was the agenda in the recently held army commanders' conference. Mobilization of forces is going on in all the 9 states since last January and February, which increased in 5 to 6 states in April. This summer the offensive war of the government is going on in full swing in all the areas with an added new feature that the para military camps will stay permanently in all the strategic areas.

Social fascism and communal (Hindu) fascism have both married the devil, targeting the revolutionary movement without any major difference. At this juncture the UPA government has initiated a new offensive and as a consequence things have assumed new dimensions. The communal fascist BJP-led Gujarat government has formally taken a decision on 4th May that it will send its state armed forces to assist the Chhattisgarh police to fight the Naxalites. The decision has two important aspects, which need to be counted as a serious one by all the progressive forces of this country. The infamous Gujarat police were known for their cruelty and open loyalty to the RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal. They will assist a BJP-led government by the cruelty increasing on the people of Chhattisgarh.

Forms of Multi Pronged Attack by the State

The home ministry convinced the planning commission to allot more funds to the Naxalite areas as a part of the ongoing reforms, which had been being implemented as a part of the 'carrot and stick' policy. The planning commission included 55 'most affected' districts of Naxalism under the Backward Districts Initiative (BDI) scheme through which they allocated Rs. 2,475 crore for 3 years. The ministry of rural development as a part of the PMGSY (Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojana) sanctioned Rs. 37.5 crore as additional allocation to construct roads, where by the state Special Forces can move more easily. The World Bank allotted Rs. 300 crore for each district in 1999 for the construction of roads in the 'Naxalites affected areas'. Construction of roads is going on at a frenzied pace. In some zones, since the last 8 years, the BRO (Border Roads Organizations), an Indian Army's construction department, is engaged in completing the roads in areas of intense revolutionary activities.

Various State governments and the Central government have sanctioned some other packages as well. Of course, a major portion of the money, which was pumped in the name of reforms, goes to fill the coffers of the ruling class parties, police, the civil administration and the local brokers. The Police will compel the villagers to accept the reform projects sanctioned by the state. In guerrilla zone areas health, schools and family welfare programmes were allowed by the Maoists. But in those areas where Base Areas are being formed all the government machinery with its programmes, projects have been facing a boycott from the masses. In Chhattisgarh, in the name of constructing primary schools in the midst of the thick forest-covered villages the government planned to build well fortified buildings, which can be served as a part of permanent war preparation. The existing special police and para-military camps are utilizing mainly school buildings. So when the camps are in school, classes for students can never be taken and the civil authorities too start saying "camps can not be vacated". So the Maoists decided to stop all the projects with the help and participation of the masses. All the guesthouses, forest rest houses, etc. are in the occupation of the police at the time of combing and patrolling. So naturally the people's militia have been targeting and demolishing them.

Since the last few years, in all the struggling zones, the main trend of the governments has been to fill the administrative vacuum through the police force. So they get more power, all civil activities are now mediated by the police.

It is quite clear that not only the Indian ruling classes but also the US imperialists are panic-stricken by the unity of the Maoists in India and the formation of a united Maoist party in the country. The debate whether the 'Naxal' problem is a law-and-order one is a hoax; their intentions are the same — to silence the anguished voice of the oppressed masses by whichever means is most effective.

And in such areas we find that even bourgeois leaders seldom have any right or voice.

As a part of their welfare activities police and paramilitary forces are organizing health camps, clubs, cultural performances, sports, and such regular campaigns in villages to safeguard the state and to hunt down the Naxalites. But the thing is that in many a State with growing revolutionary influence, Naxalites means not only the professional revolutionaries but even the village militia, the revolutionary mass organizations, etc. which have become targets of the state. To counter the revolutionary movement the police are depending on defectors by organizing them in rehabilitation camps and using them in all the operations. Loose recruits, vacillators in the movement were purchased by adopting many forms and utilizing them as coverts and informers. So the coverts and informers are becoming targets of the people, whom they try in 'Janadalats' (people's courts) and the verdict is implemented by the militia or the regular PLGA units.

Another major form is psychological warfare. In Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra the state governments, sometimes the police department also, are giving full page advertisements in the newspaper, focusing on the Naxalites as man eaters, criminals and anti-social elements. Tens of crores of rupees was spent on this propaganda war, through which they want to win the sympathy of a section of the middle class. White terror is prevailing in all the states where repression is the main form. Even then the movements are facing all this bravely and putting up resistance consistently, sometimes getting the upper hand on the state. In Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa such movements are able to retain the initiative and flexibility in its hands.

Media Hysteria & Revisionist Panic

Not only the ruler uses the pliable media to whip up hysterical campaigns against the Maoists, portraying them as 'terrorists'. They seek to create a public opinion in favour of their policies of brutality. In this they gain the assistance of revisionist forces from the M-L camp, like that of the Liberation and the newly formed 'CPI(ML)'. These parties that have betrayed the revolution shout even more loudly than the police and state that the Maoists are terrorists, anarchists, etc. These outfits never even raise the question of police brutality when Maoists are mowed down in false encounters or human rights activists killed by the black gangs. Even

humanitarian, civil rights activists and other such at least have the sensitivity to oppose such horrors, but not these revisionists; not to mention the CPI/CPM type ruling class parties.

The high-pitched anti-Maoist propaganda has particularly picked up after the unity of the MCCI and PW and the formation of the CPI (Maoist). While the rulers have taken the unity with extreme caution calling the Maoists as the number one danger to internal security, the Liberation type revisionists are writing article after article in the bourgeois media doing the effective work of the government, by throwing all sorts of slander against the Maoists. They appear to be working in tandem. Of course part of their fear is that with this unity they may lose their relevance and the genuine cadre may flock to the real Maoist camp. Their very existence calls for a policy that is similar to that of the state!! Is there any real difference from what the two CPI(ML) parties (old and new) say and that of the government?

Prepare the Oppressed People to Wage War Resolutely

Whatever decision may be taken by the Indian army commanders' and the CMs' conference the war will not stop. Both the classes, the oppressed and the oppressor are preparing themselves to gain the initiative in the battles. Losing initiative in the battle means it will lead to defeat. Due to the strategical defence position on the side of the Maoists they have less preparation and less combat capacity in comparison with that of the state at this juncture. But in many parts of the country they are enjoying a huge mass base even in the midst of the war. The oppressive state is losing ground, so, out of desperation, it is struggling bitterly.

In Andhra Pradesh when the so-called peace talk conditions were broken by the state from Jan. 6 onwards till the end of April as many as roughly 100 revolutionary fighters died in the encounters. Apart from the Maoists some other parliamentary MLs too are facing attacks. They are not giving any active resistance but the state will not allow even them too to function. This is the fundamental character of the state. One needs to understand that in any class war one cannot expect any major compromises from the enemy in these battles or in the entire war. So, Marxism teaches, and the history of earlier revolutionary experiences shows, that revolutionaries need to mobilise the masses more firmly in their war against the state. Those struggling forms need to be selected as per the concrete situation, a thousand and one changes in

If the Maoists are in the forefront of all the struggles of the masses, whether it is against economic exploitation, political oppression or social discrimination and attacks, it will gain the credibility as the only consistent fighter for the real democratization of the country.

the forms and methods are necessary to mobilise and consolidate the masses; but all these need to focus on advancing the people's war. Sometimes revolution can and do face a critical situation like what currently exists in Telangana, where, in its retaliation against the state forces, the revolutionaries have had to take a step back; but this too can be overcome by mobilizing the people to face the most adverse situations. The methods, plan, implementation of operations of the government need to be studied. Alternative moves need to be prepared at every step. Preservation of the revolutionary strength also depends on the active counter tactical offensive. Where there is resistance and protest, there revolutionaries shall get scope to express their opinion, to fight, to sustain, to further the struggle in many active forms and all this will help push the revolution further. Some wrong trends, practices may crop up, which need to be fought resolutely. This is the time to organize the masses in many a battle, political and military, to counter the political, military, tactics of the rulers.

A countrywide organized offensive of the enemy cannot be defeated only with propaganda or para defence tactics. The people's armed forces, Com. Mao shows, always need to be strengthened and regular harassment of the enemy, even small attacks, are a necessary pre-requisite for advance. Otherwise the embryonic form of people's political power cannot survive, sustain and expand continuously. All the sectional demands and partial demands of the masses need to be addressed in a revolutionary way. In all the areas in one or other form masses need to be contacted, organized and consolidated depending on the situation.

The enemy considers the ongoing people's war as its main agenda in India and Nepal. Unlike Nepal, in India the ongoing people's war agenda has not yet become the main agenda of the majority masses. In a few pockets only it is the

agenda of the Masses. Maoists need to develop the situation where people actively participate and peoples' war becomes their main agenda.

Initiate Political Campaign against the Coordinated Offence of the Enemy

The Indian government is moving in close coordination with American imperialism to suppress the ongoing people's war in Nepal and India. When king Gyanendra proclaimed an emergency to save 'democracy' Manmohan Singh announced a temporary stop in arms supply to the RNA. Yet in the Nepalganj operation against the Maoists, Indian troops were directly involved. When the Indian PM and the king met at the Bandung Conference India advised to lift the emergency which would damage the image of the king and Indian rulers who very much like to continue the arms supply. Meanwhile the so-called left B-team leadership issued a statement objecting to arms supply to Nepal during the continuation of emergency there. One should notice that the pack of so-called left leaders do have no hesitation in arming the Nepal army fighting against the Maoists. All the actors in the drama have performed well. One after another the scenes of the unfolding drama are coming to the forefront.... Finally India is now sending, arms. (troops will go like the operation organized in Bhutan against the ULFA) after the king made a show of withdrawing the emergency. Ironically, after the declaration, the king arrested the once PM of Nepal who was loyal to him and released the UML leaders. The UML of Nepal and the CPM-led B-team in India appear to be important instruments to safeguard the respective systems.

The Indian and Nepalese governments are waging a synchronized war on the Maoists of both the countries. So now, there is need for the Maoists to initiate a wider political propaganda campaign covering India, Nepal, and the other countries of South Asia. This is the time to coordinate the propaganda campaign in a superior way in comparison to what was done in the earlier period when Maoists proved too weak to build a coordinated and effectively organized political campaign to rouse the broader masses in support of the guerrilla zones, and the emerging base areas in India, and those that exist in Nepal. The 21-century is witnessing a fresh round of confidence in revolutionary Marxism, i.e. Maoism, which is, to some extent, focused in South Asia. A new dawn is breaking and the rising sun is beginning to illuminate the entire sub-continent.

YSR's Police State Bares its Fangs

{This is the first part of a two part article on the Congress rule in AP. The first part deals with the repressive policies of the new government which has turned out to be even more ruthless than that of its predecessor. The second part will deal with the other policies of the state government and its impact on the lives of the people.— Editor}

Nitin

The Congress government that had replaced nine years of misrule by the TDP headed by Chandrababu Naidu, has proved itself to be no less authoritarian, anti-people and a servant of the landlords-comprador bureaucratic bourgeois-imperialist combine. The record of the past one year of YSR rule in AP shows how its performance is no different from that of the predecessor in every sphere of activity. In this article we only focus on its repressive policies.

In the four months since the YSR government began fake encounters and stepped up its brutal offensive on the revolutionaries, the violence and counter-violence had escalated rapidly and this time on a far greater scale than during the same period last year when the TDP was in power.

The YSR govt decided to recruit 3000 police and another 3000 home guards immediately besides setting up two India Reserve Battalions with 2000 policemen.

In the four months of 2005, there were 44 encounters (most of which were fake) in which 59 Naxalites were killed. In the same period in 2004, 52 Naxalites were killed. Those killed by the Maoists were 105 in 2005 compared to 78 in the earlier year as a whole.

While on the one hand, the government had begun its brutal offensive on the Maoists, it shamelessly continued its claims of peace talks and its commitment to

maintain peace in the state. The CM and HM have been repeating ad nauseum the same chant of peace in the state which they assure would result if the Naxalites gave up their arms. The PCC president and one of the well-known buffoons of the Congress party, KKeshava Rao, undertook a *shanti yatra* even as his policemen were going on a killing spree. Like the devil himself citing the scriptures, all the Congress ministers and police officials began their propaganda for peace even as they created a bizarre blood-bath.

The encounters began on January 6th when a squad member belonging to Janashakti, was killed in Karimnagar. On the 8th comrade Laxmi, an executive committee member of CMS, was caught and killed when she went to meet her husband who was a member of the district committee of Nallamala forest division. Thus the fake encounters regime had begun again after a gap of about eight months. The CPI(Maoist) state secretary of AP, comrade Ramakrishna, and the secretaries of the NTSZC and AOBZC, comrades Jampanna and Sudhakar, issued a statement on January 15th saying that new tactics would have to be adopted by the Maoists to counter the military offensive of the state as the period of peace talks was over.

The Chief Minister and the Home Minister continued to cry from the rooftops every day that their government was ready for any number of rounds of talks with the Naxalites. But like their predecessor Chandrababu Naidu, they wanted the

Naxalites to give up arms!

The rationale behind holding the first round of talks without any condition and bringing forth such impossible, irrelevant and impracticable conditions all of a sudden, was questioned by all and sundry. The YSR government, obviously, had no answer but only harped on his pet theme that Naxalites were misusing the period of cease-fire by collecting huge amounts of funds, procuring arms and ammunition, laying landmines all over the state in a bid to attack the police, and were taking advantage of the situation by making large-scale recruitment, and so on. Whether anyone is convinced or not, the Chief minister and the Home Minister continued to indulge in this propaganda and ordered the police forces to go into all-out assault. And the criminal DGP, who was trying to save his anti-social wife against whom a serious case of child trafficking was pending, went berserk. He gave full license to his special police forces, the Greyhounds and the central forces to kill at will anywhere in the state.

In the 44 encounters that were said to have taken place during the period since January 6th 2005, only five or six would be real encounters. The losses in these real encounters were actually few. But the actual losses occurred due to prior information received by the Intelligence wing i.e., the SIB through informers and covert agents. The biggest and the most ghastly incident is the one that was staged in Manala in Nizamabad on 7th March in which 10

"Remove the DGP who is interfering in his wife's criminal case" demand women's organizations

Various women's organizations held a protest demonstration against the abuse of power by the DGP Swaranjit Sen for protecting his wife, Anita Sen, who was involved in child trafficking. A case was filed against her a few years back and the DGP is now trying to absolve her of the crime and was even resorting to vindictive measures against IAS officers like Shalini Mishra who had filed the charges against DGP's wife. The DGP asked the Medak police to file a case against Shalini. These vindictive measures were squarely condemned by every organization in the state.

