

# PEOPLE'S MARCH

*Voice of the Indian Revolution*



## UPA's

## 1-Year

## Rule

## Repeat of NDA



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# One Year of UPA

## Continuation of the Policies of the NDA

There is really no difference in the policies of the two fronts. What the one does crudely the other does with the mask of a human face. Dictated by the imperialist policies of economic reforms, both the fronts resort to increasing dictatorial and fascist rule to stem the tide of people's discontent against their policies. One does it with the aid of Hindutva, the other does it with soft Hindutva and a humanistic mask. The NDA crudely used the iron fist, the Congress keeps the iron fist in velvet gloves. And to add to the fraud the CPM with its regular futile noises helps to add further legitimacy to the policies which differ little from that of the BJP. No wonder the 'Left' was showered with praise from the imperialist's biggest stooges in the country ..... none other than the very Finance Minister, Chidambaram and also the Prime Minister.

There has been much talk of a rural oriented policy of the new UPA government. This is an outright fraud and even where it had promised free electricity it has been quick to reverse these policies. Privatisation in all spheres has hit the rural economy the worst. In fact we see a growth in money lending, further reduction in government spending in rural areas, and acute marginalization of the rural poor. It has aggravated the rural crisis thereby resulting in an even greater number of peasants resorting to suicide. Besides the rural elite the agony of 70% of our country's population that live in the rural areas has aggravated in this past one year.

Besides this, the one year of UPA rule has focused its prime attention on further speedening the speed of sell-out of the country and building up the instruments of repression. These two have been the twin aspects of a orientation set by the imperialist on whose instructions the comprador rulers act.

### Major Sell-out of the Country

First, the policies have allowed for windfall profits to big business, like the massive subsidies, tax concessions, tax holidays, import/export concession and most important the change in labour policies to allow for increased exploitation of labour. So, some of the top 550 companies (private) in the last quarter of the year 2004-05 (the three months to March 31 05) increased their net profits by a massive 45.5%. This alone has given windfall profits of Rs.11,196 crores to these companies. Over the entire year companies like Reliance increased their

net profit by 41% and Wipro by 56%. The top IT companies have increased their net profits by 40% over the previous year; the Cement giant, ACC has increased it by 81%. Many other's profits have jumped even more. Big business is quite naturally thrilled with the new government. The PSU, SAIL's profits net profits leaped a massive 171% in just the year 2005. Even the banks have seen their profits sky-rocket, with the State Bank of India's net profits reaching the \$ 1 billion (Rs.5,463 crores) mark in the year 2005.

In the year 2004 there was a 16% rise in the write-off of so-called non-performing assets (i.e. amounts owed by big business to the banks). Some companies have thereby got gifts as much as Rs.100 crores. So far a total of Rs.45,000 crores has been written off, much of it during NDA rule.

The next big achievement of the UPA rule has been to open up the country to the imperialists at an even faster pace than that of the earlier NDA rule. It is a competition between the two as to who can prove greater servility to the imperialists to be bestowed their favours. And this opening up is notwithstanding the presence of the CPI/CPM's prop to the UPA. This is of course not surprising as the very initiator of economic reforms in the country is the present Prime Minister. The PM is a man who has not been elected and a bureaucrat with deep links to the World Bank/IMF combine. This has resulted in the just one year of UPA rule Rs.33,000 crore (\$7.5 billion) take-overs of Indian and comprador companies. This figure far surpasses any previous year. In the previous year it was \$4.5 billion. This then is the speed with which Indian and comprador companies are falling into the direct hands of the TNCs.

Yet another achievement is to pass the New Patent Bill to kill over 20,000 small scale pharmaceutical companies and allow the TNCs to hike medicine prices enormously to make even bigger windfall profits

Yet another big boon has been to the US company Monsanto and other such TNCs by the passing of the Seeds Bill 2004.

Other 'big achievements' in this sphere is the opening out of the telecom sector to 74% FDI, construction and real estate to 100% FDI, private banks to 74% foreign investment, allowing 100% FDI in export and wholesale trading, allowing FIIs to pick up upto 26% in print media companies, etc. Besides it has scrapped Press Note 18 (PN 18 was meant to protect the interests of Indian partners .... i.e. comprador's ..... of joint ventures with the MNCs) to facilitate

easier flow of foreign investment into all joint ventures with the Indian compradors. It has also relaxed FII norms in debt instruments with the result that the entire corporate bonds sold recently have been cornered by 6 FIIs. Even a new legislation has been passed on the SEZs (Special Economic Zones) to allow for even greater flow of FDIs into industries here. **Imperialist capital is on the rampage swallowing up sector after sector thanks to the policy changes of the one-year old UPA government.** FII's have defacto control of the Bombay Stock Exchange with over 20% share in it. The percentage of foreign investments in all major companies has increased phenomenally in the past one year. In many they have taken control, in others they are on their way to take over total control.

It appears that the PM Manmohan Singh is taking direct orders from the big bosses of the TNCs of the US. The Chief of Wal Mart, the biggest retail company in the world visited the country amidst high pitched talk of allowing 49% FDI in the retail sector. He was wined and dined by cabinet ministers as also the Prime Minister. Close on the heels of this US business tycoon came the head of the General Electric. He too was given a royal welcome. This TNC giant says they already have \$ 1 billion invested here and promised to buy up a host of Indian banks and industries in the near future. Hardly had he left the country that the Prime Minister made major statements on the need to step up privatization of the Electricity Boards and even electricity services. One wonders from whom he is taking his orders. Wal Mart is the largest company in the world and GE is within the top five. Never before have two chiefs of companies of such large and powerful TNCs visited India in so short a time. This shows their pleasure with the ruling Congress and UPA governments.

Yet another major achievement is chalking out massive plans to sell our natural wealth to the TNCs on a gigantic scale. In Orissa, which has 70% of the country's bauxite (for aluminum production), entire areas have been handed over to these foreign sharks and their Indian compradors displacing thousands and thousands of Adivasis from their lands with little or no compensation. A massive 35 new steel plants are planned, of which one is a conglomerate from South Korea worth some \$12 billion. In Chattisgarh diamond mines are to be handed over to foreigners. Now the government has an urgent plan

for the privatization of the coal sector to hand over even this key raw material to the imperialists. The natural recourses of the country are being sold off at a pace not seen by the earlier governments. And for all the noise made by the CPM they are nothing but collaborators in these nefarious schemes.

The UPA government has particularly gone full speed ahead to sell off India's financial sector. Thereby the entire money wealth of the country will be put in foreign hands. The continuous reforms in banking sector over the last one year are but one example. Now the FM has announced further sweeping 'reforms' in banking and infrastructure. He has also announced his intention to introduce a Bill in the monsoon session of Parliament which will allow for raising foreign investment in insurance from the present 26% to 49%. Not only this, the UPA also now seeks to open out the huge retail sector to 49% foreign capital **AS DICTATED BY THE** Wal Mart chief.

This is not all. The UPA is busy hastening the pace of sell off of our entire water resources and even genetic wealth of the country. The speed at which the Delhi government is moving to clear the grounds for its sell off is just one indication. They have revalued the DJB's (Delhi Jal Board) assets at a fraction of its real cost so that it can be finally sold off cheap, and have hiked the price of water about 5 fold to allow for big profits to them. This has enhanced the burden on the poor and middle classes whose back has already been broken by increased charges for electricity, health care, medicines, transport and basic food items. India has become one of the biggest centres in the world to for tapping its genetic resources and also the hotbed for clinical trials of new drugs, where the Indian people are being used as guinea pigs for foreign pharmaceutical companies. All these have increased apace in the one year of UPA rule.

Another major gift of the UPA government has been a massive hike in the import bill to a gigantic \$105 billion and a skyrocketing trade deficit of \$28 billion, which is predicted to go up to a massive \$50 billion by the end of this year. Thus India is becoming more and more a dumping ground and market for foreign produce. Such a massive deficit is unsustainable and can push the country into a crisis unless there is a continuous flow of foreign capital. It is a trap where the nature of the development project adopted by the present rulers pushes the economy into a vicious circle that is more and more dependent on foreign capital. No wonder Chidambaram has been shouting for the urgent need for more FDI/FII to balance the growing trade deficit.

The UPA also has big plans for the privatization of the profit-making PSUs like BHEL, GAIL, BSNL, MTNL, etc. It has just announced a plan to disinvest 10% of its shares in BHEL and raise Rs.5,000 crores from disinvestment in the other four. The CPM looks on with its traditional noises of half-hearted 'opposition'.

Finally, the UPA pushed through the VAT which has been a demand of the imperialist ever since the 'reform' process started in the 1990s. This will increase the tax burden on the masses and will crush much of the small traders or force them to face the harassment of the tax official.

And as such policies will have a disastrous impact on the lives of the people, the UPA government has taken up a systematic and long-term policy for unleashing the worst ever attacks on the masses, particularly those in the forefront of the battle.

### **Systematic smashing of all Resistance**

Though the UPA government has focused its main attention for suppressing the Maoist movement, it has not hesitated to attack the poor in all ways possible. While waxing eloquent on rural development its policies have hit the rural population the worst.

There is not a single pro-poor step by the UPA government in the last year — in concrete terms. What may have existed is only in rhetoric, that too mostly of the CPI/CPM allies, which seeks to white-wash the black deeds of the Congress. The worst crisis is in the countryside. With Banks cutting their rural branches the peasantry is being forced deeper and deeper into the arms of the moneylender. With the existing agricultural pattern loans are necessary and debt is becoming one of the major problems of the peasantry, besides the land hunger of the rural poor. The UPA did nothing to halt the collapse of the PDS. Nor the fall in the purchasing power of the rural people. Rural jobs are down. Distress migration is leaping up. The Employment Guarantee Scheme brought in is a hoax (see article on unemployment in this issue).

In the last one year the Maharashtra government has demolished over 80,000 hutments making 4.5 lakh people homeless. The brutality of the attacks matches that of the Emergency in the slum demolitions at Delhi. This is part of the Vision Plan of Mumbai-based big-business plan to turn Mumbai into a Singapore. It is backed by the World Bank.

In Delhi the Sheila Dixit government, after winning the elections, has introduced measure after measure to tax the residents more and more and increase the burden on

their lives. So also has been the case with all the state governments of the UPA.

Unemployment is continuing to rise and millions are being pushed to the edge, where survival itself is a growing problem. The peasantry has been the worst hit. Thousands are committing suicide each year and the tempo picked up in the one year of UPA rule. All its promises, like free electricity, Employment Guarantee, etc, have been gone back on. With the massive mining projects planned by the UPA government lakhs of tribals are set to be displaced and marginalized even further. In fact the burden on the peasantry, workers, tribals, and even middle-classes have only increased. Lakhs of small business have been forced to wind up.

Worst of all the UPA has been pushing ahead with lightening speed with the privatization of even water. Even this basic natural resource is not being spared from the ruthless profit machine. Delhi and Maharashtra governments are on the verge of taking the step towards privatization. The five major TNCs in this field are waiting like sharks to pounce on their prey. When it comes to improving the needs of the people, whether it is water, health, public transport, etc the governments' claim to have no money. But when it comes to writing off thousands of crores owed as NPAs or by the fraudulent Enron, the funds do not seem to matter.

And with this has come the enormous plans of repression to stem the discontent of the masses. While making a show of scrapping the POTA it introduced an equally draconian legislation. Not one of the culprits of the gruesome pogrom of Gujarat has been apprehended and, till today about 130 Muslims languish in jail under POTA. Besides it seeks to incorporate all the draconian measures of the POTA in the very Criminal Procedure Code itself. The UPA government is actively going about trying to implement the recommendations of the Malimath Committee report. While the NDA could not implement it due to the opposition from the lawyers, the UPA is taking systematic steps to 'educate' the lawyers and bring in the suggested changes. It is working hard to institutionalise all the legal instruments of repression. The Malimath Committee report is even more draconian than all the 'anti-terrorist' laws put together.

The brutality in J & K and the North East continue unabated. In fact it has been stepped up in Manipur which is continuing the struggle against the Indian occupation forces. It is now seeking to change the labour laws on a war footing to tie the hands of the trade unions even more. As it is even the smallest action by workers is crushed brutally. The smallest peasant unrest is

## The Fraud of the Dandi Yatra

The Congress with much fanfare sought to re-enact the Dandi yatra to shore up its 'patriotic' credentials. Vast funds were pumped in to stage this hypocritical jamboree. But at the same time the Congress has taken the maximum steps to crush the small salt producers and hand over the vast salt market estimated at over Rs.5,000 crores to the TNCs and big compradors by once again introducing a ban on non-iodised salt.

For example even while the Dandi March was on the government refused to implement a supreme court judgment to pay compensation of the land snatched away from local producers in 1974 on the basis of the very Salt Act of 1870. The original Dandi March was against this very Salt Act that allowed the take over of all salt land by the British Government for revenue purposes without compensation. In 1974 the then Nehru government seized 3,000 acres of such land in Uran, off Mumbai without paying a single paise of compensation. This was done on the basis of that very Salt Act of 1870. The land was handed over to the JN Port Trust, which today leases out the same land to companies for Rs.1.5 crores for 30 years. The case has been going on for the past 30 years. The landowners won their claim at every level of the judgments, but the government refused to pay them, challenging the case in the high court and then Supreme Court. But even then when the judgment went in favour of the owners the government has refused to pay. Most of the owners have been reduced to acute pauperization by not only losing their only source of livelihood but due to expenses incurred in fighting these cases for over three decades. The original owners are dead. Their children peruse the case and are also now reaching old age. The compensation would come to a huge Rs.600 crores which the government wants to swallow.

But on the question of salt the Indian compradors are even more cunning than the British. In the name of care for the health of the people an earlier Congress govt. banned all non-iodised salt. Iodine is necessary in the diet to counter the disease of goiter. Under the pretext that goiter is rampant it introduced this ban. But this has been proved to be false as goiter is only to be seen in some hill communities. It is not at all that prevalent in the country. This has been proven by many research reports. Yet, the rule persists. Even while introducing the latest ban, the report cunningly just mentions that the consumption of iodine has gone down, not that there is any deficiency of iodine. As the cost of machinery for producing iodised salt is expensive this will virtually crush all the small salt producers in the country allowing TNC and comprador companies like Hindustan Lever and Tata to monopolise the trade. They now are able to charge Rs.7 and more per kilo, where the cost of production will not be more than a few paise. The profits are huge.

In 2000 the BJP government lifted the ban on non-iodised salt. The Congress-led UPA government has again re-imposed the ban in June this year and given all small manufacturers two months notice. As 71% of India's salt is produced in Gujarat, the BJP lifted the ban as the bulk of these small producers are with the BJP. This time not only does the government seek to wipe out the small producer but also the medium producer. It has said that it will soon bring in legislation for "*compulsory double fortification of common salt with iodine and iron*". This will make the production process even more capital intensive wiping out all the smaller producers. Such legislation will help the handful of big producers monopolise the trade in salt and will push up the prices of salt even more. This will open up a huge market to the TNCs as, for example, the consumption of iodised salt in a state like UP is only 10% of the total.

Like the earlier hoax of Gandhi to divert the attention of the masses from the militant action on the Chauri Chaura police station, so also the recent repeat performance is even a bigger hoax. If it is serious about allowing salt to reach the masses at reasonable prices and help the small producers it should remove the ban on non-iodised salt and immediately pay the compensation to the Uran people. But this they will not do, and to cover up their treacherous policies they will enact more such Dandis. But as was once said, history repeats itself, first as a tragedy, then as a farce. This present Dandi was a gigantic farce on the people of the country. Not surprisingly it attracted little attention and passed off without much notice.

suppressed. Dalit assertion has to continue to face the same violence of the ruling upper caste elite and is crushed brutally, with the police conspiring with the ruling elite at the village level. Though anti-Muslim hysteria is down, little is done to draw them actively into the social life of the country.

But the UPA, with all its sweet talk on the Naxalite problem being a socio-economic one, has put its major effort into plans for the long-term crushing of this movement. The UPA put on a liberal mask giving the impression that they seek talk with the nationality and revolutionary movements. But, this is nothing more than a mask to hide the intense military preparations being taken to suppress it. They very well know it is only the Maoists who can give effective leadership to the growing discontent of the masses. It is for this reason that they are focusing their major attention on the suppression of the Maoists. Never before has such a systematic plan been worked out against the Maoist of the countries. Also its brutality in AP, after the collapse of the talks, was on a scale that matched the

massacres of the early 1970s in Bengal. Even the CPM has matched the terror of its partner at the centre. Recently the CPM government of West Bengal arrested two top leaders of the CPI(Maoists), the politburo member comrade Shome and the state secretary of the West Bengal unit of the Party. In the last issue of this magazine we have given a detailed account of the steps taken by the Centre to crush the growing Maoist movement in the country.