The organizations—Chaithanya Mahila Samakhya, Progressive Organisation of Women, AIPRF, RWA, Praja Kala Mandali, APCLC, Civil Liberties Monitoring Committee, Telangana Ambedkar Sangham, and others—demanded that the DGP be suspended immediately as he was interfering with the proceedings of the case and that the case of Anita Sen be tried in a special court.

A hue and cry was raised by the Christian organizations that Anita Sen was being harassed because she was a Christian and that the protestors were biased against the Christian minorities. This bogey of attacks on Christian minority was plannedly brought to the fore by a Christian lobby that was hand in league with YSR and the notorious DGP. Instead of condemning the child trafficking done by the wife of the DGP, the so-called Christian organizations shamelessly supported the culprits just because they were Christians by religion. The women's organizations said that the Christian lobbies that had the backing of Sonia Gandhi and YSR have been trying to protect the accused.

The various women organisations and other democratic and revolutionary organisations also held a press conference on April 10th to expose the conspiracy of the Christian lobby that was backing YSR and Swaranjit Sen.

Manala Massacre—Reveals the real Hitlerite Face of YSR

The ghastly massacre of ten comrades belonging to the CPI(Maoist) has few parallels in the annals of Indian history. On the morning of 7th March 2005, when the comrades belonging to the Area Committee in Nizamabad gathered for a meeting, their food was poisoned by a renegade employed by the police, and when they fell unconscious after consuming the poisoned food, they were taken away by the police, tortured throughout the night and killed the next morning.

The covert agent, Ganganna, was formerly a squad commander but surrendered to the police during the TDP regime. At the end of last year, he contacted the party and expressed regrets for having surrendered to the police and begged that he be taken into the Party again by excusing his past. Unconscious of the deep conspiracy hatched by the top police brass in the district and the SIB, who had trained and sent the covert agent, comrade Ramesh believed his words and took him into the squads. And that became the Achille's heel. The scab waited for three months for the opportune moment and when most of the leadership of the district gathered for the meeting near Manala village in Kammarpalli mandal, he executed his plan of mixing poison supplied by the police officials in the food supplied at the camp.

The district Secretary of the CPI(Maoist), 40-year-old comrade Gangula Venkataswamy alias Ramesh, another DC member, comrade Kommubabu alias Babanna, and 8 others, including three LGS commanders, were also murdered in the incident. The Sricilla local guerrilla squad (LGS) commander Raghu, Metpally LGS commander Srinnu, and Jagatiyal LGS commander Shobha were among the martyrs. Two other women comrades—Sunita and Sneha—were also among the dead. The brutality of the police was unbelievable. The hands and legs of the leaders were swan off, cheeks of the members were chopped off, heads were smashed with stones, and so on. The DGP Swaranjit Sen, who has the least respect for the Indian Constitution, and even openly talks like a goonda, claimed that it was a real encounter and that the poor policemen had to fire back in return when they were fired upon by the Naxalites. Not a single policeman was injured while ten Naxalites died! He had indirectly hinted that this was in response to the Vempenta incident two days earlier where eight people involved in the lynching of the dalits in the village in 1998 were killed by the Maoists.

Comrade Venkataswamy alias Ramesh hails from Mogilipet village of Mallapur mandal in Karimnagar district. He had joined the revolutionary movement in 1987, became a squad member in 1988, served as commander of Metpally squad, and became DCM in 1997. He was elected as the district secretary of Nizamabad-Karimnagar west after the martyrdom of comrade Padmakka in July 2002 and comrade RK, in 2003. He had taken charge of the district party unit when it was passing through a very difficult situation. Encounters were a daily occurrence and the police had built a vast network of informers and had succeeded in sending some covert agents into the Party. He played an important role in reviving the squads in Bheemgal and Sirnapalli that had become defunct in the wake of severe enemy attacks. Surrenders were organized by the police by threatening and “counseling” the parents of the underground cadre.

In such a situation comrade Ramesh became an inspiration to the cadres in the district. He enthused the comrades and confronted the police daringly. He survived more than 25 encounters with the police and became a terror to the police. Even during the period of cease-fire there was an attempt to eliminate him but he survived the attempt in Kukkalagandi hamlet near Rudrangi in Karimnagar district in November last.

Comrade Babanna too was involved in several attacks on the enemy and became a target for the police.

It was this fear of directly confronting the Maoist leaders that had prompted the police officials to organize such cowardly methods to eliminate the leadership.

Even after this so-called encounter was thoroughly exposed before the people and the fact-finding committee comprising of various civil liberties organizations, had unambiguously stated how it was actually a massacre, the Chief Minister and the Home minister, continued to chant the DGP's rhyme that it was a real encounter. They gave up all democratic norms they did not even bother to enquire into what might have happened.

When there was a furore over the incident and the demand for conducting repostmortem, the Home Minister ordered for a repostmortem. However, the police gangsters headed by the big gangster, YSR, were so scared that they scuttled the repostmortem obviously. They hurriedly burnt the bodies of the comrades by the time the magistrate went to the mortuary.

The Nizamabad-Karimnagar police officials and the lawless SIB gang had always tried to eliminate the leadership in the district through the use of covert agents and informers. In 1999, comrade Malkapuram Bhaskar, a member of the NTSZC, was killed by a covert agent who was trained by the top police officials.

In 2001, they tried to kill comrade Azad, a member of the NTSZC through some covert agents. They were caught and the whole gang of covert agents was busted. A dozen covert agents were killed by the PGA of the then CPI(ML)[PW]. The cowardly incident has exposed the “bravery” of the Greyhounds, the APSP, the SIB and the central forces deployed for suppressing the ongoing people's war in the state and it is not unlikely that they would be awarded Shourya (bravery) awards for killing ten unconscious revolutionaries just as the killing of comrades Shyam, Mahesh and Murali after arresting them in Bangalore brought “bravery” awards for the top police brass.

Maoists were murdered in cold blood (See Box).

The biggest loss was the martyrdom of comrade Yadanna, who was the secretary of Warangal DC and a member of NTSZC. On 19th March comrade DVK Swamy alias Yadanna, along with three other comrades, were killed near Andugulameedi tanda hamlet in Venkatapuram mandal in Mulugu sub-division of Warangal. Comrade Swamy was the secretary of Khammam-Warangal DC and a member of the NTSZC at the time of his martyrdom. 34-year-old Yadanna hails from Raghunatha palli village in Warangal. He studied up to Intermediate and joined as a worker in the PEC factory in Jangaon in Warangal district. He joined the CPI(ML)[PW] in 1988 and went underground in 1991. He worked as the commander of Palakurthi, Cheryala and Nekkonda squads and as the secretary of Janagaon Party Area Committee. He led several attacks against the police and class enemies. He once served as the commander of the Platoon. He became a chief target for the police in the two districts and the SIB hatched several plans to eliminate him. He escaped the police dragnet several times. In July 2004, even when the cease-fire was in operation, the district police and the SIB tried to kill him by using a covert agent, Laxman in Oddugudem. The covert agent fired at comrade Yadanna in the middle of the night but the guards saved Yadanna and in the process two squad members gave up their lives. Yadanna was injured in this heinous attack planned by the SIB.

Then there were a series of incidents—the killing of Sudarshan of TJS and Nalla Vasanth, the vice President of the Warangal district unit of the ruling TRS, comrade Bhaskar in Nallamala, Ranjith and two others in Adilabad on 3rd February, Seenu a DCM of Karimnagar in March, Srisailam alias Santosh, a district committee member of Mahboobnagar, along with his wife comrade Pushpa. Both these comrades were transferred to DK and just before they left for DK they saw their parents on 31st of March. The police got word and caught them and murdered them on 1st April. Thousands of special police, Greyhounds and the central forces undertook a campaign to eliminate the leadership of the CPI(Maoist) in North Telangana, North Andhra, Nallamala and Rayalaseema. Other revolutionary parties such as Janashakti, Pratighatana, Praja Pratighatana and the CPI-USI group, were also the target of the police attacks.

The main concentration of the police has been on eliminating the leadership, particularly the district and state leadership of the three zones in AP. Even more concerted is the effort to eliminate the state



Com. Yadanna

committee secretary and a member of the CC, comrade Ramakrishna, who played a prominent role during the first round of talks and who has become quite popular among the people of AP. Hence the top political and police bigwigs decided to nab him as it would have a demoralizing effect on the Party cadres and the revolutionary sympathizers in the state. Accordingly, the notorious SIB drew up a plan to kill him. In the first week of February thousands of Special Forces entered Nallamala forest and tried to encircle the venue where Ramakrishna and other leaders were supposed to be camping.

As soon as the news of the police operations in Nallamala and the encirclement of Ramakrishna broke out, the pressure on the state and central government increased. The Congress party legislators ran to the Chief Minister and demanded that the police operations be stopped immediately lest they would be the targets if anything happened to the Maoist leader. The ministers in the Union Cabinet, Dasari Narayan rao and K Chandrasekhar Rao, met Sonia Gandhi and asked her to intervene in the state's affairs and control the police operations by YSR. The police forces were said to have been withdrawn but the fact was that the Maoist leaders had retreated from the place just before the police tried to encircle their camping place.

Ever since then the police have been trying desperately to attack the leadership and have begun combing the Nallamala forests in a big way particularly from mid-March. Time and again they claimed to have surrounded the Maoist leaders including Ramakrishna, which, however, eventually turned out to be a false claim. Several villages in Nallamala forest were forcibly vacated. All the routes going into and coming out of the forest have been covered by batches of policemen. Couriers moving in and out of the forest were arrested or

killed.

Attacks on the mass organizations:

The police had begun to reenact their age-old tactics of physical assaults on the mass organization activists, threatening them through phone calls and visits to their houses asking them to resign from their organizations, filing cases against them, involving them in the attacks against the police, taking them to the PS and torturing them, and so on. This type of harassment is seen very seriously whenever a violent incident takes place on the part of the Naxalites.

For instance, in Prakasham district, after the attack on the district SP, Mahesh Chandra Laddha, there was a virtual witch hunt for the activists of the mass organizations such as RWA, AIPRF and APCLC. At least a dozen of their leaders were arrested including the district president of RWA, Pinnika Srinivasa Rao, and a well-known poet, Rivera, Kula Nirmulana Sangham leaders Prabhakar and Prasad, and AIPRF leaders, Sajja Venkateswarlu. The leader of the Handloom Weavers' Union (Chenetha Karmika Samakhya), Mohan Rao, was also arrested. These were taken to unknown places, tortured severely and some were forced to hand in their resignation letters and only then they were let off. The experiences of North and South Telangana under the TDP regime were being repeated in the coastal districts today.

The family members and workers of these mass organizations organized dharnas, hunger strikes to protest against the arrests. Even children participated in these hunger strikes. The arrests are continuing in Prakasham, Guntur, Warangal, Mahboobnagar, Kurnool, Karimnagar, Medak, East and West Godavari districts, and other places.

While unleashing the massive inhuman onslaught on unarmed revolutionaries and their sympathizers when they were going out of the area for treatment or other works, killing them after arresting and torturing them cruelly, Chief Minister YSR has been crying for peace like a wolf in sheep's clothing. The more the terror unleashed by the police state that he is heading, the shriller his cries for peace, non-violence and Gandhi's ideals rent the air. Like their masters George Bush Jr and Tony Blair, who had become congenital liars, YSR and Jana Reddy, the Home Minister, have been merely surviving on lies. And the irony is that they know that they are uttering lies day in and day out; the people know that these hypocrites are repeating lies endlessly; and the two Ministers know that the people of the state know that they are

indulging in white lies. In spite of this they go on telling lies like Bush and Blair even if people have lost interest and show apathy and indifference to all that they are saying.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the verbal offensive by these double-tongued frauds has surpassed that of Chandrababu Naidu. Referring to the attacks by the Maoists in retaliation to the killings by the police, YSR said that his govt was adhering to moral values in the war against Naxals whereas the latter had given up all ethical values to the winds and were indulging in attacks on unarmed policemen such as in the attack in Chilakaluri Pet where even the mother of the SI was not spared. The fact was that when the Maoists attacked the PS the SI fled to his house and when the Maoists opened fire on him his mother stepped forward to shield her son. It was clear that it was not done intentionally but the malicious propaganda by the YSR gang goes on with the aim of justifying its brutal murders.

In fact, it was the YSR gang which was desperately trying to fabricate lies, forge letters in the name of the Maoist leaders, and spreading all types of malicious slander in order to justify its stand of backing away from the talks and stepping up the offensive against the Maoists. The drama of forged letters created a furore in the first half of April and exposed the bizarre operations of the SIB and the secret *Nazi* apparatus that actually runs the state of AP.

The March 31st letter released in the

name of Ramakrishna gave a call to the Party and PLGA cadre to kill the policemen and informers secretly and hide the dead bodies and to kill the class enemies with daggers and axes and not with firearms. The statement also justified the burning of the buses and destruction of all types of property. It was clear that the aim of the letter forged by the SIB was to create anarchy and thereby legitimize the illegitimate and lawless acts such as the one in Manala and to justify the brutal offensive the police had begun to launch. By accusing the Maoists of killing policemen and not declaring publicly or handing over their bodies, the YSR gang thought it can create revulsion among the people towards the Maoists by portraying them as terrorists, and to motivate the police to go for an all-out attack by whipping up hatred against the acts of the Maoists.

But all these plans came to naught when the genuine statement came from Ramakrishna ten days later and set things straight. The April 10th letter said that unlike the SIB and the Greyhounds and other anti-Naxal forces, it was never the policy of the Maoists to kill and hide the bodies of anyone. It would boldly declare to the world why it chose to kill a certain person, give the reasons for taking this extreme measure and also indicate where the corpses are lying. It also explained that, though a few incidents of bus burning might have taken place as an immediate reaction to a fake encounter or illegal detention, it was not

the policy of the Party to burn the buses as it only caused inconvenience to the passengers. It exposed the conspiracy of the YSR gang in releasing the forged letter by which it wants to actually carry on the policy of "missings" and "disappearances" and also rouse the hatred among the people and ordinary policemen.

On May 3rd, speaking at a passing out parade of the police officers at the AP Police Academy (APPA), YSR said that the police have to tackle the Naxals not only on the socio-economic front, but also on the political-ethical front. He was thus justifying the unethical war waged by his government and the police bosses through forged letters. What he also meant by this statement became clear when his government began an unethical fight against the Maoists by publishing the letter correspondence between the Talks representative Varavara Rao and the Central Committee of course, after considerable distortion of the letters (see box).

Resistance by the Maoists

In retaliatory actions, the PLGA of the CPI(Maoist) conducted several raids and attacks on police stations, political leaders and informers in the state.

Five police stations, including the one in bordering Karnataka, were attacked—Chilakaluri pet and Durgi stations in Guntur district, Tripurantakam PS in Prakasham, Achampet in Mahboob Nagar, and Venkatamma Halli PS in Pavagada in

The story of the leaked letters had dominated the newspapers of AP for most part of the second week. The leakage followed the arrest of two couriers—Vineel Reddy and Krishna, both engineering students—on 26th April when they were carrying letters from Hyderabad to be handed over to comrade Ramakrishna. The SIB had secret parleys with YSR, hatched plans to unleash a psychological war on the Maoist representatives by utilising the letters, and to carry out this plan they made some changes in the typed letters and released them along with a handwritten letter of Varavara Rao after keeping the letters for over ten days.

It was a well-hatched conspiracy of the police officials led by the SIB to divert the people's attention from the charges of forgery of letters that they themselves were facing after the furore over the so-called letters of Ramakrishna, the state secretary of AP, on March 31st and Balram, a spokesperson of APSC, in the last week of April.

The leakage of the letters of Varavara Rao to the CC and to the secretary of APSC was also meant to create a serious rift between the three Maoist representatives during the Talks—Varavara Rao, Gaddar and Kalyan Rao—as the letter sent by VV had contained some allegations against the other two. Utilising this, the YSR government tried to divert the people's attention from the brutal state terror, and the public outrage at the series of fake encounters, some extremely gruesome murders like the one in Manala.

The YSR gang also wants to step up its reign of terror on the mass organisations and the sympathizers of the Maoists by first painting them as people without any morals. It also wants to tarnish the image of the Maoists in the eyes of the people as the latter consider the CPI(Maoist) as the only real alternative before them, that it is the only Party that is fighting for the people selflessly and which has no other interests other than people's interests. It was necessary for the government to demolish this image of the Maoists and to show that they are ethically no better than the other ruling class parties or corrupt officials. The DGP stated after the publication of the letters that "There are no holy cows" implying that Maoists too had no morals and it was no good to rail at him for defending his criminal wife.

On 10th May, the three representatives held a press conference and exposed the conspiracy of the YSR-Swarmjit Sen Govt. in releasing the letters to the media ten days after they got them. The distortion made in the letters was exposed and they demanded the government to book the culprits in the SIB and police department who had forged the letters of Ramkrishna and Balram.

Karnataka bordering Anantapur district. Three policemen were killed when their patrolling van was attacked in Nalgonda district. Totally, 18 policemen were killed in these attacks, six of these in neighbouring Karnataka. The attacks on the Venkatamma halli PS killing six special police and seizing 10 SLRs, killing of two policemen in Achampet PS and the attack on Mahesh Chandra Laddha, the SP of Prakasham district, showed the dare-devilry of the PLGA forces.

On 11th March at about 11pm, 50 Maoists attacked the PS in Chilakaluri Pet situated on the Grand Trunk road from Chennai to Kolkata. It is a completely plain area and the government least expected an attack on the station in the plains. The CI Prasad and three other constables were killed along with three civilians who were inside the station at the time of the attack. The SI Dharmendra, who was on the hitlist of the Maoists, fled the station after seeing them. The Maoists chased him and fired at him when he went into his house. His mother tried to protect him and died due to the bullet injuries while her son could escape from the house.

Several political leaders were also attacked, the prominent being the president of the District Congress committee of Mahboobnagar and the vice president of the Rangareddy district Congress committee. Most of the leaders belonging to the ruling Party fled the villages as the police expressed their helplessness in providing protection. Almost all the functionaries of the ruling Congress from the Mandal level to the state level have stopped visiting the villages in the Maoist-dominated areas since January this year and are moving with security even in the towns.

On 4th February, an autorickshaw carrying the CI and SI of Gurazala in Guntur district, and four other policemen was blasted by a claymound mine. Four policemen, including the CI, were seriously injured though they survived.

On 27th April, the DGP boasted while on his tour to North Andhra that the Maoists had been brought under control and have become incapacitated due to the measures initiated by the police that saw serious losses to the Maoists. He assured that there will be no more attacks in future. And within hours after he spoke there was the daring attack on the SP of Prakasham, Laddha, in the heart of Ongole town itself. The special action team of the PLGA escaped safely after carrying out the daring raid. Although the SP survived as his bullet-proof vehicle was blasted in the front part, the incident shook the morale of the police and was a slap in the face of the arrogant DGP.

After the daring attack on Laddha in Ongole town, all the VIPs beefed up their personal security. In the first week of May 2005, a year after YSR had proudly declared that he was in no need of the high personal security like his predecessor Naidu, and asked the officials not to stop the traffic for his convoy to pass through, was himself provided with remote jammers for his convoy to prevent mine attacks. A few months ago a huge mansion with high security bunkers and other protection was constructed for the stay of the Chief Minister at a cost of Rs. 10 crores. So much is the fear among the police officials and the politicians that several PSs were withdrawn and attached to bigger stations. Almost every politician of the ruling party fled to the cities and are living under heavy protection. This was one of the reasons for the poor turn out at the meetings organized as part of the *praja patham* programmes. The politicians did not dare to venture out to the villages.

All the police stations in and around the areas of armed struggle are protected by heavy fortification and three sentries. But the more important change is the use of Naxal sympathizers as a human shield for the protection of the PS. Every night 20-30 Naxal sympathizers from the villages are made to stay in the PS to ward off probable attacks from the Naxals. In the latest attack by the Maoists on Durgi PS in Guntur on 10th May, they found that over 50 people were inside the PS. And this had deterred the Maoists from continuing their raid on the PS.

The attack on the PS in the plains had unnerved the government and the police department and had intensified the contradictions between the various types of police forces. Whereas the Greyhounds, the APSP, CRPF and the SIB had everything at their disposal such as most sophisticated arms, mortars, grenades, communication sets, vehicles and funds, the police in the stations in the plains had a shortage of weapons and did not have even rifles. Most of them had muskets. Most of the funds allotted to the police department are consumed by the anti-Naxal special forces and the attack on Chilakaluri Pet PS highlighted this glaring difference and discrimination between the various types of police forces in the state. The police forces in the plains demanded that they be given sophisticated arms or close the stations. This meant a total of 10,000 SLRs have to be provided to these stations in the state—an impossible task at the present moment when the state is passing through the worst economic crisis. Any attempt to strengthen the police in these areas will reduce the funds for the anti-Naxal special forces—a prospect that the

government cannot bear. Hence the contradictions will intensify with the further intensification of the war and the attacks by the Maoists on the stations outside their areas of armed struggle.

The policemen often traveled in buses along with the civilians but after repeated appeals and warnings by the Maoists to the people not to allow the policemen in the buses or not to travel in the buses along with the policemen, there is strong resistance from the villagers whenever policemen tried to board the buses. For instance, in Bellamkonda, when the policemen boarded the bus the passengers asked the bus to stop and forced the policemen out of the bus. Gradually the tactic of using passengers as a human shield is petering out due to the growing resistance of the people. In one incident in Guntur in end-January, Maoists blasted a landmine just before the arrival of a bus carrying 26 policemen and double that number of civilians in Bellamkonda. This was intended to serve as a warning for the people not to travel along with the policemen.

On March 15th, the police patrolling van which was standing near a petrol bunk on NH 9 near Dandumalkapur in Choutuppal mandal in Nalgonda district, was attacked by the PLGA forces and two policemen died on the spot. Two more were seriously injured. On 18th March a constable was killed in broad day-light in Balanagar mandal of Mahboobnagar district. The incident took place within a few hundred metres from the PS.

On April 20, rocket launchers were used to attack the OD Cheruvu PS in Anantapur district. Though no damage was done it shook the police force.

Even the much-trumpeted public meeting of Sonia Gandhi that was held in Hyderabad on the 20th of March became a tame affair in spite of spending huge sums of money and arrangement of lorries and buses to bring the people to the meeting. While the Congress bigwigs wanted to make it a big show and YSR himself gave the call to make it a huge success, the turn-out for the meeting was far less than the turn-out in Mogilicharla on 28 July 2004 organised by the then CPI(ML)[PW], or the one organized by the CPI(ML)[PW] and Janashakthi on 30 September 2004 or the Guthikonda Bilam meeting of 11 October to commemorate the martyrdom of comrade Charu Majumdar. The state committee of the CPI(Maoist) issued a call for boycott of the meeting of Sonia Gandhi which had an impact on the attempts of mass mobilization by the Congress. It showed the weak base of the Congress party and its sagging image in less than a year of rule. ■ ■

JMM's betrayal and the Rise of the MCC

(Based on an account from a talk with activists once in JMM and now in the MCC)

Subhash

Jharkhand has two important communities, the tribals (primarily Santhals) and the Mahtaos, which were the backbone of the movement for a separate state for Jharkhand. The Mahtaos belong to the O.B.C. (Kurmis) and look at the tribals as inferior. But, the Jharkhand Movement for a separate state brought these two sections of society close.

It was the beginning of the seventies. In the year 1970-71, when three powerful progressive movements developed in this area.

The first was the powerful trade union movement in the coal belt in Dhanbad led by A.K.Roy. This TU movement grew like a torrent against the coal mafia and the management. He fought for workers' rights and in the process violent clashes took place between the workers and the mafia, in which many were killed from both sides. It was A.K.Roy who was the chief ideologue of the incipient movement for a separate Jharkhand State.

The other two movements that developed were sweeping social reform movements within the Mahtao and Santhal (Tribals) communities. These were led by Vinod Bihari Mahtao (V.B.M.) and Sibhu Soren respectively.

V.B.M. was then the member of the C.P.M. and was close to A.K.Roy. He formed the social reform organization called Shivaji Samaj (they trace their routes to Maharashtra and even use the surname Patil). One of the main agendas of this organization was against dowry. The movement grew like wild fire and spread to vast parts of Jharkhand, particularly Dhanbad, Girdhi, Hazaribagh, Bokaro, Singhbhum and Purulia. In the process, like A.K.Roy, he left the C.P.M.

Sibhu Soren (from Hazaribagh) was in the ninth standard when his father was murdered by local landlords. Seeking revenge, he left his home and in the process came in touch with V.B.M. He too began a social reform movement within the Santhals and called it The Sanat (Good) Santhal Samaj. It was mostly directed against liquor consumption, backward superstitious ideas, for simple non-expensive marriages, against having more than one wife and against religious customs etc. This too spread like wildfire.

At this time, the M.C.C. had already

begun movements against Mahajans (moneylenders) and landlords in Hazaribagh district. The then District Collector of Dhanbad, one K.B.Saxena, sought to promote Sibhu Soren's Movement to counter the incipient Naxalite Movement in the area.

It is these three movements that finally merged to form The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha at a huge rally on February 4th 1973 in Dhanbad. These three leaders joined hands and it was A.K.Roy that acted as the ideologue for it. It was A.K.Roy who coined the slogan *Lalkhand*, and the JMM's two main slogans were: *Fasal Japt, Zamin Japt Andolan* (crop seizure, land seizure movement); and *Maro Mahajan, Maro Daroga* (beat Moneylenders, beat Police). This movement spread like a torrent and became a veritable upsurge.

The main edge of the JMM struggle was against the Mahajans. In those days the interest charged was over 100% per year by these moneylenders. In the initial phase of the movement there was not much intervention by the police. Much of the lands seized by the moneylender were restored to the peasants. The movement swept the districts of Dhanbad, Hazaribagh, Girdhi, and Jamtalla (of Santhal Parganas). The movement also targeted the forest officials. The sweep of the movement became so intense that they began targeting all exploiters. The movement went well beyond the confines set by the Saxenna types. The Jharkhand flag was red and green and A.K.Roy coined the slogan "*vote se nahin, chot se lenge Lalkhand*" (we will not take Lalkhand by vote but by hitting)

By 1972 itself the MCC had begun some land struggles in Hazaribagh and also against the forest department. Some landlords had been annihilated and their weapons seized. While this was in its nascent form the JMM movement grew militant. The masses would beat and kill the moneylenders, dacoits and even the police in clashes. In Dhanbad particularly many landlords were killed and in Dumka the Raja was killed. Saxenna tried to pull the movement back. Even Roy was not able to ride the militancy of the movement. Mahatao and Soren went underground. It was 1995 and the movement had peaked. The Emergency was declared in June.

Roy, Saxenna and one Thakur tried their best to make the two surrender and rein in

the movement. But when Mahatao was caught the movement intensified against the arrest and the whole town of Girdhi was taken over by the masses. There were road blockades, rail blockades everywhere. Soren was underground in the hills of Parasnath. The military was then called in and massive repression unleashed. In the areas that Soren moved it was virtually turned into a liberated zone, with a functioning parallel government. They began cooperative agriculture, night schools, people's courts at night, and from every house grains were collected to fund the movement. Soren's volunteers wore green dresses and roamed with him in batches of 300 to 400.

At that time A.K.Roy wrote a book saying that revolutionaries only dream about a Lalkhand, Soren has actually formed a socialist society. Soon after this Soren was arrested and Indira Gandhi herself went and met him in jail. And from the jail itself he withdrew the struggle, saying that it was wrong and to support Indira Gandhi's 20-point programme. He changed the slogan to: "*Chot se nahin, vote se lena Jharkhand*" (achieve Jharkhand not through Beatings but through the vote). He also began to say that the Mahajans are also Jharkhandis. Much of the land seized was taken back by the Mahajans. Saxena played a big role in this capitulation process. Indira Gandhi lavished money on his offices (called ashrams), gave him tractors and money, and 100 lanterns and books for the night schools. All his activists signed bonds and were released from jail.

When Sibhu Soren came out of jail the opportunist politics of all the leaders led to a split amongst them. JMM went into stagnation. A.K.Roy came out of the JMM, while the other two leaders also began to fall out. All the gains of the movement were usurped by the leaders and the sincere cadres suffered. All became deeply immersed in election politics. Soren's faction particularly became most corrupt and its organization lumpenised. But people turned against Soren and he lost the elections from the main heart of the movement in Tundi, Dhanbad (later became MP from Dumka area).