The Congress has sought to fool the people by pretending to offer the olive-branch of 'talks' with the armed organizations of both the nationality and revolutionary movements. It merely seeks thereby to diffuse these movements or divide them; and if neither work then launch even more brutal repressive measures. This is to be seen in the ongoing repression in J&K, Manipur and against the Maoists. Its 'human faced', further pinked up by its CPI/CPM allies, hides the vampire-like fangs.

Even after that one can understand the extent of the Centres preparations from the statement of the Minister of State for Home, Shriprakash Jaiswal, made on May 29<sup>th</sup> at

Bhopal and reported in the Economic Times of May 30<sup>th</sup>. To quote, he said "*the Centre would go to any level to gain control over the Naxalite problem and would not hesitate utilising the services of the army. Though force alone cannot solve the problem, we will go to any level to gain control over the Naxalites, even if it means using services of the Army.*" He further complained that funds of the Centre for this suppression are not being fully utilised in the northern states. He added that "*the money is under-utilised despite the Centre relaxing norms and by reducing amounts of matching grants which have to be given by the states from 50% to 40%, 40 to 25%, and 25 to 100%. .... We have decided to provide modern equipment like armoured vehicles and helicopters. AP and Orissa have agreed to bear 50% expenses and the machinery would be given to them*".

Not only in this country, the UPA has even stepped up its expansionist and repressive policies in South Asia. From the very first days after coming to power the foreign minister vowed to give all help to

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## For A Real Peace: Indian Army Quit Kashmir As A First Step

Akhil

Kashmir cries out for peace; for a real one. The people say that the cricket or bus diplomacy is not an answer to the Kashmir issue. If the neighbours want to be friends again and trade with each other for mutual benefit then no one has any objection to that. But if blood continues to flow down the rivers in the beautiful land of paradise as before, then the two countries won't find peace altogether.

The national highway A-1 continues to be heavily lined with the military, with guns slung over soldiers' shoulders and mounted on the vehicles; but without fingers on the trigger. The uniformed seem to be engaging themselves in smoothening and controlling the flow of traffic. The number of military convoys has not declined but the priority given to them to pass ahead of others is no longer there. This is the usual 'mission healing touch' before the routine security checks are again resumed and the guns start booming.

The guns, however, are roaring in the interiors of the whole land without respite. **The military is on an increased offensive in the aftermath of the Indo-Pak "peace process". The so-called encounter killings by the armed forces have not seen a let-up in spite of the much blared clamour for bringing peace in the sub-continent. About 150 people were killed by security forces in the month of April.** On May 3, 2005, the army killed 21 people in a single operation razing five houses to the ground and damaging a number of others. The next day six more bodies were recovered from under the rubble, of which two were of Indian army men. Seems to be a real encounter! But there is no information as to how many among the killed were civilians. Usually, most of the civilians killed are branded as militants while the rest are declared 'died while caught in the crossfire'. So, the crime of killing civilians is exonerated. The world never comes to know the details of the cold blooded murders. The day Musharraf left Delhi after telling his hosts that India and Pakistan would jointly fight against the menace of "terrorism" the Indian security forces mounted up their offensive throughout the valley.

The army officers say that since the last few months the infiltration from across the border has come to naught. A good sign from the military regime of 'notorious' Pakistan who was always interested in fomenting trouble on the 'Indian' soil! Musharraf would have ordered strict control over all passages leading to this

part of the occupied land as one of the confidence building measures (CBMs), months before his visit. The cricket series was planned to make the visit look like a sudden crashing-in of the Pakistani president into the gate of Ferozshah Kotla grounds, to send a message to the people that both the governments have acted responsibly by grabbing up the unexpected opportunity thrown in by the bowlers. Well, the opportunity is grabbed, and an offensive agreed on by both sides of the line of occupation, is unleashed on the Kashmiri people.

### What Kashmiris Say about the Talks?

*"It will not solve the issue of Kashmir unless the Kashmiris are involved in the resolution of the Kashmir issue"* is the familiar answer which a broad cross-section of the Kashmiri people and leadership give. They say that these talks are between two states and have nothing to do with the issue of Kashmir. They are right. Even Prime Minister Manmohan said that *"bilateral issues would come first and Kashmir can wait."* Musharraf too demonstrated the same thoughts as he did not utter, even on a single occasion this time, that Kashmir was the *"core issue and everything else comes afterwards."*

He was non committal on Kashmir this time. Perhaps he learnt a lesson from the debacle of Agra or some bigger gun was dictating to him from behind the scenes. This time he was all smiles and contradicted the journalist who said that whenever America sneezes, India and Pakistan catch a bad cold. He said *"America does not sneeze all the time. It is only when its national interest are involved"*. So the US had nothing to do with the current parleys between the two countries, he seemed to say.

But many in Kashmir agree that the US is the behind-the-back puppeteer pulling at the strings and its 'national interests' in the Middle East and Central Asia demand that it sneeze on both of these sub-continental rivals. That is why Kashmir is no longer a core issue for Pakistan because the US 'national' interests demand it. Surely, the Kashmiris have understood it rightly that Pakistani's support is taking a turn backwards.

The reality that the US is a behind the scene ring-master is too obvious. It is censoring the line of occupation from the satellites and providing information to both the countries dictating both what to do.

The FBI, the internal intelligence agency of the US is operating in both the countries tracking down the movements of those who are anti-US imperialism. The crackdown in Pakistan on the militant forces continues under the active leadership and guidance of the US. At the same time, it is keeping the options open to push the two countries to a mutual war in future when its imperialist interests demand so. It is selling modern weaponry to both the armies. That is why there is no serious attempt to resolve the Kashmir tangle in a politically correct way. And a genuine initiative cannot come under the aegis of the US. Openings on the borders, without going for a political solution of the problem, can only help in some mutual trade treaties which will soon be signed. The governments of both the countries are dancing to the imperialist tunes from America, to serve its current strategic needs in Central Asia and the Middle-East. That is why the guns are silent on the border and activities of the freedom fighters are being curbed and suppressed on both the sides.

The so-called friendship between the two countries is only transitory and farcical. It is just a hullabaloo, masquerading sinister scheming against the Kashmiri people; a discharge that has come along with the US sneezing on both the states. But one thing is definite: **that the current process between the two would not affect the struggle for freedom as Pakistan is not the initiator or main architect of the Kashmir liberation movement, that the movement in Kashmir is based on and represents the aspirations of the Kashmiri people, it has risen up from the soil of Kashmir as an answer to national oppression by India. They say that even if Pakistan moves away from supporting it, it won't die down as the rulers of India expect.**

Syed Ali Shah Geelani, a Hurriyat leader, says the Kashmir movement is indigenous and self sustaining. He is for a final solution that decides the fate of Kashmir through a plebiscite to be either with India or Pakistan, and is confident that the process of CBMs has nothing to do with the resolution of the Kashmir issue. None of the Kashmiri leaders associated with the freedom movement is against "friendship" between the two countries. But, the solving of the Kashmir problem would require an altogether different approach.

### The Bus, on a Heavily Protected Road to Muzaffrabad

But the line of occupation these days

is being fast lined with a fence to prevent the people from meeting each other across the line. Again a confidence building measure! This fence is a tacit agreement between the two countries to keep Kashmir permanently under their control, obstructing the Kashmiri freedom movement from gathering support from both sides of the forcedly divided land. **The much advertised weekly bus is not at all popular in the valley.** The people say: why they are putting up the fence if they want people to meet each other across the border? The hill people have hundreds of winding hilly paths leading to the other side to meet their dear ones. These were there before their land was occupied and were occasionally used by the people even during the last 17 years of bloody conflict. Even in dangerous conditions of occupation they could arrange and attend marriages at will. **Now all that is being blocked and the bus service is being trumpeted as the opening of an opportunity to visit relatives.** The Kashmiri people say that the bus service was there before their land was occupied, and scornfully ask: who were they if not the aggressors who had stopped the bus and all other traffic to their brethren across the border? Now they need it again to perpetuate the same occupation. It does not signify any change of heart. It is a tactic in the new conditions to hoodwink the people here and around the world.

Only one way, from Srinagar to Muzaffrabad is opened while there are ten more roads where buses can ply. The people are not against the bus service but they say it has no role to play in the resolution of the Kashmir problem. The Kashmir problem is not a bus. The bus is essentially between India and Pakistan running through Kashmir to ease tensions among themselves whether it goes from Amritsar to Lahore or across Gujarat or the Rajasthan border, makes little difference. The people of Kashmir say that they may construct one gas pipeline or a dozen, but the freedom movement in Kashmir will continue unabated. One may have doubted this statement given the Pakistani support to militancy in the earlier years, but it shows their conviction that neither India nor Pakistan can prevent the coming into being of an independent Kashmir because in the conflict Kashmiris are the principal party whose land has been divided among bigger states. Some compare their condition to that of the Kurds who are divided in six adjoining countries and have no homeland of their own.