Meanwhile the MCC kept patient relations with the Jharkhandis, even with some of their top leaders. In fact one of

MCC's earliest activists was one comrade Raganath Mahtao (a panchayat mukhiya of the Topchachi area) and a close school friend of VBM. Another well-respected activist was comrade Ravan Murmu who wielded a lot of influence amongst the Santhal community. All these three were friends and about the same age. All three had taken ration shops. Around that time there was a famine in the area and VBM had made a lot of money through fraud. Later he became a lawyer and did the cases of the dispossessed who lost their land in the newly built Bokaro Steel Plant. The case went on for over 10 years. He won those cases and in the process made huge amounts of money and amassed a lot of property. But he also gained much popularity because of these cases. Both Ragnath Mahtao and Murmu wielded much influence with the JMM, including their leaders. When the latter betrayed the movement it was the MCC that took up the old slogans of the JMM, including the *Lalkhand* slogan. Throughout the process RM and Murmu secretly spread the influence of the MCC. Both belonged to one of the earliest recruits of the MCC in 1971/72. RM had a big influence in the Mahto community and Murmu amongst Santhals.

Through this entire period the MCC maintained contacts and had discussions with large numbers of JMM activists at all levels of leadership. In the late 1970s they took out a special issue on this question of Lalkhand in their organ *Lal Pataka* (No. 14). Their leader, com. Kanai Chatterjee, was there through this entire period. With the betrayal of the leaders, large numbers of activists from the JMM began to flock to the MCC.

With the weakening of the JMM, the Mahajans, once the main enemy, began to become the leaders of the movement. Soren set the practice of holding weekly general meetings in his sprawling head office (ashram). In these weekly events many questions were raised by cadre for which he had no answer. Finally, the JMM began to be used as an important weapon with which to crush the MCC.

By the early 1980s the struggle between the JMM and the MCC began to intensify. In 1983 the JMM hatched a conspiracy to kill many MCC activists. They badly beat up 18 and took away three leading comrades to be killed. But, because of the people's reaction they had to free the three. Even the JMM's other leader, VBM, did not support this action and publicly chided Soren and his followers. For the first time

the MCC took out a procession against the black deeds of the Soren's JMM and demanded a public debate.

Soren now gave the slogans like: *Lalkhandi logo ko suvar jese tir se mar dalo* (Kill Lalkhandis like pigs with arrows), *Throw them off the Parasnath Hill*, etc. They started a massive anti-MCC campaign. MCC intensified its anti-Soren campaign. In 1983 Sibu Soren formed his separate CC, and in 1984 VBM formed his separate CC. The latter was close to the MCC. All reactionaries began to heavily back Soren against the MCC.

In the 1983-86 period the Soren JMM intensified its attacks on the MCC and killed a number of their activists, like the famous cultural artist, Sagar Soren. (He was to become the representative to the AILRC before his murder). It was on Feb. 4th 1984 which was being celebrated by both factions as JMM foundation day. After performing at VBM's programme he went to the other programme. He also happened to be a relative of Sibu Soren (SS). They then took him to the Ashram and fed him well. He never expected that they would kill him. Till today his body has not even been traced.

From Sept. 1983 to Dec. 1984 the SS JMM launched massive attacks on all MCC supported villages. They destroyed crops and houses, seized money and valuables, harassed the women and demanded surrender to the JMM. Many even were forced to surrender in the face of their brutalities. Till then the MCC did not take any action against them, only conducted a political campaign. The VBM faction of the JMM also supported the MCC in this campaign against the SS storm troopers. By 1986 it had gone beyond limits and by then the SS JMM had killed over 10 of the MCC activists including one sub-zonal member (com. Ratilal Murmu) and two area committee members (Coms. Valli Mia and Nangal Murmu). At all their public meetings they would declare publicly that they would give thousands of rupees for killing MCC people.

Before starting a counter attack the MCC first re-built the land seizure movement against the landlords and moneylenders which had been given up by the JMM. Now, many of these happened to be activists or sympathizers of SS's JMM. Particularly notable were the big movements against the landlord Inder Singh and JMM member who was killed and his land seized. Then there were the actions against a very big and powerful Bumiḥar and also a moneylender (Tularam Marwari) — both were tried in people's

courts, beaten severely and their lands confiscated. These too were members of the JMM. After this, in retaliation, the JMM unleashed a further reign of terror. It was then that the two right hands of the SS mafia were killed one Jiten Besra and Samlal Murmu, both of the Dhanbad area. After this the Sibu Soren gangs got paralysed and the people enmass threw away the green flag and replaced it with the Lalkhandi red flag.

Since then Sibu Soren's weekly meetings have stopped. Since 1987 his main 'Ashram' is a veritable police camp. All his huge farms have closed down and his mafia forces have shifted their operations of money-making to the cities where they have to some extent replaced the old-time mafia in the coal and other trade union belt. With the masses turning to the MCC, SS was panic stricken not knowing who was really his member and not an MCC secret operative. This panic particularly grew after a planned attack on a Sibu Soren meeting in 1985. Over 15,000 attended this meeting. Most were MCC supporters. Present also was a squad with bombs and small weapons. As he began speaking bombs exploded from all sides. He panicked. Taking cover from women he changed his clothes and fled in a car with police protection. 5kms down the road another squad again fired on his car, not with an intention to kill, but to warn. His panic then knew no bounds. Since then no meeting is held by him except under massive police protection, which is only allowed near police stations. He has also given up his public anti-MCC slogans.

The other faction of the JMM always supported the Lalkhandis though VBM became an MP himself. But he died after winning the 12th Lok Sabha elections. The current Chief Minister, Arjun Munda also came from the JMM, but has a notorious criminal background. He won on a ticket given by Sibu Soren and then switched to the BJP. Sibu Soren's marriage with the Congress dates back to that jail meeting with Indira Gandhi. In the recent elections at last five seats were lost because of his attitude towards his deputy, Stephan Marandi. Just like the JMM mafia that operates at the local level SS sought the entire cake of CM for himself and his immediate family. This backfired miserably, and while the MCC grows from strength to strength, Sibu Soren can only sustain his existence as a tool of the ruling classes who seek to use tribals, etc as vote-banks of the ruling classes and to prevent them from turning to the revolutionaries. ■ ■

India : The Global Destination of Toxic Wastes

Ruhul Amin

Few years back the news of Pepsi Cola Company exporting plastic wastes from the United States to India sent a shock wave to many Indians including fans and admirers of Sharuh Khan's Cola advt. "Yehi Hai Right Choice.....Baby..... Aha!" Subsequently, it was revealed that only in 1993-'94 Pepsico has exported 23 shipments of used plastic bottles weighing 4,500 tons to Futura Industries, a Company in Tiruvellore, Tamil Nadu in the name of recycling. It is a well known fact that the PET bottles used by the Cola giants are not fit for recycling and more than 50% of the consignment was of such non-recyclable containers which amounts to more than 2000 tons of plastic waste, which was dumped in India in one year only.

The recipient company is doubly blessed. It gets huge amounts of money from the US counterpart vis a vis sale of unhygienic, used bottles in the Indian market.

The law of waste disposal is stringent in 'Gods Own Countries'— USA and Europe. It is a costly affair also. In the USA, in 1980 the cost of waste disposal was \$.15 per ton which grew to \$250 per ton in 1989 and further to \$600 per ton in 2001. The consumerist life style of the US and European citizens produce huge amounts of waste products which they cannot detoxify or handle. The gravity of the problem can be judged by the information that even NASA has undertaken a project to dump the waste products in space! But is it not much cheaper and wise to export the hazardous toxic materials to Asia and Africa in the name of business and economic growth? That is exactly what the imperialists are doing. The poor third world countries have become their trash bins.

In Los Angeles of USA, the Cola giants (Coke and Pepsi) made a joint venture company (a perfect example of corporate cooperation!) named Plastic Recycling Corporation of California (PRCC) which channels these used bottles to Asia and earns millions of dollars.

The brunt of the burden of pollution rising out of the utterly extravagant lifestyle of the western world is being transferred to the shoulders of our poor countrymen! The multinational and transnational companies, with the help of the collaborators from

within, are polluting, looting, molesting, raping and destroying our environment day in and day out. Our forests are virtually gone, the 7000 km coastline is fast becoming a toxic soup and its aquifers so poisoned with industrial and agricultural contaminants that much of the portable water could actually be treated as poison.

More than half of the flood irrigated soils of Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh have begun to go fallow, thanks to the uncontrolled application of water, pesticides, herbicides, weedicides and fertilizers in the name of green revolution. Rampant lifting of ground water, deforestation and soil erosion vis-a-vis silting of the main river beds are slowly turning the once rice bowl into a salty, barren stretch of land. Out of 329 million hectare cultivable land 175 million hectares (55%) is polluted. Each year 1.5 million hectares of forest land is being denuded. Acid rain has occurred in some parts of the country. The air in cities is unbreathable and drinking water is contaminated with faecal matter. As a result, summer and monsoons are punctuated by recurrent outbreaks of communicable water borne diseases leading to epidemics. Even human breast milk in parts of Punjab is so contaminated by D.D.T that if it were to be bottled, the health department would be compelled to confiscate the stock.

Apart from the criminal desecration of our natural resources which has seriously affected the very survival of nearly 4 crores of fisher folk, 6 crore of forest dependent people and over 15 crores of marginal farmers our nation has been the safe heaven of dumping plastic, PVC, metallic scrap (copper, iron and lead), used computer parts, ash and residue wastes and even cowdung and pig droppings (under the fashionable name of enviro dung).

The imperialists, like the United States, UK, Germany and Australia, have chosen to cold bloodedly poison India's coastal water, lakes, aquifers, rivers, soil and people.

Plastic and P.V.C

The plastic industry has been facing growing unpopularity in the US as consumers' awareness about the harmful sale of plastic packaging in the waste problem and in the large environmental problem has increased. So much so that

the industry has felt the need to launch a multi-million dollar campaign in the USA to convince people about the recyclability and harmlessness of plastic.

As already stated, the Pepsi Cola Company (which has shifted from clear, safe, reusable glass bottles to disposable plastic to make more money) is spreading the myth of recycling of PET (Polyethylene Tetrathalate) bottles. Millions of used plastic bottles are exported to Asia. Some of them are reprocessed, some burned and some simply dumped. Exporting of plastic, relocating the production process itself to an underdeveloped country and spreading myths about recycling are easy ways of getting rid of problematic waste cheaply while making consumers at home feel good about using plastic.

In its new strategy, the Pepsi Cola Company along with Indian Oil Chemical Limited (IOCL) has set up a Rs. 75 crore project to manufacture PET bottles in Chennai. The capacity of the factory is 20,000 tpa of polyester chips and 3500 tons of PET bottles. These bottles are exported to the USA and Europe and returned back to India. Since plastic damages the environment both during production and during disposal, India is doubly cursed by this. This is a classic example of a toxic industry being shifted to a less industrialized country to avoid strict environmental and labor laws at home and, of course, to avoid investing in clear production in the first place.

As already stated, Futura Industries in Tiruvellore, Tamil Nadu acts as the local crony of the Cola giant. This company has imported more than 25,000 tons of plastic which are grossly contaminated, filthy and beyond the scope of recycling. The work is done by casual workers with a meagre payment of Rs. 20/- per day and they are exposed to all types of toxic assaults on their health.

Plastic contains highly toxic chemicals like Benzene and Vinyl chloride known to cause cancer. There are also gaseous and liquid hydrocarbons which pollute air and water. Plastic resins are highly inflammable.

Chemicals emitted during its production are very toxic e.g. Ethylene Oxide, Benzene, Xylene etc. These cause immense damage to the nervous system, kidneys, blood, immune system and child birth.

Plastic is not bio degradable.

Incineration leads to release of **Dioxin**—the most toxic substance science has ever known.

50 micro gram (1000th the part of a gram) of dioxin can kill 50,000 mice.

On the other hand recycling of plastic bottles is highly uneconomical, dirty and labor intensive. It is associated with skin and respiratory problems due to contact with toxic fumes. Let us put a simple question. **If recycling is safe why it has been relocated in the poor countries?**

Chlorine is another highly toxic gas released by the plastic and PVC industry. It causes cancer of colon and urinary bladder. It is deposited in body fat and causes infertility, hormonal disturbances and nervous disorders.

Metal Scraps

These can come in a large variety of forms, from very low grade ashes and residues to relatively high grade pieces of waste metals. Metal processing wastes are generated by smelting of iron, steel, copper, zinc, lead and aluminum. Smelting wastes often contain highly toxic concentrations of arsenic, lead, cadmium and cobalt. Arsenic oxide, lead and Cadmium are

carcinogenic. They interfere in the nervous, reproductive and digestive systems and also hamper plant growth.

The metal scraps remain in the environment for a very long time. Lead is a very stable metal and is very toxic to plant, animal and human body, resulting in pernicious anemia, recurrent gastrointestinal upsets, peripheral neuropathy, dermatitis, renal failure and infertility. It is confirmed carcinogen. Even small amounts of lead lowers intelligence level in children, resulting in reading disorders, psychological disturbances and mental retardation.

Very often the toxic metal scraps, ash and residues have a life span that is much larger than the containers and dumpsites built to hold them. These wastes in such cases, corrodes or seeps through and emerges either through food chains from the soil to plant and vegetation taken in by man and animal (polluting meat & dairy products), through ground water to reservoirs and drinking water systems and even through air.

Destination: Asia

India, along with the Philippines,

Hongkong, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Malayasia are the global destination of waste products.

Chlorine, plastic and lead smelting industries have shut down in the western world due to public protest. These monstrous industries have shifted to Asia.

NASA along with 6 other giant companies (like Boeing, Gen Vinamix, Lockheed etc) has set up **Conduct and Commercial Space Transport Study (CSTS)** the aim of which is to dump wastes in the moon. Presently \$3 million is being spent for research on this.

Through the 1980s Africa was regarded as the easy dumping ground for all hazardous wastes— industrial, pharmaceutical, radioactive along with banned pesticides and toxic incinerator ash, against cash. But in 1991 (29th January) the **Bamako Convention** of all the African slates adopted on Africa wide ban on waste import.