The road to Muzaffrabad is like the notorious NH No-1A where every segment of the road is barricaded. It is an irony that there is only one road that links Kashmir with India which has been instrumental in

the occupation and still bleeds and burn with blood and fire. Similar is the story of the road from Srinagar to Muzaffrabad. One deadly road and such is the situation in Kashmir. Had there been more, the story would have been more horrendous. The people despise this road. On the other hand, there are eleven roads linking Pakistan with Kashmir, and the people think that Pakistan is a friend. One can gauge the magnitude of the atrocities the Indian armed forces have committed that it has almost become an idiom in Kashmir that there are eleven roads to Pakistan while there is only one linking India with Kashmir. The distance that has come to stay in the psyche of the Kashmiris seems unbridgeable. The coming new generation feels nothing in common with India. This is the correct image reflected by the objective reality in the hearts of the Kashmiri people. Ofcourse real freedom can only be achieved by the people of that land by creating a truly democratic Kashmir, free from all foreign oppressors.

Bilal Kotru, who has lost four of his brothers in the days since the movement began in 1989, one killed by militants and others killed by the security forces in the so-called cross-fire, says his land will achieve freedom one day and the whole of Kashmir would be united. He wants the pre-October 1947 borders of the independent Jammu and Kashmir State to be re-established. And this idea is emerging in the new situation and slowly gaining support among Hindu and Muslim intelligentsia in both the Kashmir valley and Jammu region. They accuse both the neighbours of being oppressors. For them the bus is no answer to an intricate problem like Kashmir.

On the contrary, the army men admit that they have greatly benefited from the fence which could not have been possible to construct in the ongoing insurgency in a terrain like Kashmir without the tacit co-operation from Pakistan. This benefit is being translated into military advantage in a bid to control the movement of the people and in the stepped up offensive of daily killings by the security forces after Musharraf went back. These killings remind one of the Punjab of 1993, when the state

launched a spate of killings of peasantry in the name of crushing Sikh 'terrorism' after large scale penetration into their ranks by the moles, the so-called black cats. One can conclude that both India and Pakistan are in collaboration to crush the militancy in Kashmir. Hence, we might see more bloodshed in the coming days. The water flowing in the gushing rivers of Kashmir will become more red as a consequence. The hell which is now Kashmir is set to surpass all previous records. The so-called current peace process entails the peace of the graveyard.

## Peace of the Graveyard

Visit the graveyard of the martyrs who have died at the hands of the Indian security forces and you will find that there are more than one thousand graves, some even containing bodies of two people. Lying in the vicinity of Srinagar, the paradise for tourists, it is a grim monument of the dead which is a living example of the cruelties of the security forces. Now this graveyard is full and when more bodies arrive it will be further extended to accommodate the dead. The Indian army has a plan to arrest, intimidate and destroy the over-ground structure of the freedom movement. This includes students, youth, scribes and political activists who are vocal and spearhead the movement openly among the masses. They are on the newly formed hit list of the army and comprise nearly 4,500 people. The very name of the *Security Forces* is a dreaded word and means death and destruction. This word has nothing to do with the security of the people. The army works like an occupation force and not as a security force. Any midnight knock is sufficient to instil fear among the residents of a house and the very next idea that comes into mind is: the family's next visit will be to this place with the coffin of a dear one.

Those who are buried here all belonged either to Srinagar or lived in the villages around this ghost city. All have been the victims of the security forces. Some of the buried are children only a few months of age, some small brother and sister lie in a single grave. You also find there those who were only to die in a few months or years,

The recent visit of some Hurriyat leaders, many of whom have sold out to the Indian government, were sent to Pakistan in a bid to isolate the militants, and give these elements legitimacy with the Pakistani rulers. The recent peace overtures between the two countries, at the behest of the imperialists, particularly the US, in the interests of furthering international trade and oil and gas pipelines, is resulting in the Pakistani government stabbing the Kashmiri movement in the back. Earlier it sought to use the freedom aspirations of the Kashmiri people for its own interests; now in the international scenario it acts differently. It is this new turn of events that has resulted in the so-called moderates getting a new-found legitimacy with the Pakistani rulers. The settlement of the freedom aspiration of the Kashmiri people cannot be resolved through deals between the two countries.



despite the hard labour which they put into their fields to eek out an existence. The movement is yet to devise plans to help them to build their lives again. And the suffering of their children is beyond description. The hope and wait of these people refuse to die.

The land where ninety thousands have been killed, ten thousand disappeared, twenty five thousand orphaned, can only burn like an inferno. The land of Chinars and mighty rivers is in torment because

being on the threshold of death due to old age, but the security forces were too merciful to let them wait for natural death. There lie heroes of the Kashmiri people like Maqbool Ahmed Batt and Jalil Andrabi. This graveyard of the dead will live forever in the memories of the Kashmiri people. It is a living monument of the dead! Except for this graveyard, peace lies nowhere in the valley.

Millions in India, who have been to Kashmir or are likely to visit it for sight seeing and merry making, never go to see this bleeding site in the gashed belly of Kashmir. The rulers of India have been successful in corroding off the human concern of the inhabitants of our vast land, with only a few voices of solidarity for the Kashmiri cause.

And if you hear the stories of those

who have neither been seen or buried by their relatives it turns out to be even more ghastly. These are about the disappeared persons who are routinely picked up by the Indian armed forces in the dead of night as well as in broad day light. They never return to their homes and are lost for ever. They are disappeared persons murdered and disposed off secretly. Their numbers surpass: Ten Thousand. The parents continue to look towards the horizon in the never ending hope that one day their son would come back to unite with them. Brothers never reconcile with the thought that their dear ones are no more. Wives are neither widowed nor can be considered as married. It is like an eternal anguish of a devastated woman. They are left to live and bring up their children un-aided. Many such peasant women are living in penury

their neighbours are cold-blooded real estate dons having criminal hordes of marauding armies at their command. When autumn sets up in winter the Chinars turn into infernos as if mountains are on fire and their fury would engulf everything that would come near them. Their leaves turn blood red in colour when they dry up. Hence, the name: Chinar i.e. Yeh kaisi aag hai !

The valley today is on fire in the real sense of the term. The peace loving, secular sufi people are burning with the aspiration of freedom. They are furious. They say: *"The friendship between India and Pakistan is okay but we want our land in our hands. We are not for bloodshed, we want peace, BUT the Indian army will have to leave. Only then a real peace can return to this land."*



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## Unending Lies and Hypocrisy mark one year of YSR's Rule — People prepare for the long battle ahead in the police state of AP

- Nitin

On 14<sup>th</sup> May 2005, the meeting that was held in Hyderabad to mark the completion of one year of the Congress rule in AP, turned out to be a poor shadow of the one held exactly a year before. In spite of the Congress government pouring in huge sums of money to bring the people for the public celebration, it turned out to be a big flop. The lorries and buses that were sent to the villages to pick up the people for the meeting returned empty. And those who attended the meeting complained to the media, covered live by the TV channels, that they were brought there with the promise that they would be given house sites, pension allowance, etc., but nothing of that sort happened. Half the audience had left soon after the meeting began. Indeed, it was in no way comparable to the massive crowds that had gathered spontaneously in the Lal Bahadur stadium in May 2004 soon after the Congress won the elections with a three-fourths majority in the state Assembly.

Then how had the government of the Congress-TRS alliance led by YSR, which secured a three-fourth majority in the state Assembly, become so unpopular within just one year? Why have the people become so disinterested, frustrated, and apathetic to the Congress that had come to power in AP after nine years of autocratic rule of the World Bank stooge, Chandrababu Naidu?

The Congress government that had replaced the TDP with promises to fulfill almost every demand raised by the people during the elections last year, had proved itself to be a replica of the TDP in every aspect—whether it be cringing before the World Bank and the various imperialist MNCs and loyally following their dictates, suppression of the Naxalites, harassment of the people of the Muslim minorities, dalits and adivasis, factional murders, corruption and scams involving ministers and top officials, and any thing that one could think of. This became increasingly clear to the people within six months after the Congress came to power and now, after a year of governance, even many ardent followers of the Congress have lost all hope that YSR's rule would be different from that of Chandrababu Naidu.