The Nigerian coast was the dustbin of Italy. It is shown that in 1990, 98% of the 40 crore tons of toxic wastes came from 40 industrialized nations which are grouped together as the Organ for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)—

Waste Imports into India

	Year	Weight [in kg]
Australia		
Plastic waste	1990	3,000
Plastic waste	1992	16,000
Plastic waste	Jan-Sept. 1993	74,000
Metal waste (other than lead)	1992	33,621,000
Lead battery waste	1992	126,000
Lead battery waste	Jan-Sept. 1993	346,000
Canada		
Copper and copper alloy wastes	1992	960,371
Ash and residues	1992	1,226,455
Lead waste	1992	1,007,897
Ferrous waste, iron or steel,	1992	106,005,000
Non-ferrous waste	1992	90,330
Plastic and polystyrene waste	1992	42,275
<i>(these figures do not include waste exported from Canada via the US)</i>		
United Kingdom		
Ash and residue waste	Jan-July 1992	524,652
Copper waste	Jan-July 1992	2,443,578
Other metal waste	Jan-July 1992	719,172
Ash and residue waste	Jan-May 1993	250,056
Copper wastes	Jan-May 1993	2,575,413
Lead wastes	Jan-May 1993	501,944
Other metal waste	Jan-May 1993	1,120,608
United States		
Plastic waste	Jan-July 1992	3,974,700
Plastic waste	1993	7,841,800
Scrap metal	1990	1,794,011,000
Tin plate waste and tin waste	1993	26,802,360

Source: Greenpeace [1993]

actually a mantle for the imperialists. The main objective was to transport these hazardous materials to 'non OECD' poor countries. Of the OECD countries, the main waste exporters were US, UK, Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, Netherlands and Austria who got furious by the Bamako Ban, threatened the participating nations with 'dire' consequences, withdrawal of funds and tried to split the unity by hectic lobbying, bribing and brow-beating behind the screen.

In spite of the pressure of these imperialists by 1993, a total of 101 countries from Africa, Latin America Caribbean islands and Pacific islands signed the historical '*Basel Ban*' manifesto imposing a **blanket ban on Trans boundary Movement of Hazardous waste and their disposal**. Since then, the toxic wastes in the form of thousands of tons of plastic, lead scrap, & computer waste found their new destination in Asia, particularly south east Asia.

During 1992, 15% of the wastes from USA sailed to India. The amount jumped to 83% in 1993.

From January to July, 1993 the waste dumping increased by 97.3% in India, 125% in Pakistan and 37% in Bangladesh. This dumping appreciably fell in African countries.

The lead Astray

All of the worlds' motor vehicles contain lead batteries which the rich countries consume at an alarming rate. USA, UK and Australia are the main sources of such huge amount of used lead batteries to Asia, particularly India. The sulfuric acid mixes up with water bodies and lead ash contaminates the air. The used lead battery waste is mainly imported from Australia through Mumbai and Kolkata ports exposing our population to the risk of heavy metal poisoning. Our people are serving a death sentence for the heinous crime committed by the imperialists and their agents within the country.

Other types of Metallic wastes

- Ferrous waste (from iron & steel foundry)
- Copper and copper alloy wastes
- Tin plate wastes
- Zinc and aluminum wastes
- Arsenic oxide and cadmium wastes

Techno junks

As if this is not enough, India is the

favoured destination for used computer parts. More than 5 million computers are scrapped every year and the US is already exporting thousands of tons of such 'techno junk' to India, China and the Philippines. Workers usually strip the cables for copper wire and the remaining wastes are either burned or stockpiled. Burning of computer key boards produces brominated dioxins which has already been mentioned considering the rapid depreciation of computer hard wares and rapid turnover the computer wastes already pose a serious problem.

Enviro dung

The RSS-Sangh Parivar may be happy to know that we are also planning to import cow dung (along with pig droppings) from Netherlands, in the name of bio fertilizer. Actually this dung causes environmental disaster.

In the attractive package of nature friendly fertilizer, we are getting excreta from animals fed on fodder heavily impregnated with chemicals. Since Netherlands is below sea level, there is chance of contamination of sea water by seepage of animal dropping. Hence, Holland wants to export it even free of cost. A shipload of such chemically impregnated toxic organic residues were sent to countries of Latin America causing a great uproar and public outcry.

Since then India has been targeted even though it has a large livestock (almost 200 million) population. An Indian Company EID Parry, in collaboration with a Dutch company Seaswan B. V. planned to import 6 million tons dung every year from Holland to Kandla port. Due to huge farmers' protests the project has temporarily been suspended but it may resurface any day banking on the liberal import policy of the government which is actually a running dog of the imperialists.

Ship Dismantling Industry

The extremely hazardous ship wrecking industry has been transferred to India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Ship dismantling is banned in the USA and Europe as during destruction it emits huge amount of toxic products. Moreover enormous human cost is involved in the form of loss of lives of workers and health hazards to the people of the port area.

Almost 20 years back, a gigantic yard and dry dock was founded at Alang, on the Bhavnagar Coast, by the Gujrat Maritime Board (GMB) which dismantles ship at an

insignificant cost. Frequent accidents, injuries and explosions kill the contractual casual laborers off and on. Moreover highly toxic materials like Poly Chlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) and asbestos wastes contaminates air, water and soil to persist in the food chain for decades. The project has a workforce of 40,000 (who earn Rs. 40 to 50 only for a 12 hours a day) and the annual turnover is Rs. 2000 crores. GMB has hired 183 plots to lodge 200 discarded ships at a time and the whole project is stretched over a 10 km. patch on Bhavnagar Coast.

Almost 2000 workers suffer injuries every year. Skin diseases, pneumonia, asthma are rampant due to burning huge amount of solid wastes like broken pipes, asbestos, foam, rubber sheets, glass wools etc.

Alang is a hell on earth with 5 lack people. This ship breaking industry serves the purpose of the US Navy and commercial liners. It is also a golden goose for the Government in the form of sales tax, customs duty & central exercise. It is a fortune for compradors who earn from the shipping companies on the one hand and also gets cheap steel scraps (3.2 million tons in 2000-2001) on the other.

Conclusion

India is a signatory to the declaration banning the import of toxic wastes. Still then, most of the anti-pollution rhetoric on the part of the government is only to dupe the people.

The government is reluctant to take any tough stand, that may make its imperialist masters unhappy. Environment and peoples' health is not an issue for them. Even after 20 years of the Bhopal gas leak, which left almost 30,000 dead and 6 lacs diseased, no justice has been meted towards the victims. Only 1.07 lacs affected person have received Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 50,000/- only— an excuse for a compensation. Several times the government tried to withdraw cases against the culprits and has agreed in an out of court settlement for a meagre compensation for the offending company. In this backdrop, we cannot expect this comprador administration to stand up against the imperialist plot of allowing our people to live a healthy life. We must unite, must be vigilant and must force them to scrap such a heinous blue print of poisoning our land and people. ■ ■

The Myth of Foreign Exchange Reserves

Ujwal

Trying to encash on the stock market boom before the Harshad Mehta scam, the then Finance Minister Mr Manmohan Singh had said "The Stock market is responding to the economic reforms". But in no time he retracted after the scam was exposed and the stock market crashed and said "the Stock market is no indicator of the economy and I can't loose my sleep over stock market". This is the typical response of our policy makers. They take credit for things as long as it suits them and disown them the moment they are not moving in their favour.

A similar approach is being taken towards the huge foreign exchange reserves, amounting to US \$126 billion, with the government of India. The foreign exchange reserves with the RBI are steeply increasing from the time the present phase of new economic reforms were launched during the Narasimha Rao-Manomohan Singh time. In 1989 our foreign exchange reserves touched rock bottom. They had fallen to a level that could barely last fourteen days and the Government of India had to pledge its gold with the Bank of England to borrow foreign exchange to buy essential imports. After embarking on to this present phase of new economic policies under the auspices of the IMF and World Bank combine, the foreign exchange reserves have been rising continuously. The improvement in the foreign exchange reserves from a bare minimum level (equivalent to two weeks of imports), to the present US \$126 billion level (which can last for more than 26 months) is repeatedly claimed by successive governments as their achievement. They are trying to sell this as a success story of the liberalization-privatization-globalization policies. But can be this be said to be a success story? Can this be called an achievement? No it can't. If we go into the sources and composition of these foreign exchange reserves we will come to know that there is nothing to feel great about it and on the other hand we are paying heavy price for sitting on such reserves.

In the present day of global trade, exports and imports of goods and services are essential for every country. For carrying out trade between two countries each country must have a currency acceptable to both. The currency of one country will not be acceptable to the other country unless either there is a special trade agreement between the two countries like

the one India has with Nepal and the erstwhile Soviet Union or there is a common currency between them like the EURO in the European Union countries. Because of its superpower status and also because of its large share in the world trade the US dollar has emerged as the most acceptable currency of the world. Apart from this, SDRs (Special Drawing Rights a currency of the IMF) and gold are also acceptable as a medium of exchange in world trade. Every country must maintain a reserve in the form of these currencies for buying imports. These reserves are known as foreign exchange reserves and will become an asset in the central bank of the respective countries. So foreign exchange reserves means the amount held by the government or the central bank of a country (RBI in the case of India) in the form of US dollars, SDRs and gold. In India at the end of December 2004, the RBI was having foreign exchange reserves of US \$126 billion comprising of gold reserves of US \$4.352 billion and SDR of US \$5 billion and the rest is foreign currency assets.

Apart from the export and import of goods and services, capital will also move across countries as investment. This capital moving across countries will also become an important source of foreign exchange reserves.

In a nutshell, foreign exchange, required by any country, can be earned by it from its exports, from returns (either in the form of interest or profits) on its investment in other countries and it will be spent for buying the imports and for paying capital liabilities. Any country whose earnings are more than its spending can accumulate foreign exchange reserves and such accumulation will represent the sound financial health of that country and any country with surplus foreign exchange can feel proud of its reserves. Can this be the case with India? No it is not. Because India always had trade deficits, which means its imports are always more than its exports. The returns on India's investments abroad are negligible when compared to its debt payments. In such a case how India has managed to pile up such large foreign exchange reserves is interesting to know.

Our foreign exchange reserves are bulging not because of our earnings from exports but because of borrowings and inflow of foreign capital. Thanks to economic reforms pursued by successive governments to please the international lenders like the IMF, World Bank and other financial institutions there is a regular flow

of foreign capital into the country both as debt and as investment. This is what is making our foreign exchange reserves increase. The huge foreign exchange reserves we have is not an asset because it is not created from our earnings but a liability that has emerged out of the foreign capital inflow into the country. The ruling classes are cleverly suppressing this fact and trying to portray rosy picture of this liability. Our present Prime Minister during his previous tenure as finance minister already redefined the word "self-sufficiency" as "having enough foreign exchange reserves to pay for the imports" by conveniently ignoring the source of foreign exchange reserves. Going by this definition, India with so much foreign exchange reserves can easily be called a "self-sufficient economy".

Now let us try to understand the exact position of the foreign exchange reserves, its composition and the costs associated with it. As is mentioned above, India always had trade deficits (our export of goods and services are always less than import of goods and services). And this gap has been increasing day by day. Even in the current year our exports and imports for the period April to September are US\$ 34,451 million and US \$ 51,892 million respectively resulting in a deficit of US \$17,441 million.

The following table of Foreign Trade will further highlight this point.

India's Foreign Trade

(in US \$ million)

Year	Export	Import	Balance
1993-94	22,238	23,306	-1,068
1994-95	26,331	28,654	-2,324
1995-96	31,795	36,675	-4,880
1996-97	33,470	39,132	-5,663
1997-98	35,006	41,184	-6,478
1998-99	33,219	42,389	-9,170
1999-00	36,822	49,671	-12,848
2000-01	44,560	50,536	-5,976
2001-02	43,827	51,413	-7,587
2002-03	52,719	61,412	-8,693
2003-04	63,843	78,149	-14,307

(Source : RBI bulletin)

So trade is a drain and not a source for foreign exchange reserves. The other source left for foreign exchange reserves is capital inflows into the country. As long as international finance capital finds India as an attractive place to earn profits it will flow into the country and our foreign exchange reserves will continue to swell, and the moment they feel the other way, this inflow

FOREIGN INVESTMENT INFLOWS

(US \$ million)

	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
FDI	2,155	2,400	4,095	2,764	2,387
Portfolio investment(FIIs)	3,026	2,760	2,021	979	11,377
NRI deposits outstanding as at end of March	21,684	23,072	25,174	28,529	33,266

will be stopped and the so called strong external sector will burst like a bubble. The foreign capital inflow can be either in the form of investment in setting up of industries here, which is called FDI (Foreign Direct Investment), or in the form of pure speculation in the stock market which is called FIIs (Foreign Institutional Investment) or in the form of deposits by the NRIs (Non Resident Indians).

As for FDI, it is an equity for which we need not pay interest, but there will be an outflow in the form of profits, royalty, technical fee etc. The only advantage of this form of foreign capital over the other forms is that it is a long-term investment and comparatively more stable and can't be withdrawn overnight and hence not volatile. Yet most of it goes to swallow up indigenous capital and bring high technology displacing labour. Where as the foreign capital in the form FIIs is purely on speculation and they will not have any productive purpose. Moreover it is more volatile and moves very fast. They will always be on the look out for short term profits and move fast wherever they see an immediate profit. This can be withdrawn overnight leaving the country bankrupt as they have done in Malaysia and many other countries.

With the huge amounts of their investment they are capable of manipulating the stock market to their advantage. They push the market to an artificial level, lure the small investors, and then offload their stocks making big profits that allow the stock market to collapse leaving the small investors bankrupt. They can push the market to whatever level they want. This is what is happening in our stock market for so many years.

The flow of money from FIIs has been rapidly increasing in the recent past. The

net equity purchased by FIIs increased to \$3.1 billion, \$6.6 billion and \$8.5 billion respectively in 2002, 2003 and 2004 respectively. The cumulative stock of FIIs investment totals \$30.3 billion which is 8% of the total market capitalization at the Bombay Stock Exchange which is around \$383.6 billion. But even with this small portion they account for the 38.4% of the transactions at BSE. **Another significant fact is that the hold of total foreign capital on India's top 50 companies has increased from 18% in 2001 to 22% in 2002 and to 30% at the end of 2004.** Further if we consider only free floating shares, or shares normally available for trading, the average holding of FIIs will be about 36%. From this it is easy to realize that the sensex is driven neither by the economic fundamentals nor by the profitability of the companies nor by the dividends they give, but only by the outlook of these FIIs. The recent example is that even after such a devastating tragedy of tsunami, which struck on 26th December, the stock market kept on rising and reached record levels. After reaching a record high of 6679 on January 3, 2005 the stock market suddenly collapsed losing 316 points in a single day on January 5 draining around Rs 60,000 crores from the market. This is not because of any economic reasons, as there is no substantial change in the "fundamentals", but because FIIs offloaded their stocks to book profits.