### Worsening Crisis in all spheres:

In just one year, the person on the street can directly feel the effects of the crisis in every sphere. The situation has become as bad as, if not worse than, what it was under the TDP and it was in a similar situation

that the TDP government was thrown out in the last elections. The negative feelings of the people have become so strong that the Congress is likely to receive a thrashing in the ensuing Municipal polls in August-September this year. More important is the emerging militant mass movement and strikes by the various sections of the people which would be suppressed by the police state with brute force.

The most conspicuous of all is the agrarian crisis that gave rise to tragic consequences. Suicides had reached a staggering figure of 2000, that is, almost five a day or over 30 a week in the past one year under the Congress. The agrarian crisis in AP had become so acute that not a day passes without one hearing the news of grim and heart-chilling stories of peasants, both young and old, consuming the poisonous pesticides and leaving grieving families behind. The decision to take one's own life shows the cruelty and unjustness of the existing system. It shows the darkness, despair, pessimism of the peasantry—the backbone of the country, and the total breakdown of the system. Although ex-gratia of 1 lakh and 50000 was announced only a third of the victims' families received the amount.

The report on farmer suicides submitted by the Jayati Ghosh Commission that was set up by the YSR government amidst much fanfare, was not even taken up for discussion in the Assembly this time.

The report links the agrarian crisis to a combination of “macro liberalisation and globalisation policies” at the central government level, specific policies of the state and local governance failures.

According to the Report, “*The state of Andhra Pradesh had become almost a laboratory for every neo-liberal economic experiment, with a massive shift towards relying on incentives for private agents as opposed to state intervention and regulation of private activity, in virtually all areas.*”

It further stated, “*The decline in the government's role began when the state started incurring massive external debts from bilateral and multi-lateral agencies. Many problems in its economy can be traced to this reduction in government role and the collapse of a wide range of public institutions.*”

Obviously, while the Congress had set up the Commission immediately after the elections in conformity with the promises it made, as part of its election rhetoric, to resolve the agrarian crisis in the state, it had no more use for the Report as it had

decided to pursue the same old policies as the predecessor TDP regime. Consequently, there has been a further intensification of the agrarian crisis leading to even more suicides by the desperate and helpless peasantry caught in the vicious circle of debt.

Today, electricity supply for agriculture is just for 5 hours while the Congress had promised 8 hour supply during its election campaign last year. Free electricity — a promise made during the elections — was implemented only partially due to pressure from the World Bank.

Remunerative prices for agricultural produce remains a serious problem. Especially those producing purely commercial crops such as mirchi, cotton and haldi, are unable to even meet their input expenses as a result of a steep decline in the prices of these commodities. The overproduction and oversupply of these commodities in the world market, the manipulative tactics of the organized private monopoly lobby of traders, and the crass neglect by the government in providing minimum support prices for the agricultural produce, have pushed the peasants deeper into crisis. The falling prices in the world market have had a dangerous impact only on the peasants of the Third world countries like India whereas the farmers in the imperialist countries get huge subsidies from their respective governments. The imperialist agencies like the World Bank-IMF-WTO exert immense pressure on the Third World governments not to subsidise the farm produce and it should not be a surprise if a Chief Minister like YSR kowtows before these powerful sharks and obeys their orders not to give any subsidies to the peasants in the state whatever be the scale and magnitude of suicides.

Consequently, the plight of the peasants producing mirchi, turmeric and cotton has become terrible. The purchase price of these three cash crops has come down drastically. The mirchi crop which fetched Rs. 2300-2700 last year came down to Rs. 1500-1800 this year thereby pushing the peasantry to the clutches of the moneylenders and rapacious traders and commission agents. There is no support price for mirchi and haldi. Hence there is no alternative for the peasants but to go into militant agitation. Guntur and Warangal have become the main centres of such agitations this year. There are numerous incidents of burning of their own mirchi crop by the peasants as they did not have the wherewithal to transport the mirchi to

the godowns due to the low price offered. Traders and government officials were attacked by angry peasants.

Water has become a scarce commodity. Almost a third of the state's population has no access to clean drinking water. Even in the capital of the state people have to struggle for hours to get the minimum quantity for their daily requirements. And water is bought by those who can afford. The government, of course, makes tall promises that it has drawn up a scheme to permanently solve the water problem at a cost of Rs. 6000 crores.

Industries continue to close down due to so-called sickness and those in the state sector are sold to the imperialists for a song. The World Bank's direction to reduce the staff by 2% every year was loyally followed by the YSR government which issued a GO to that effect.

Corruption has become rampant and it is alleged that Rs. 900 crores is already swallowed by the ministers and officials while granting tenders for irrigation projects. There is increasing demand by the opposition parties and several organizations for an enquiry into the allegations of fraud against the Ministers and top officials in the YSR government in granting contracts for projects like Polavaram, Gundlakamma, etc. The so-called *Jala Yagnam* of the YSR government has been sarcastically called as *Dhana Yagnam* which is quite apt going by the huge sums involved in the scams in allotting contracts.

The latest scandal doing the rounds is the temple land scam involving Congress party bigwigs like the Endowments Minister MS Sathyanarayan Rao, APCC President KKeshava Rao, and top officials of the state administration. The temple land has been occupied illegally by several political leaders and government officials. This scandal had also brought the contradictions within the Congress to the fore with MS Rao and KK Rao throwing charges against one another. These greedy sharks of the ruling party had begun amassing wealth through such underhand dealings by misusing their power and position.

A new excise policy was adopted that encourages the sale of liquor. It introduced a Bill in the assembly for the privatization of agricultural market yards. It announced that it would implement contract farming as envisaged by Chandrababu Naidu, no matter if this same bunch of exploiters in Congress had spoken against it during the assembly elections exactly a year ago. It did not review the agreements in the electricity sector as promised earlier, but, on the contrary, has given several concessions to the private companies in

the power sector.

The spread of diseases in the rural areas, particularly in the backward adivasi areas, is alarming. In the Agency areas of Vishakhapatnam, Srikakulam and Vizianagaram districts, there has been a big spurt in diseases like viral fevers and gastroenteritis and cholera, malaria, and hundreds of adivasis had died due to lack of medical facilities. Non-availability of clean drinking water is the biggest cause for these diseases while lack of primary health facilities aggravated the situation causing deaths.

The YSR government had promised that all pending projects will be completed at a cost of Rs. 46,000 crores and 28 irrigation projects are taken up for construction simultaneously, though most of it remains on paper as hardly any funds were released for the projects. It is estimated that it would take 10 years to get permission for all the projects. The government claims that 65 lakh acres of land will be irrigated due to this scheme of completing the pending projects. This year only Rs. 4500 crores were allotted for the irrigation projects. It is clear that the projects will again remain pending after the officials and politicians pocket sufficient amounts. Another joke that goes round the media is that canals are being dug without constructing the reservoirs as in Polavaram, Ellampalli and Dummugudem.

Moreover, projects like Pulichintala over river Krishna and Polavaram over river Godavari, are caught in serious controversies. The former serves only the landlords of Krishna district by providing them water for the third crop, even as the peasants in the backward Palnad region in Guntur district and those in backward Nalgonda, do not have water even for a single crop and suffer from drought and famine year after year. Hence the CPI(Maoist) had declared their total opposition to the Pulichintala project and warned that it would not allow the construction work on the project. In fact, the foundation stone laid by the Chief Minister last year, was blasted within 24 hours by the PLGA while the people took out massive demonstrations against the project and burned down the project office.

The Polavaram project is steeped even deeper in controversy. It does more harm than good. It submerges 276 villages in the three districts of East and West Godavari and Khammam. 94,357 acres of land in these villages and another 7,000 acres of forest land will be submerged. 1 lakh 17,000 people will be displaced due to the project. There is strong opposition from the people to the construction of the project. The work on the Right and Left Main Canals has begun but the tenders are obtained through bribes

and commissions. With Rs. 1750 crores and 1500 crores for the two Canals respectively, and Rs. 8000 crores for the project as a whole, no wonder there has been a virtual dog-fight within the ruling class parties for a share in the cake.

The YSR government had thus done more harm than good to the people of the state through its so-called *Jala Yagnam*. Its projects are a non-starter and where some work had begun it is steeped in scams. YSR's anti-people government has created more disputes between people of various districts and regions by undertaking the construction of controversial irrigation projects. It is using the water issue to divide the people.

### **Cringing before the World Bank:**

Prior to the elections the Congress said that reforms in AP were like a hangman's noose around people's necks but within a year it changed track and began to vigorously campaign for reforms. The World Bank had sent its report to the state government. In the meeting of the United Electricity Employees' Union, YSR spoke of the need for reforms. 2500 cooperatives were abolished and 6000 employees were terminated. Housing Board workers were dismissed. 15,000 people were fired.

True to its class nature, the YSR government has shown its subservience to the World Bank and the imperialists within less than a year after the Congress made promises that it would not bow to the imperialist pressures and that it would submit a white paper on all the agreements with the World Bank as soon as it came to power. But soon after it came to power it began to enter into agreement with the government of Austria with conditions even more atrocious than those with the World Bank. It is trying to enter into an agreement with Germany on setting up Volkswagen plant at a cost of Rs. 4,300 crores. 350 acres of land has been already sanctioned gratis to the German MNC in Vishakhapatnam. The IT portfolio is retained with the CM and IT parks are developed in Vishakhapatnam and Vijayawada. IT Corridors are being developed in Tirupathi, Warangal, Vishakha, and Kakinada. YSR had assured the MNCs and Big Business in the IT sector that he would be even more "liberal" than his predecessor Naidu in sanctioning land and other infrastructure, and giving the concessions they want, to the players in IT who ventured to invest in the state.

The state's Finance Minister, K Roshaiiah, stated that the government had received Rs. 10,000 crores from various agencies in the first financial year of his government. He also stated openly that his government was not opposed to World

Bank loans and tried to defend the sanctioning of loans by saying that they were old agreements made by the TDP government. For instance, he said, that the Structural Adjustment Loan to AP was released by the World Bank in two tranches during the TDP regime. Now his government is trying to get the third instalment of Rs.1600 crores of the SAL. His government had also sent proposals to the World Bank for Rs.1600 crore loan for the extension of roads in the state, Rs.1300 crores for the provision of basic infrastructure in the urban areas and for slum development, Rs. 3000 crores loan for what is called '*Water Sector Improvement Project*' which includes the modernization of the Nagarjuna Sagar project, and so on and that the proposals are awaiting the approval of the central government.

The country director of the World Bank, Michael Carter, assured the state government that the Bank would release Rs.7,500 crores for the four major projects in the state as soon as the Centre sends its approval. In a 'breakfast' meeting with the chief minister YSR in New Delhi, Carter and two other World Bank economists expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the World Bank projects and the policies pursued by the government in AP and assured all 'aid' to the state.

The Congress rulers are trying to fool the people that they are only continuing the policies of the earlier TDP government led by Chandrababu Naidu and that they are not making any fresh agreements with the World Bank. If YSR's Congress had stated that it would implement the agreements made by the TDP government, then it would not have gained so many seats in the Assembly elections. TDP would have been in a better position to implement the agreements and there was no need for a change in the government. But the fact was that people of AP were so much vexed with the policies of the TDP government, particularly its pro-World Bank policies and the anti-Naxalite policies that they chose to throw it out of power in the elections and this was utilized by the Congress and its allies to make electoral gains. But now, on most of these issues the YSR government differs little, though initially it waxed eloquently how its policies were drastically different from those of the TDP government.

### **Increasing militancy of the people:**

No wonder, the people are infuriated and frustrated by the Congress government which took over from the TDP making endless promises but fulfilling hardly any. The strikes and agitations are gradually

growing in the state. The Singareni workers went on a three-day strike from 25-27 April.

Four workers' unions of the State Road Transport Corporation—NMU, RTC Staff and Workers' Federation, Employees' Union and Transport Mazdoor Sangh—representing almost the entire work force, have formed into a joint action committee and served Strike Notice to the government in the last week of May after their parleys with the government did not resolve their problems. The so-called package of Rs. 640 crores announced by the state government did not cut much ice with the workers' unions which stated that they might go on strike anytime after June 10<sup>th</sup> and began organizing meetings of RTC workers all over the state (See Box). At the time of writing the Unions declared that the strike would commence from July 4<sup>th</sup> as the government was adamant.

The junior doctors had also served notice to the government that they would go on strike any time if the government did not withdraw its moves to grant permission to more private medical colleges. The junior doctors had placed a charter of democratic demands but the government—a puppet in the hands of the big business and the elite who wish to make profits out of private medical colleges and privatization of education in general—has adopted an adamant attitude thus making the strike by the junior doctors inevitable in the near future.

It is interesting to note that in both the instances mentioned above, the same YSR fully supported their demands when he was in opposition but now he thinks the demands are unreasonable! Once in power, he has proved himself to be no less a stooge of the World Bank and the imperialists than Chandrababu Naidu, notwithstanding all his anti-World Bank rhetoric during the elections.

Struggles for agricultural land, house sites, drinking water, water for irrigation, power supply, medicare, etc., have become commonplace. These demonstrations and struggles have often turned militant leading to lathicharge and even firing by the police on the one hand, and mass attacks on the police personnel and stations on the other.

### **Separate Telangana:**

The issue of separate Telangana has been a contentious issue between the various parties in the state. The Congress-TRS alliance swept the polls in Telangana almost wiping out the TDP in the last Assembly elections. The TDP had given the call for united Andhra Pradesh which it had reiterated in its *Mahanaadu* in the last week of May.

The people's expectations regarding a separate state of Telangana were quite high

following the victory of the Congress-TRS alliance last year as the TRS fought purely on the issue of separate state and the Congress pretended as if it supported the demand. But soon after the alliance won a thumping majority, the Congress changed track and began to campaign for a Second States' Reorganization Commission (SRC) saying that it would abide by the latter's decision whatever that would be. However, YSR began a simultaneous campaign against separate Telangana by pitting Rayalaseema against Telangana, arguing against '*smaller states*' by stating that development and controlling Naxalites would be difficult in small states due to lack of resources, and so on. By the end of the year-long rule, the attitude of the Congress became increasingly clear which is almost akin to that of the TDP. In the last week of May it came out with the old, worn-out proposal of Regional Development Boards for Telangana and Rayalaseema as an alternative to the demand for a separate state. When YSR is pushed to the defensive on the issue, he would pretend that he would abide by the decision of the non-existent second SRC or that his party had no objection if the other parties agreed to the separate state, knowing clearly that other parties especially the TDP and those on the so-called Left, are opposed to it. The CPI and CPI(M), who are opposed to the demand of separate state, immediately extended their support to the Congress's proposal of setting up regional boards for Telangana and Rayalaseema.

The TRS is clearly in a fix. It had initially declared that it would not join the Congress ministry in AP as it would mean acceptance of the present geographical state of AP and would weaken the demand for separate Telangana. But the crass opportunism and power hunger of its leaders prompted them to share power with the Congress both in the Centre and the State.

There is growing frustration among the TRS cadre as weeks passed into months and as the promises of the TRS leaders had not materialized. Like mendicants, the TRS leaders have been lobbying in Delhi and kowtowing before Sonia to fulfill their demand. Occasionally they issue a statement that they are prepared for any sacrifice and will launch a mass movement to achieve Telangana if their tactics in Delhi failed.

The TRS leaders initially assured that a separate state would come into existence by December last, then extended it to April and then to June this year. They assert that 20 parties are supporting their cause, 12 within the ruling UPA at the Centre and another 12 outside it. Sonia Gandhi herself, and Pranab Mukherjee, who is nominated

to look into the demand and provide recommendation to the union Cabinet, had declared that it would take a longer time to arrive at any decision. They had assured YSR that they will not take any decision in haste but only after consultation and approval of the other Parties. The CPI and CPI(M), on whose support the UPA government at the Centre is totally dependent for its survival, are clearly opposed to a separate Telangana.

The game of fooling each other and the people at large continues unabashedly. And in spite of the clear opposition of the Congress to the demand for separate a Telangana state, the TRS still continues to share power in the government both in the state and the Centre. The CPI(Maoist) exposed this double-talk of the TRS and demanded that it should immediately come out of the government.

The emergence of new forces in Telangana that are keen on starting a

militant agitation for a separate state is an encouraging development. Recently, a Telangana United Front was formed with 14 parties and organizations, which include some organizations in the Andhra region. A new organization is being floated by actress Vijayashanthi who had resigned from the BJP in the last week of May and declared at a public meeting in her characteristic cinematic style that she would “fight for separate Telangana until her last breath”. Though doubts exist that she would not have made such a move without the blessings of the BJP, the fact that she had resigned from the BJP and asserted her commitment to fight for a separate state instead of lobbying with the Centre like the TRS, has attracted a section supporting the demand. There could be polarization of the forces in Telangana and it is likely that forces from other parties would come onto a common platform once the agitation takes off.