In case of NRI deposits the government has to pay high interest on these deposits. The present level of interest on these deposits is between 2.5% to 4.5% depending on the currency and the tenure. With other concessions it is in fact much higher and well above international rates of interest.

Another source of foreign currency is borrowings by government, Corporates,

Banks and other financial institutions which is known as ECBs (External Commercial Borrowings) at commercial rates and the interest rates will range from 5% to 7%.

On the other hand, the RBI would be investing these reserves in the central banks of other countries where it would be earning interest between 1.5% to 2%. Presently the RBI has invested about US \$ 30 billions. It means the RBI is paying 4% interest on the deposits and earning only 2% interest. Hence there is a net out flow of 2% on these foreign exchange reserves. The more reserves we have the more cost we have to pay.

Another significant aspect of our foreign exchange reserves is its composition. The following table of foreign capital inflows into our country will give us the clear picture about the nature of the foreign exchange reserves.

From the above table we can see that in spite of their best efforts and many incentives the ruling classes are not able to attract FDI in significant portion. And what we are getting is either highly volatile portfolio investment from FIIs and high cost deposits from the NRIs. So India's piling up of foreign exchange reserves instead of giving comfort to its external sector is a burden on the country and economy. The large funds from FIIs is going to make India a vulnerable hot spot in the global market.

Who is going to feel great about such foreign exchange reserves which are not earned but a borrowed? Only the comprador ruling classes and servants of global capital can feel happy about this. Patriotic Indians can't allow such undesirable and unwanted burden on their heads. Like the foreign debt the foreign exchange reserves would be confiscated by any people's government when it seizes power.

Publications Available:

- * **A Basic Understanding of the CPC (Shanghai 1974), Radical Publications, (Rs.25, \$5)**
- * **Semi-feudal India and The Impact of Globalisation, Radical Publications, (Rs. 20, \$4)**
- * **Masses of Dandakaranya Rebel in the path of Liberation, Radical Publications, (Rs. 30, \$3)**

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CPM's 18th Congress Gives Open Support to Globalisation

The 18th Congress of the CPM for the first time came out more openly in support of Globalisation. The exigencies of being a ruling party in some states and now even at the Centre, the CPM could not carry on with its subterfuge for much longer. Tied to the globalization chariot wheel it sought to build up an atmosphere to get the cadres to accept its counter-revolutionary policies. Knowing that such outright endorsement of globalisation may create a back-lash from amongst its cadres the leadership first created the necessary atmosphere before the Congress; then it introduced its ideas during the Congress without any conclusion. The task of concluding the discussion on just this one specific issue was conveniently passed on to the new CC. In fact the document on "economic policy" was the only document not to be finalized at the Congress. What the Congress did now was nothing but giving the rubber-stamp on what it has been implementing for years in the States it rules.

Well before the Congress the atmosphere for the acceptance of globalization was set by the intellectual hacks of the party. With the CPM being part of the Central power many seek to bask in the glory of the new-found power. One of them, Prabhat Patnaik, publicly advocated the need for a "*practical rethinking on 'left' positions on private enterprise, capitalist production and inflow of FDI by accepting the realities of multi-party Indian parliamentary democracy*". Patnaik began to mobilise a campaign from within the party circles by presenting his new thesis in a CPM-backed publication at the directions of the leadership.

So, not surprisingly the document "*On Certain Policy Matters*" made it clear that "*the struggle for an alternative socialist order has to be based on the revolutionary transformation of the existing order*" and that this requires "*an engagement of the revolutionary forces with existing world realities with the sole objective of changing the co-relation of forces in favour of socialism*". After outlining the methods of the World Bank, IMF, WTO, etc, what the document visualizes is not an outright rejection of these maneuvers of neo-liberal economic interests, but a tactical engagement with them. "*Engagement*" means nothing but collaboration as has been going on in West Bengal and the other States it rules. Imperialism is such a force that it demands complete subservience to it. To talk of *engagement* with it amounts to its acceptance — i.e. dealing and

negotiating with it. It is nothing but demagoguery to say that *socialism* can come through such *engagement*.

Also this document goes so far as to welcome foreign capital, putting three stipulations — that it must augment existing production, upgrade the economy technologically and lead to employment generation. All three points are ridiculous. Existing production is of course augmented in luxury items as cars, etc. All foreign technology does use high-level technology even if it is the BPO sweatshops of Call Centres, etc. And any new investment will generate jobs, but how many small scale industries close down as a result is conveniently ignored.

So, in effect the Congress has given the green signal to all foreign capital to enter the country. That is exactly what has been going on under the present UPA dispensation, with a speed that would embarrass even the BJP. Not only that the CPM was silent on even the labour reforms introduced and now the rulers plan a drastic reform of all labour laws. No doubt it will make the customary noises and allow such changes. Increase in foreign capital in banks, telecom, aviation, mines, construction and real estate, opening up of retail, pension fund management, courier services, etc are all the gifts of the UPA government with the CPM as faithful follower. Not only that, the CPM went so far as to vote for the New Patent Act.

Even on the question of the foreign-funded NGO the Congress has taken a back-door method of acceptance saying that "*the party units must follow the guidelines and take appropriate decisions accordingly*". Ironic indeed as the first extensive booklet against the foreign-funded NGOs was written in 1984 by none other than the new secretary general elected at this Congress, Prakash Karat. CPM turns full circle.

Jyoti Basu was not just senile when he said "*China is running its government based on Marxism-Leninism. They are bringing in socialism very fast*". Not even a child believes that China is socialist today; it is so crudely adopting all capitalist policies. No doubt Jyoti Basu has a similar China dream for West Bengal and may hope to emulate the fast pace of capitalist growth in China.

The reality is that the party in the States where they wield power are thoroughly bourgeoisified. This has taken place with total consent of the central leadership notwithstanding the media hard-line/soft-

line images created. So, for example the Buddadhev regime of West Bengal has been pushing for foreign capital, for economic reconstruction packages and many capitalist tools. They have been resorting to closing down or selling off many 'unproductive' units and also indulging in contract employment in some sectors. If the capitalism in West Bengal is subtle that of Kerala is blatant and crude.

Kerala Inc. & CPM Mafia

The recent CPM State Conference re-elected the same leadership by rejecting the opposition from the hardliners led by V.S.-Achuthanandan and the CITU. It was clear that the winners had the backing of the top leadership as these elements have been ridiculed as the "*materialist boys*" and have been charged with pursuing a "*revisionist course*", compromises with foreign capital and "*corrupt and bourgeois life-styles*".

In Kerala the CPM now functions like a business empire with the Pinarayi faction having ousted the old guard. It is estimated that the CPM's extended parivar is worth Rs.4,000 crores and growing. Party leaders squabble over foreign junkets and plum posts. The empire stretches from Amusement Parks, to super-specialty hospitals, mega-supermarkets, IT parks, to TV Channels and foreign-funded rubber cooperatives. No party in Kerala owns as much property and land as the CPM.

What has shocked many is the party's forays into the promotion of imperialist culture through the setting up of amusement parks and the floating of the new outfit The Malabar Pleasures Private Limited. Funds for these outfits have been even mobilized from liquor barons and bootleggers. One Chennai based liquor baron bought Rs.25 lakhs of shares in the TV channel and so has the bootlegger Manichan, who is now in jail responsible for the death of 36 for the hooch supplied by him. It is the general secretary of the party, Pinarayi Vijayan, who pushed this Kairali TV Channel five years ago!!

The 'party of the working class' will soon add another feather in its cap of business achievements — a water theme park. The amusement park at Parassinikadavu in Kannur district, being developed by the Chennai-based Real Fun Consultants, will cost Rs 25 crore. The business venture is promoted by Malabar Pleasures Private Limited, a company fully owned by Malabar Tourism Development Co-Operative Ltd, the society formed by the CPM when EK Nayanar was the chief minister.

It was E.Narayanan who first set up the rubber cooperative in 1997 which now has annual sales of over Rs.450 crores. In a plan of massive expansion the coop. is seeking Rs.1,300 crores, mostly from foreign financial institutions. The CPM has also floated the Tellicherry Medical Foundation which has set up a network of hospitals and is now planning a super-specialty hospital. They are also planning a mega-super-market, along the lines of what exists in the West. So successful has been its business empire that it now plans to set up IT Parks in all districts of Kerala.

No doubt with the full possibilities of it coming to power in the coming year it predicts vast expansion of its business empire. Already the bulk of the enormous factional fights in the Kerala CPM is over the spoils of office; now to this is being added the battles for control of these vast funds. For much of the rhetoric at the party Congress CPM bosses are more involved into big business and the high flying alliances are part of the games of the ruling classes.

Said old time CPM member, Berlin Kunjanandan Nair "*Pinarayi Vijayan, the present party secretary, is a son of a poor toddy (local liquor) tapper. After reaching the top post, he became an adopted son of the corporate mafias. The party secretary post has been reduced to that of a CEO of a private company*".

All this has gone on with the full backing of the central leadership. What then can be expected from such a party? All those intellectuals that consider the CPM as progressive need to think again, unless of course they hope to get in return some gains in their professions and climb the ladder in the academic world.

CPM, democracy and Naxalites

The Congress document while opposing POTA is totally silent on the new legislation brought in its place. It merely condemns the BJP but is silent on all the repressive measures taken by the present regime. It does not call for a repeal of any of the existing fascist laws and legislations.

It adopts its standard rhetoric against the Maoists while sending feelers to the revisionist Liberation. The Political Resolution says "*The naxalites have a disruptive stance which targets all the bourgeois parties and the Left parties without any distinction while covering up their ideological bankruptcy with revolutionary phraseology. Their activities include suppression of democratic rights of people and extortion and appropriation of funds meant for rural development. Their anarchic-terrorist*

violence provides the State the excuse to act against all democratic movements and for the police to step up their repression of the people.....As for those naxalite groups which have taken to mass political work and abandoned the adventurist armed struggle tactics, such as the CPI(ML) Liberation, the Party is prepared to work with them in united platforms in the fight against communalism, imperialism and on working class issues."

This is self-explanatory. Its approach towards the Maoists is similar to that of any other ruling class party. Its approach to Liberation is also like that of any other ruling class party. Though it is the Maoists that face the most brutal onslaught of the State the CPM goes so far as to say that *their activities include suppression of democratic rights of people*. Yes, it is true they suppress the *democratic rights* of the landlords, moneylenders, mafia, as also the bureaucrats, police, forest officials etc. and have stopped their loot. Probably it is this that the CPM sees as the suppression of the *democratic rights of people*. The CPM cannot tolerate if any representative of the ruling classes are in any way touched by the masses. It shows their ruling class character.

On the nationality movements of the North East, like any other party of the ruling classes they raise the bogey of the ISI. They also harp on the threat to so-called national unity. Their document says: *The situation is complicated by the fact that the neighbouring country of Bangladesh has become a sanctuary for most of these extremist groups and imperialism is very much active in aiding them. Of particular concern is the role of the ISI of Pakistan which is well-known for its links to the US intelligence agencies. The ULFA leadership is based in Bangladesh and most of the ULFA cadres who fled Bhutan after the army operation are sheltering there. The two major extremist groups of Tripura, the NLFT and the ATF and the separatist groups in Manipur have their camps across the border. The heightened intervention of foreign agencies poses a serious threat to national unity.*

All the standard rhetoric of the ruling class parties is evident here — anti Bangladesh and Pakistan, the hysteria of foreign agencies and the call for national unity. Even it vehemently opposes the separate Telangana issue calling for "*a strong Centre and strong States to strengthen national unity*".

Smoke-screen of Third Alternative

This time the CPM sought to draw a difference between a Third Alternative and a Third Front. They said that "*a Third*

Alternative would be formed on the basis of a common approach towards economic development. The Alternative is not for elections alone. We want a more stable, viable alternative". The new General Secretary, Karat, further clarified "*so when we talk about third alternative now, what we are saying is that these forces must have a common policy framework, must show willingness to take up joint activities such as campaigns and movements to achieve this*". Given the nature of the existing parties this type of Alternative is only possible by completely discarding even the mask of socialism. On the question of economic policy all the parliamentary parties are aggressive pushers of LPG, whether it is the regional parties or all-India ones. In other words their intention to form the so-called third front indicates their intention to even throw off their mask as being anti economic reforms.

It is either that or else it is subterfuge to continue the alliance with the Congress indefinitely by putting forward an alternative that is not possible. Recently Jyoti Basu invited TDP chief, Naidu, for a dialogue. But, Naidu was one of the most-aggressive pushers of imperialist dictated policies in the country, not to mention his ruthless butchery of Naxalites and human rights activists. What do they have in common? One leaves that to the reader to consider.

CPM, a Ruling Class Party

The CPM, like the CPI are not just revisionist parties but parties of the ruling classes. Revisionist is a political categorization to show that the party is not a proletarian party. But all revisionists need not be of the ruling class, some may be petty-bourgeois formations, some could be peasant formations, etc. So, the term 'revisionism' does not denote its class character. The CPM and the CPI are clearly ruling class parties representing the interests of the comprador big bourgeoisie and feudal elite. They too act as tool of imperialism within the country. That is why the CPM's hostility towards the Naxalites is not in any way less than that of any other ruling class party. They too have been resorting to mass arrests, torture and killings in West Bengal. They have even started the regime of fake encounters. No doubt Jyoti Basu could have a lot to learn from Naidu. As they say, birds of a feather flock together.

All those duped by the 'progressive' credentials of the CPM should see its practice in the states it runs and not get carried away with its rhetoric. No doubt the latest Congress resolutions could help clarify the situation as to the real character of the CPM. ■ ■

Banks being handed over to International Financial Mafia

Arvind

Already large sections of the financial sector have been taken over by TNCs and foreign capital through policy changes of earlier governments. With the opening out of the insurance sector to 26% foreign capital (and a proposal to increase this to 49%) and the government's decision to reduce its equity in public sector banks to 33% together with allowing 20% foreign equity into PSU banks, much of India's money wealth has already been handed over to the foreign powers. Now the new Congress government, with the Finance Minister in the lead, has been taking steps to completely hand over the entire banking sector, both public and private, to the foreign sharks waiting in the wings.

Some time in January the Finance Minister called the Chairmen of the public sector banks and told them that they must immediately act to merge their banks and reduce the number of public sector banks to just four. Also they were told to write off their NPAs (Non-performing Assets; or money loaned to big business and not paid back) fast. The entire purpose was to make the banks viable for foreign take-over.