Surely, there is trouble ahead for all the parties in Telangana, especially the Congress and TRS.

### **Praja Patham—A big Fiasco:**

The so-called *praja patham* (people's path) programme is a poor duplication of the much-maligned janmabhoomi programme of TDP government. During the last Assembly elections, YSR's Congress had accused the TDP that it had spent over Rs. 400 crores for his publicity and that his Party would cut down all such extravagant expenditure, and instead, provide it to the peasantry in the form of free power supply. However, the new government is on the same track of conducting publicity gimmicks, road shows and padayatras and spending huge amounts to propagate the 'achievements' of the government.

In spite of the massive propaganda by the government, the *praja patham* programme had turned out to be a damp squib. Three features stood out

### **“Sell Off the RTC property and repay the loans”**

—advises YSR to the workers

*The philosophy of the World Bank was reflected very clearly in the advice of the Chief Minister of AP to the RTC workers when they raised the demand of cancellation of the loans of the Corporation. YSR created a furore by asking the RTC to sell off its property to repay its debts. He thus tried to conveniently hide the actual reasons for the losses incurred by the RTC and the role of the state government in aggravating the crisis in the RTC.*

*The RTC's so-called losses actually began after 1995-96 and continued throughout the regime of Chandrababu Naidu. The same policies are being pursued by the YSR government thereby leading to further losses to the Corporation. The APSRTC, with a fleet of nearly 20,000 buses and worker strength of 1.24 lakhs, has found place in the Guinness Book of world records. The Government had been giving concessions in RTC fares to the students, journalists, physically disabled, legislators and MPs, both past and present, and a host of other sections. But the burden is placed on the RTC itself instead of the government making the payments for the concessions. This has been one of the reasons for the losses in the RTC. At last, after several parleys, the government has agreed to pay half the amount spent for concessions. However, the workers' unions are not satisfied. Another contentious issue is the tax levied on diesel used by the RTC fleet. The tax on diesel for RTC which is 19.33 % in AP is the highest when compared to any other state in India. It would be interesting to note in this context that the tax on diesel for railways is just 4 %.*

*The Workers' Trade Unions held several rounds of talks with the state government but nothing fruitful emerged out of these. By the last week of May the four Trade Unions— NMU, RTC Staff and Workers' Federation, Employees' Union and Transport Mazdoor Sangh— representing almost the entire work force, have formed into a joint action committee and issued a strike notice to the government and warned that they might begin their indefinite strike anytime after June 10<sup>th</sup>. The leaders of the various Unions went round the districts to garner support of the workers for the strike and exposed the hypocrisy of the YSR government, its deliberate moves to wind up the RTC gradually and to encourage the private operators, and its subservience to the World Bank. Its anti-people policy of absurd taxation on the RTC was explained to the people.*

*Almost all the opposition parties have expressed support for the RTC workers' demands which were against the government's plans to weaken the RTC in order to benefit the private operators and to finally bring about total privatization in the transport sector. They demanded the reduction of the tax on the RTC to the levels prevailing in Tamil Nadu (2%) and Karnataka (3%) as the 12.5% tax in AP has become a heavy burden to the RTC as well as the passengers. The Revenue Reforms Committee, appointed by the state government, too had recommended a tax of 2 % in place of the 12.5% levied at present.*

*Moreover, there is a sinister plan of the government to divide the RTC into six separate corporations and thus weaken it. Subsequently, it wants to replace the RTC with private operators who are already quite powerful in Rayalaseema and North Andhra regions.*

*It is interesting to note that it was the same YSR who had totally supported the RTC strike in 2001 when the TDP was in power, stated that the demands of the workers were fully justified and promised that he would solve their demands when his party came to power. The workers' unions showed the article written by YSR in the Times of India at that time justifying the RTC strike. Today, the demands of the RTC workers remain the same, but ironically, the same YSR now opposes the demands of the workers, calls them unjustified and even threatens them with dire consequences if they went on a strike. The TDP, on the other hand, extends support to the strike whereas it had suppressed the strike most brutally when it was in power. In fact, it was the TDP's 9-year misrule that had pushed the RTC into the present quagmire through its advocacy and implementation of the World Bank's policies of 'privatise or perish' and cuts in subsidies.*

*Such is the height of the hypocrisy of the parliamentary parties of the exploiting classes!*



conspicuously with regard to the conduct of this so-called *praja patham* programme:

Firstly, there were hardly any people during the *praja patham* programmes. Ministers, legislators and officials had to wait for hours for want of people. As the Congress had a weak base and network of functionaries in most of the districts unlike the TDP, it could not mobilise much for its local programmes.

The second thing that was conspicuous was the intolerant and authoritarian attitude of those in power. MSR, a minister of endowments, tried to slap a person who questioned him. A villager who complained to the power minister that power supply was not proper, was beaten up by Congress workers. Another minister, Nayani Narsimha Reddy, openly declared that what they promised during the elections were not for implementation. In Kothapalli village in Jammikunta mandal of KNR, women demonstrated with water pots when the local MLA visited the village as part of the Praja Patham programme. They blocked the road and there was a lathi-charge on the women. One woman broke the pot at the feet of the legislator. In Bothalapalem village in Nalgonda district, the home minister became furious when women demonstrated with empty pots demanding drinking water. The minister fled the village in the middle of the meeting.

Third, there is growing defiance of the people, with politicians turning tail. In Nalgonda, Home Minister displayed anger and fled when women demonstrated with empty pots demanding drinking water. 2 ½ crores of people in around 39000 residential areas in the state are short of water.

See no evil, hear no evil! claimed the chief minister. But as regards doing evil, he did not make any comment thereby reserving the option to do so.

One year in office and the people's anger is rising rapidly against a government that had come to power basing on false promises and lies. The expectations of the people were quite high when the Congress came to power as it had promised virtually heaven on earth. Even though people knew that most of it was election rhetoric, they at least expected some promises to be fulfilled. But the performance of the Congress in the one year had belied all their hopes and expectations. The people are now preparing themselves for the bloody battles ahead. Already lathicharge, firings arrests and killings have become common place under YSR raj. The coming days will witness an upsurge of the militant struggles of the people in AP which will further strengthen the ongoing people's war led by the CPI(Maoist).

## **YSR celebrates his one year with brutal attacks on the revolutionaries and their sympathizers**

The YSR-Swaranjit Sen government in AP had further stepped up its attacks not only on the revolutionaries and their sympathizers, but also on the various sections of the people who have taken to the streets to resolve their problems like drinking water, house sites, agricultural land, loans, remunerative prices for agricultural produce, etc. It has decided not to allow any militant protest against its policies. The following is a brief description of the police operations at the end of one year rule of YSR's Congress in the state. As history has proved time and again, repression breeds resistance. The daring attacks by the PLGA led by the CPI(Maoist), which are growing day by day, notwithstanding the claims by the government of having achieved significant victories in its fight against the Maoists, vindicates this truth once again. We are publishing here a few of these incidents which took place in the one month since the celebration of one year rule by the congress government i.e., from mid-May to mid-June.

For the suppression of the Naxalites the YSR government has been trying desperately to intensify the combing operations in the forest regions by utilizing the summer season. The DGP had been to Delhi at a regular frequency and requested the Centre to supply the state with four UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) immediately along with four Battalions of CRPF so that the combing operations can yield good results in the summer months when the water points dry up and the forest cover gets thin. Although the request was made in May and the centre had agreed to it, the vehicles had not yet arrived by the middle of June which has made the elite Greyhounds and the police force quite jittery. They do not want to undertake risky operations by themselves and want the help of the central forces. And the papers reported on June 13 that four Greyhound personnel were hospitalized when they were struck by sunstroke during their combing operations in Nallamala forest.

In Prakasham district, around 300 people were arrested, detained illegally for several days and weeks and false cases were foisted on them. Activists and leaders of the RWA, Kula Nirmoolana Sangham, APCLC, CMS, Chenetha Karmika Samakhya, AIPRF, PKM and other organizations were detained and tortured and it was only the immediate bold protests by their kith and kin and the democratic

organizations and individuals that they were eventually released without the usual story of encounters.

A pocket book of guidelines for the VIPs and others suspected to be in the 'hitlist' of the Maoists, was released by the SP of Mahboob Nagar district in the background of increasing attacks by the Maoists on the police and political leaders. Entitled '*Taraka Mantram*', it has 12 guidelines. It describes how an Action Team of the Maoists functions, how to identify an action team, and what precautions should be taken to protect oneself. It warns the targets not to go for morning walks, not to inform the family members about his/her movements or give wrong information, search all those who go to meet the political leaders, collect information about strangers, avoid deserted places and to inform the police whenever they have the slightest suspicion.