The FM, acting as an agent of the powerful foreign bankers, has been pushing through changes in the banking system at break-neck speed, that facilitates this take-over and allows these banks to maximize their profits (which has anyhow been skyrocketing over these years). With profits maximized, bad loans written off and banks merged to become fat prize catches — the FM has been continuously diluting the restrictions on foreign capital into banking in order that they may be easily taken over by foreign banks.

For profit maximization the first task lay in reducing staff. Already about 12% of the staff (over one lakh) were removed a few years back through a VRS (voluntary retirement scheme). Since then, as people retire, their posts are not filled with new

recruitment. More staff is sought to be reduced. Then, in order to help banks make fat profits the necessity to give concessional loans to the primary sector have been removed. Now the RBI has approved proposals of the government to amend the Banking Regulation Act to permit the banks to trade in commodities and derivatives (a form of speculative investments which give huge profits). The government has diluted or dismantled all regulatory measures as with priority lending, as well as restrictions on banking activities in India. With this banking credit has shifted from commodity production to consumer consumption affecting investment and growth of the economy. Personal credit for items like housing, cars, etc have jumped from Rs.50,000 crores in 2000 to Rs.1,60,000 crores in 2003.

Besides these, institutional changes have been introduced, which include: rapid increase in new private sector banks, bank mergers, and the creation of universal banks that are in the nature of bank supermarkets, offering the customer a range of products like debt products, investment

services, debt and commodity markets and insurance of different kinds. The earlier nationalized banks that, to some extent, were made to focus on priority lending and investments that help build the economy, have been completely overhauled over the past few years, making them lucrative profit-making machines, ripe for foreign take-over. Besides, in May 2005 the RBI has ordered that 100 loss-making urban cooperative banks to either surrender their banking license, or merge with a healthier bank or face liquidation.

And to reduce the huge Rs. 15 lakh crore NPAs with the PSU banks a massive Rs.11,074 crores was written off in 2003-04 alone. Such amounts are being written off each year. While the small fry is being forced to pay back the loans the big fish is being let off. Some of the big fish include Malvika Steel, Maharashtra Rs.1,227 crores; Modern Syntex, Maharashtra, Rs.867 crores; Lloyds Steel India, Maharashtra Rs.595 crores; Prakash Industries, Hissar Rs.725 crores, Usha Ispat, UP Rs.555 crores.

With the grounds already laid for the maximization of profits the present FM is pushing through changes which allow for the speedy take-over of Indian banks by the foreign TNCs.

Just after the budget the government changed the ruling that foreign investments in private banks could not exceed 49%. It was increased to 74%. Any company is made up of its share capital, control of which amounts to control of the company. Generally with 26% in the hands of one person/company that can be sufficient to dictate terms to the company. With a 26% holding the person has the right to have their people on the board of directors, who run the company. As it is 49% amounts to control and 74% will entail total domination.

Not only this, a few weeks earlier, the FM declared that the government was open to the process of creeping acquisitions in which foreign banks acquire

*From this issue we begin a new regular column entitled **The Great Indian Sell-out; Traitorous policies of the Indian rulers** This will attempt to focus the reader's attention as to how the governments/parties at the Centre and the States and their various financial and other wings, are actively selling out the interests, wealth and assets of the country to the imperialists, particularly the US. From now on every issue of the magazine will carry some latest example of such sell-outs taking place under the banner of 'globalisation', 'economic reforms', 'liberalisation', 'privatisation', etc. These policies are not merely a question of infringing on the integrity and sovereignty of the country (or what nominal amount remains of it) but of its disastrous impact on the lives of the people. While the rulers seek to arouse national sentiment (country in danger, by invoking hysteria against Pakistan, Muslims, so-called terrorists, etc. etc), it is in fact they who are these rulers and their hangers-on who are the biggest traitors that are actively selling out every aspect of the country's wealth to the sharks of international finance capital. As these policies come under the cover of financial and economic policies, it is not understood by the common man. In these columns we shall attempt to interpret the steps being taken, so that all can understand its disastrous implications on the people's lives and for the sovereignty of the country. We appeal to all readers to send your comments and write in other examples of how the country is being sold by the agents of the imperialists that don and 'Indian' garb.*

10% stake every year in Indian private banks. Even in the most pro-west countries of East Asia foreign bank's holdings in local banks is very restricted. But the lackeys of India have far surpassed even these agents of the East. In South Korea foreign capital in banks is limited to 39%, in Malaysia to 19% and in Philippines and Thailand it is a mere 15%. From this one can understand the extent of servility of the Indian rulers to the imperialists.

So, not surprisingly the leading 'Indian' private banks are already in reality foreign banks. Foreign capital in ICICI Bank is already 74% even before the regulation came in. The table will give a picture of the extent of foreign control over India's private banks.

This shows the extent to which the foreign penetration has taken place. And this is continuing at a very fast pace. De facto already the first top six mentioned above are in foreign control. It is a matter of time before the others are also taken over. For example in March 2005, in a block deal Deutsche Securities (Mauritius), an FII of the Deutsch Bank Group of Germany, acquired another 4.1% equity stake in HDFC Bank for Rs.714 crores. This alone takes foreign investment in HDFC Bank to 52%.

In the public sector banks the take-over is taking place too, though at a slower pace. The government has recently planned here to increase the limit on foreign investments in these banks from the existing 20% to 24% as many have neared the 20% limit. Till now the foreign holdings in these banks are: State Bank of India 19.4%; Bank of Baroda 19.6%; Punjab National Bank 18.7%; Corporation Bank 16%; and Oriental bank

Capital Share as of Dec. 31/04

Bank Name	Promoter (Indian owner) in %	Total Foreign capital (FII, FDI, NRI, OCBs) in %
ICICI Bank	-	71
Centurian Bank	0.4	66
Ing Vyasa Bank	24	72
HDFC Bank	24	48
Indusind Bank	31	45
UTI Bank	53	35
Kotak Mahindra Bank	60	21
Bank of Rajasthan	44	7
Bank Of Punjab	31	6
Federal Bank	-	5
Dhanalaxmi bank	37	1

of Commerce 16.5%. Besides, the government has been systematically disinvesting its share in these banks, paving the way for foreign take-over. For example, just in the last year the government has reduced its share in IFCI from 60% to 42% this year. 12% has been taken over by the big business houses.

And now in May this year the government brought through a major 'reform' that allows foreign control over private banks. As of now the voting rights of foreign investors, irrespective of their equity (share capital) ownership in private banks, were limited to 10%. This prevented them from exercising veto rights even if their equity went beyond 26%. Now they will have a say in the policies of the bank as per the percentage of capital they own. In other words the restriction that prevented decision-making is now removed and with this one change the foreigners now take open control of the first six banks mentioned in the above list.

Beside this the foreign banks have been given full freedom to extend their own network over the country. They have been expanding at a frantic pace. For example the British Bank, HSBC, has bought a 15% stake in UTI Bank (for Rs.306 crores) to make it the biggest foreign bank in India.

At the pace at which the changes are being introduced it will not be long before the entire money resources of the country will be in foreign hands. This will have serious implications on the sovereignty of the country and its future. All the profits generated will be sucked out and not used for re-investment here thereby retarding growth and development. Concessional interest rates will be totally stopped and this will have serious implications on small and middle farmers and also small business. Other facilities like concessional scholarship loans etc will also disappear. The banks will become rapacious robber-barons destroying all in its path to earn that extra dollar. ■ ■

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Two woman guerillas from Dandakaranya Special Zone Speak

We give here accounts of two women guerillas from Dandakaranya about their life and struggle at home, how they came into the Party and what they feel now. They spoke on the occasion of 8th March 2005. Both the accounts are good evidence of what the Revolution and the Revolutionary Party gave women and how they received the same. The accounts visualize the ongoing struggle against patriarchy as a part of the class struggle in the armed struggle. A picture of the new women taking birth in the areas of revolutionary power – Editor.

First woman guerilla: “If I did not join the party I would have died”

When I was in home, I knew nothing about the world. I had a mother but lost my father.

The village heads wielded authority in the village. In our home too, they discriminated against us, women. My younger uncle was the village sarpanch. We were to obey them. We did not have any right on our lives.

When I was young, girls of 6 to 7 years were married off in our community. It was the custom. It was a normal thing. They tried to marry me too. The sarpanch who took authority over my life, forced me to go to the house they wanted me to. He drank liquor with the family to which I was to be married. This was the custom before marriage. The parents of the boy drink liquor with the parents of the girl. This confirms the bondage. Once this happens, the girl belongs to the boy's family. Prior to the marriage the girl is not informed. At times the mother too is not informed.

They took me away from the shandy and left me in the in-laws house. For about one and a half years, I was not given clothes, food and other such essential things. I was ill treated a lot. I was not at all interested to stay in my in-law's house. In a desperate moment, I ran home.

There again the story was repeated. The only difference was that, this was my village. Those who ill-treated me were my blood relatives. The sarpanch beat me with a stick. They tried to take me to my in-law's house by binding me. None of the villagers could help me. It was the law of the village. It was the rule of the day.

Tired with beating me, all of them retired. I took the chance. I escaped from their clutches.

As I was on my way, I met the squad. The squad members tried to shake hands with me. But I could not even raise my hand. The members then realized that my body was full of wounds. They asked me why.

I told them that I escaped from a forced marriage. The squad brought me back to the village. They held a meeting of the whole village. They questioned the sarpanch of his atrocities towards me. They held a panchayat on my issue. In the meeting they explained the roots of the custom, the roots of patriarchy and other such things. The

culprits were proved to be guilty.

After all this, I still felt depressed. I could not totally come out of my uncle's clutches. There was none to help me have my own life. I wanted to live like a human being. But how can I? Deep and confused thoughts made me feel disturbed.

One day I climbed a tree and sat there for a long time. I thought of death. I wanted to avoid my uncle. I wanted to have a life without him. Without his power on me. Without any sort of authority that would demean me as a human being. But I could not understand how. After a lot of thought I questioned myself as to why I should die.

I thought I had the Party and it would save me. By that time the mass organizations were formed in our village and the villages nearby. I went to another village and started living there.

In this village, the squad used to meet me. Whenever I met them, they told me many things about the world. They told me the social roots for discrimination of women. They taught me politics and how life would be in a revolutionary society.

I started feeling interested in the squad. I thought about my life. I compared it with that of the women in the squad. I understood that they were not only fighting for equality to all in society but that they themselves were living an egalitarian life. After some time, I decided to join the squad.

One fine day I told the commander that I am interested to join the Party. Initially they were doubtful whether I would come or not. They knew I would have to face a lot if I was to join them. I just started working in the women's organization. As they observed me, they decided to take me in. Then they let me know their decision.

My society would not accept it if I told them I would join the squad. So one opportune day, I came out as if I was going to a meeting and met the squad. Immediately after I joined them, the squad along with me, went to my village. They held a meeting. I was asked to speak. I poured out all my feelings. I told my village what I faced, what I thought and what I finally decided. I told them I am going to have a new life. A life of my own. A life for people like me.

It is nearly seven years since I joined the Party. I am now happy to see that the people are changing. The party educated the people. Now forcible marriages are not seen much. They are giving importance to

the opinion of the youth.

On this occasion of 8th March, I could tell you one thing straight. **If I did not join the party, I would have died.**

Second woman guerilla: “The party showed us the way ... like a mother”

This is a jungle. But there are a lot of stories to tell from the lives of the inhabitants. Before the party came, there was the authority of the village heads. Their authority was also exerted on the land. Their authority was on the people's lives. It was on the women.

The women of our community did not have any power over their lives. They did not have any say on the decisions of their marriages. Customs allowed the boys to take away the girls according to their wish and will. When the girls went to shandies (market), the boys would snatch them and even rape them. Some women were even killed.

When I was in my home I faced a lot of difficulties. I faced all what a woman in this community faces. I experienced the domination of men, the frustration of rigid customs and other such things.

The Party showed the women a way like a mother. They educated our society. They educated the people. They said that women need not face the domination of the mother, fathers, brothers and the community as a whole. They said it was part of the exploitation of society as a whole.

The Party made me a member of the baalala sanghatan, the children's organization. When I became older, I joined the women's organization. When I was given responsibilities in the organization, people in the village commented. They said it was not proper for a woman to be so active. They said I should not try to be so assertive.

Some went to the extent of threatening the members of my family. They told them I would later join the squad and so to marry me off. All this talk began to influence my parents. One day my younger sister informed me that my parents drank liquor to get me married. On hearing this, the members of the village women's organization and I stayed back. We discussed the matter. Waiting for the squad to come and solve the issue would be too late.

So we took up the issue. We talked with my parents. I questioned them why I should be married at such a small age. We tried to explain them why it is not good to marry girls at such a young age. We tried to tell them how and why we should change our lives in these aspects.

This kind of a change was a process. This process turned us into human beings. It revolutionised our society and thinking. It democratized human relations in our society. It was a progressive social transformation.

This transformation applied to me too. I learnt how to think. I learnt how to fight with the old to obtain the new. I became more and more active in the women's organization. After a few years I decided to join the squad. The Party comrades also suggested this to me.

It was inevitable. It was inevitable

because of the increased consciousness. The education the Party gave me, the revolutionary practice I was in and the total revolutionary atmosphere in which I was, made me leap into the Party. I now understand that this is a leap into the class struggle. It is a leap in my personality. It is a leap of women as an oppressed section. I am one among many. This is a part of the emancipation of society as a whole.

I now know how to use a weapon. I know how to go and get things done. I know how to lead a team. I know how to teach. I know how to deal with the problems of my comrades. It was the Party that taught me all this. Without the Party I would not have learned a little bit of all this.

The Party is like a mother. It showed a path for us. It is everything for us. Now women are becoming leaders. The Party is making efforts to advance women even

more. There must be more such efforts. We too must become part of these efforts. I wish the Party would start squads in areas where there is no squad until now. Only this would bring the women out of age old shackles.

I understand that there is more exploitation on the women in the outside world, in the cities. I understand that women are oppressed, whether they be in the cities or in the villages, whether they are educated or uneducated. So all women must come together. They must come together in class struggle. They must come together in revolution.

(These are the factual stories of two women guerillas, members of area committee rank in the CPI(Maoist) Party, in a platoon in Dandakaranya. The occasion was the 8th March 2005). ■ ■

Continued from Page 27

about four area committees. So far there are PR (professional revolutionary) teams in four districts and at the central level.

The central team now has about 20 and if more are needed they are complimented from the local units. The tasks of the Central team are: training, spreading to new areas, developing units in the town, and developing new songs and preparing cassettes. But in the writing of songs many Party leaders are also involved. The performances of the JA specifically enthuse the women/girls and children, many of whom come directly into the JA as PRs.

Comrade Sunder has been the one of the main initiators of the JA who first came in touch with revolutionary culture during the last phases of the Jharkhand movement in 1975/76, when he was a student. But he became more active after seeing the "war dance" performance during the 1988 Kolkata AILRC Conference. Now a leading person in the central unit is one com Jiten who actively joined the movement since 1996 and has been in touch since 1992. Jiten himself comes from a poor peasant background and has studied only upto third standard. Now the leading team mostly comprises young girls under 20. They have done performances from the smallest of villages to the big cities of Dhanbad, Patna, and even Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Kolkata. Though they speak primarily in Santhali, they have been picking up Hindi. Their song and dance performance inspires thousands. Now songs/dances are done appealing to the youth, to the masses to join the PLGA, on the formation of the new Party, CPI(Maoist), on Maoism (in popular form), on imperialist attacks, besides the songs on police repression and on the numerous social

issues. Plays are performed against liquor consumption, police repression, superstition, etc; but as yet there is no written play. Though most have been written in Santhali, also there are songs, etc in Kotha and Mundari and Hindi. A number of cassettes too have been prepared of the songs.

Though the training they say has been limited there have been some workshops in the decade-long existence. From neighbouring Bihar, com. Ram Bali Yadav has spent months helping to train. In 1993 they held their first workshop which was attended by 40 comrades. But here only some acting was taught. Another was held in 1999 when again only theatre, miming, etc were taught. Through 2000 to 2003 only workshops were held to prepare for big programmes and also for the preparation of cassettes. It was only in December 2004 that a major workshop was held, and that too amidst a massive repression campaign that was underway in view of the elections.

For this camp about 100 participated in the training comprising the central team, district PR teams, some from local teams and even activists from the villages. The camp had two sections focusing on how to face the coming situation. The training camp was divided into two sections: a political class and a class on practical training. In the first part the subject "what is culture" was explained — that is, the difference between feudal and imperialist culture on the one hand, and new democratic and socialist culture on the other hand. Under the present circumstances it was also discussed as to what needed to be done. Also expressions were taught linked to a class approach. In the second part of the class all were asked to put on performances. Then also there was a full day session on

training in writing. Everyone was asked to present an article or a song, or a poem. The one week workshop culminated with a mass public performance attended by over 5,000 on the ongoing elections. This was also attended by a number of journalists. The farce of elections was portrayed through songs and dance, street plays, etc. The performance ended at four in the morning.

The cultural teams (whether central or local) when they go to the villages food is provided by the villagers. They also participate in work. They divide themselves to different houses and talk to the people. When there are no programmes there is a tight schedule of study, discussion, rehearsal. PR teams do such training every day in some form or the other. In this way the cultural troupes are very popular with the masses and are seen as part of them; not some performers who are superior, as that exists in bourgeois society. They thereby acquire the love and affection of the people. Though so young and with a rural and illiterate background they perform with confidence even in the big cities of the country.

And so in Jharkhand a new cultural movement is taking birth. This new culture is interwoven with the struggles of the people and their awakening to a new life. It is cemented with the new values taking root in the minds of the masses that are built on selflessness and cooperative spirit for ones fellow comrades. It is also interlinked with modern thinking away from the past traditional practices of superstition, religion, caste prejudices, patriarchy, etc. The JA is part of the new person taking birth in these regions. The ruling class who brand all this as 'terrorism' seek to hide this reality. ■ ■

Revolutionary & Democratic Culture In Jharkhand

(Based on interviews and meetings with comrades in the region)

Subhash

As part of the ongoing revolutionary movement in Jharkhand there has arisen a new culture, a new set of values and the birth of a new communist man. The fight against landlords, police, officials, mafia etc. has been coupled with the struggle against superstition, patriarchy, casteism and all other such archaic modes of thinking. So, witchcraft and other related forms of healing are being replaced by modern and herbal medicine. Forced marriages and arranged marriages together with dowry etc. are being replaced by simple functions through mutual choice. Wife beating and drunkenness are being opposed and the people reformed. Caste prejudices and particularly untouchability are being gradually minimized.

And so also in the sphere of song and dance, a new culture is beginning to flower. Popular old folk tunes are now being sung to a new political and social content. The rich Santhali culture of song and dance is being fired by revolutionary fervour.

It was way back in 1985, when the A.I.L.R.C. (All India League Of Revolutionary Culture) held its conference in Sindri. At that time, revolutionary cultural organizations from all over the country, attended. Particularly the J.N.M. (from AP) did performances in the entire area. The revolutionary cultural activities in Bihar

lead by the renowned artist Ramballi Yadav, also had its impact, in this region. It was in 1990 that The Jharkhand Aven (Jharkhand Awakening) was born at a conference that elected a committee of five. Troupes began to sing on various themes, like against landlord/mahajan exploitation, police repression, on political issues like Iraq and Afghanistan, and social issues like against ghosts, witchcraft, wife beating, dowry, etc.; and street plays were also performed on similar themes.

Santhali culture has a number of festivals, in which, there is much song and dance — like The Karma Puja in August, The Saura Puja in January, The Sarhul Puja in March etc. Songs and dance at these festivals are now being replayed to revolutionary themes. And the popular songs/dance of these festivals have been used as the tunes for a lot of the revolutionary songs written. Another example is the song and dance performed at The Community Hunting performed in June on the Parasnath Hills. In this, the dance which depicts the killing of animals



has been transformed into the ambush of the police. Another famous dance is The War Dance, also transformed from a traditional tribal dance, holding bows and arrows. The Jharkhand Aven's birth and growth has been intricately interwoven, with The Nari Mukti Sangathan (Women's Organization). The N.M.S. teams, would move from village to village spreading the message against patriarchy and attracting a vast numbers of women, young girls and children. Besides speeches and personal interactions; they primarily used the song and dance form to convey their message. These songs struck a deep chord in their hearts and attracted vast numbers to the revolutionary movement. From 1995 wide use was also made of street theatre.

The Jharkhand Aven began with a perspective of building committees and village troupes throughout the region. By 1996, there were teams in the four districts of Girdhi, Dhanbad, Bokaro and Hazaribagh. There was a central team of ten comrades. In June 1997 district conferences were held in Bokaro and Hazaribagh. By 2000 village-level teams were formed in vast areas of the region.

The village-level units do cultural activities against the backward feudal and also the imperialist culture; they go to neighboring villages and form new cultural teams; they present programmes in all the activities of the mass organizations at the village level; if there is a big programme outside they mobilize people for the war dance (which involves hundreds). Above the village units there are area committees with 3-4 comrades. In a district there are

An example of how the JA arouses the masses was indicated by one of the programmes held during the boycott of elections campaign early this year. The programme planned for Jan. 4th was held on top of the Jumra hill in Bokaro district, under the Gumiya police station. From the morning itself hundreds had gathered to erect the stage and the huge Shamiana. By evening the masses began to gather, coming from as far off as villages in Girdhi and Hazaribagh districts. Women with little children in their arms showed particular enthusiasm.

The programme was a cultural festival to educate the masses on the need to boycott the elections. Roughly at ten at night the programme began after snacks had been served to all the 5,000 people present.

First a welcome song was sung with the artists wearing red bands and ghungrus on their feet. Then a skit was performed on the question of election boycott exposing the fraudulent political leaders of all parties who were standing in the elections. After this another play was enacted against the evils of superstition. The programme was interspersed with revolutionary songs in various languages of the region. Speeches were also made against the electoral system. People listened with rapt attention through the night in the biting cold.

The police made maximum efforts to foil the programme. Finally 150 police from the Bokaro police station sat silently at the bottom of the hill. When the public began to return at dawn in the morning the police took away 70 people but released them by noon. They then went and arrested one villager, Ramji Mauji, from his village. Overall the programme helped deepen the consciousness amongst the masses about the fake democracy in the country.

Continued on Page 26

Commemorate Martyr's Week from July 28th

It is reported that the newly formed CPI(Maoist) has decided to commemorate martyrs week every year from July 28th. The coming July 28 will be the first Martyrs' Day after the historic September 21 merger of the two Maoist revolutionary parties leading the people's war in the country. Hence the Martyrs' Day this year will have specific significance and will also have great impact on the Party, PLGA, revolutionary Mass Organizations and the revolutionary masses throughout the country.

In the past six months, since 21 September 2004, when the CPI (Maoist) was formed, there have been a total of 60 martyrs from all over the country. 44 of these comrades were killed in the three zones of AP, 12 are from B-J, and two each from Karnataka and DK.

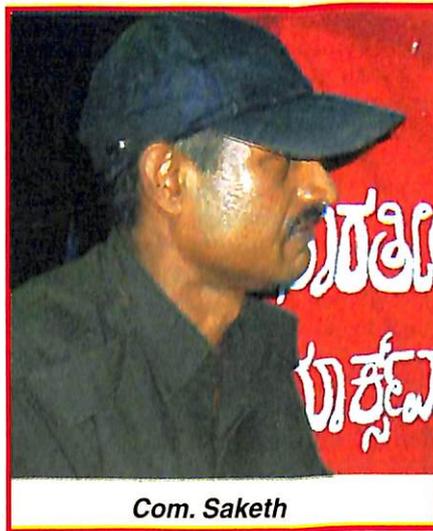
In Karnataka the Party suffered the biggest loss with the martyrdom of comrade Saket Rajan, the secretary of the State Committee and an elected alternate Central Committee Member of the erstwhile CPI(ML)[PW]. He was the main spirit behind the initiation of armed struggle in the Western Ghats and is one of the best-known intellectuals in Karnataka and his book 'Making History' has become a popular history textbook in Karnataka that gives a Marxist interpretation of the state's history. Comrade Saket's martyrdom is a great loss not only to Karnataka but to the entire Party and the Indian revolution.

The reactionary ruling classes had become so shaky after the formation of the CPI(Maoist) that they unleashed their fascist onslaught and began a killing spree in AP from the first week of January by breaking off from the peace talks. The killings of ten comrades in Manala in Nizamabad district in North Telangana on March 11th has hardly any parallel in the history of the revolutionary movement. They were poisoned through a covert agent, caught after they became unconscious, tortured throughout the night and killed. In this incident the Party lost the DCS (district committee secretary) comrade Ramesh, another DCM comrade Babanna and three LGS commanders along with five squad members of the PLGA.

The Party also lost comrade Yadanna, Warangal DCS and a member of the Special Zonal Committee of North Telangana and three others in another incident. Another three DC members—comrade Ranjit of Adilabad, Seenu of Karimnagar and Santosh of Mahboobnagar were caught and killed. Laxmi, an organizer and Executive Committee member of APCMS (women's organization) was caught and killed. Ten of the total martyrs have been women comrades. All these comrades faced

brutal tortures with great courage without divulging anything to the enemy and hence were killed in fake encounters. In Jharkhand, the newly formed Party lost Platoon commander Chandan of the PLGA while fighting bravely against the CRPF in Tamar PS limits in Ranchi district in December '04. And in March '05, another platoon commander along with three platoon members became martyrs in Barachetty PS limits in Gaya district of Bihar.

During this week the revolutionary masses of the country hail the sacrifices of these and over several thousand great Martyrs of the Maoist movement in India since the historic Naxalbari armed agrarian



Com. Saketh

uprising, starting with the first martyrdom of comrade Babulal Biswakarmakar. They specifically recollect their exemplary valour, steadfastness, determination and the firm ideological-political commitment and loyalty to the Party, revolution and the oppressed masses. During this Martyrs' Week they would particularly focus on the two great founder leaders and teachers of the new Party—comrade Charu Majumdar and comrade Kanai Chatterjee.

Comrade CM, who led the Naxalbari armed uprising and founded the CPI(ML), was arrested by the police in Kolkata on 16 July 1972, and was tortured and killed on 28 July. Comrade KC, the founder-leader of erstwhile MCCI, died due to severe ill health on 18 July, 1982. Both these great Maoist leaders played a historic role in breaking away from age-old revisionism, establishing the correct revolutionary line in the Indian Communist Movement and thus initiating the armed agrarian revolution that had been growing from strength to strength over the years.

On the occasion of this first Martyrs' Day of the newly-unified Party,

cannot but recollect all those great martyrs of the Indian revolution like Com Amulya Sen, Com Saroj Dutta, Com Sushital Roy Chowdhuy, Com Chandra Shekhar Das, Com Vempatapu Sathyam, Com Adibhatla Kailasam, Com Panchadi Krishnamurthy, Com Bhuja Singh, Com Subbarao Panigrahi, Com Sudipto Banerjee, Com Appu and others.

The history of the Maoist movement in India is filled with numerous examples of brave martyrs with exceptional communist qualities and revolutionary traditions such as: total dedication to the cause of revolution, selflessness and adherence to communist values and ethics, indomitable will and steadfastness, exemplary courage, proletarian discipline, simplicity in habits and lifestyle, deep affection, love, respect and an attitude of serving the basic classes and the oppressed masses, determination to bear hardship, hard work, and 'swimming against the tide'.

Comrades Shyam, Mahesh, Murali, Puli Anjanna Bhagya, Koumudi, Suguna of Andhra Pradesh and many comrades at various levels in the Party, PLGA, and the activists of the revolutionary mass organizations, had undergone the most brutal tortures, but had not uttered a single Party secret. There are several comrades from among the non-Party masses who had steadfastly guarded Party's secrets, protected the cadres and leadership of the Party, PLGA and the revolutionary mass organizations, in spite of continuous tortures and harassment, destruction of property and finally death itself.

Comrades Bhaktida, Dara, Bachan, Sunil, Gopal, Dadichi Roy, Sagar, Jaishia, Ramchandar, Zacharia and several other comrades will remain outstanding examples in the history of the ongoing people's war in Bihar-Jharkhand.

Besides the martyrs of India, on this somber occasion, the people cannot but recollect those who fell in the course of advancing the people's wars in Nepal, Philippines, Peru, Turkey and other countries, and for the cause of the world revolution. All these martyrs in India and other countries represent the best communist traditions and will remain shining stars forever. No doubt their examples will be propagated far and wide so that the new generations of communists may learn from their example, emulate their heroic spirit of self-sacrifice and thereby march forward on the revolutionary path to free the country and its people from acute suffering and humiliation into a bright new world free from exploitation, oppression and all forms of discrimination. n n