In the early hours of May 14, at around 1 AM, over a hundred-strong contingent of police descended upon the village of Adigoppula in Guntur district, searched all the houses of suspected sympathizers of the Maoists, brought them to the centre of the village and took over a hundred of them in two lorries to the nearby Durgi PS. They were beaten up severely and were shifted to other stations after releasing a few students. After the raid, the village wore a deserted look with only women, children and old people staying back while the youth fled the village. The village has been a stronghold of the Maoists since long and it was near this village that four Greyhound personnel were killed in a mine blast by the then CPI(ML)[PW] in July 2002 after the talks with the TDP failed. The poor and landless peasants of Adigoppula had also seized several acres of surplus land of the landlords, temple land and forest land.

The psychological war or the so-called war on the ethical front launched by the biggest liar of AP, YS Rajasekhara Reddy, at the Police Academy in Hyderabad in the beginning of May, is being waged most aggressively by the SIB and the top police brass. After the release of the letter correspondence between the Party leadership on the one hand, and Varavara Rao and other talks representatives on the other in the first half of May, the police stepped up their campaign of vilification and spreading slander. On May 30, the Nalgonda police arrested Bandi Venkateswarlu and issued a statement in his name making several baseless allegations against the three representatives, particularly Varavara Rao. The statement alleged that VV, Gaddar and Kalyan Rao had tried to make settlements of land disputes getting huge amounts of money in return. The Warangal police, who

are extremely notorious for their lawless behaviour, fake encounter killings, tortures and foisting false cases, then circulated a story that VV had received Rs.50 lakhs from KIMS (Kakatiya Institute of Medical Sciences) for his role in settlement of the land dispute. The SIB officials and other top police officials, who derive a large part of their income from their dubious land deals made through ex-Naxals-turned-renegades like Nayeemuddin, Jadala Nagaraj, Kattula Sammayya (now dead) and several others, could naturally think of only real estate deals for creating scandals against VV and others.

Interestingly, Bandi Venkateswarlu himself was not allowed by the police to meet any media persons for over two weeks to verify the story. And finally when the media persons somehow managed to ask him a few questions when he was being taken to the Court on June 13, he flatly denied anything to do with the so-called statement he was supposed to have made against VV and others. He declared that he was not the author of the statement released in his name and that it was prepared and released by the police officials without his consent and was meant to defame the Maoists. VV too denied any involvement in the land dispute of KIMS. Even otherwise, there is hardly anyone in AP who would believe the concocted charges of the police against the Maoist representatives.

The attacks and harassment of the revolutionary intellectuals continues despite YSR-Jana-Swaranjit Sen harping on their adherence to "the rule of law", whatever that might mean in the police state of AP. On May 30, two underground leaders of the CPI(Maoist)—comrades Ganti Prasadam alias Prabhakar, a member of the APSC, and Surendar, a DC member—were arrested in Aurangabad along with four leaders of the RWA when they were having a meeting. Though the arrest itself was accidental and on suspicion, they were soon handed over to the SIB of AP since they were speaking Telugu. They were identified by the AP police and were first kept in illegal detention for three days with their eyes tied for most of the time. Later they were produced in the court but again remanded to police custody, this time

legally, and a conspiracy case was foisted against them. At the time of writing they still remain in custody and the police have once again asked permission for interrogating the arrested.

### **Resistance by the PLGA:**

The Maoists attacked ten Police stations ever since the failure of the talks in January this year after the government began its armed onslaught on the Maoists suddenly even as it kept chanting about talks. Three of these were in Mahboob Nagar, two in Guntur, one each in Prakasham, Krishna and Anantapur, one in neighbouring Karnataka carried out by the PLGA of Anantapur, and one in Khammam district.

The latest attacks in the first week of June were those on Amrabad PS and Mannanoor police outpost in Mahboob Nagar district and on Kuknoor PS in Khammam district. The attacks in Mahboob Nagar took place simultaneously on the night on June 3<sup>rd</sup> when around hundred Maoists divided themselves into two batches and attacked the two stations. The exchange of fire lasted for over two hours. The Mannanoor police outpost building was completely damaged but the policemen managed to escape into the college building behind the station and thus were saved. Two policemen were injured in the attack.

Though there were no casualties on either side, the attacks blew up the myth propagated by the police that they had taken over the entire Nallamala forest region from the control of the Maoists and that it was firmly under their control. They were boasting that due to their intense combing operations since February this year, the Maoists had to flee from their 'shelter zone' in Nallamala and they are not in a position to launch any major attacks on the police. The very fact that over a hundred guerrillas of the PLGA could gather and carry out daring attacks on the two police stations made the police officials dumbfounded.

Within two days, another PS in Kuknoor village in Khammam district was attacked by around 40 Maoists. The policemen ran away from the station upon seeing the Maoists without firing a shot.

An amusing incident took place in

Chandarlapur mandal in Krishna district. The PS, which was earlier situated outside the village, was recently shifted into the centre of the village due to the fear of an attack by the Maoists. And on the night of June 8, the entire police force fled the PS after locking it as they got information that the PLGA of the CPI(Maoist) might carry out an attack that night.

On May 23, a *bandh* was organized successfully in Anantapur district protesting the killing of Diwakar alias Hanumantha Reddy in a so-called encounter by the police. The election campaign by the two parties, Congress and TDP, in the Penukonda bye-election was called off on the day of the *bandh*.

On June 1, a district *bandh* was organized in Guntur to protest the killing of a comrade in Guthikonda. This was the village where the martyr's column of comrade Charu Majumdar was inaugurated by the state secretary of CPI(Maoist), comrade Ramakrishna on October 11, 2004 and a huge public meeting was held.

On June 13, the opening day of the construction of the Pulichintala project, which is being opposed by the people of Guntur and Nalgonda and benefits only the landlords of Krishna district, the house of the MP of Tenali, Vallabhaneni Balashouri, was blasted by the PLGA in Morjampadu village in Guntur district as the MP was instrumental in getting the project through.

At the time of writing, there are media reports of an exchange of fire between the PLGA and the Greyhounds in Chitriyal village in Chandampet mandal in Nalgonda district in which at least two Greyhounds personnel were seriously injured and were sent to the hospital in Hyderabad. No casualties are reported on the side of the Maoists. This, at last, seems to be a real encounter!

The people of AP will never allow the Naidus/YSRs to sell the State to the imperialists. No amount of repression can destroy their urge for freedom — freedom from the increasingly horrifying backward semi-feudal oppression, pushing thousands to suicide each year. Rather than kill themselves and destroy their families, they will no doubt, pick up the red flag of liberation. ■ ■

### **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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# Which side are you on Lula ?

(Compiled over internet by Ashim)

*“and from every dead child a rifle with eyes,  
and from every crime bullets are born  
which will one day find  
the bull’s eye of your hearts.”.....Pablo Neruda (I’m Explaining a Few Things. . . )*

Despite its vast natural resources and economic wealth, Brazil has an overwhelmingly poor population. Relatively few Brazilians have benefited from the economy. In a country with some of the world’s widest social differences, grinding poverty and misery coexist with great industrial wealth; 20 percent of the population is extremely poor and 1 percent extremely wealthy. According to the UN, Brazil had the most uneven distribution of wealth in the world in 1995. The richest 10 percent of Brazilians hold 65 percent of Brazil’s wealth (GDP), while the poorest 40 percent share only 7 percent. Brazil is placed 65 out of 175 countries in the UN’s 2003 human development index. The vast substratum of the population lacks adequate housing, employment, education, health care, or any social security.

Latin American countries are plundered by illegitimate and usurious external debts and scandalous privatization. The countries of the sub-continent are bound to agreements with the IMF, World Bank and other imperialist institutions that control the economies for the benefit of the monopolies and the interests of the great powers. The continent has been rocked by a wave of mass rebellions, including the toppling of pro-IMF governments in Ecuador, Argentina and most recently Bolivia by mass protests, strikes and uprisings.

There have been some electoral victories for so-called left-leaning governments like those of presidents Néstor Kirchner in Argentina, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in Brazil and Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, that acts as the last hope of the reactionary system. In this context, since the end of 2002, the attention of Latin America has been fixed on the electoral victory and resulting government of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT: Workers’ Party) led by the former metalworker and union leader Luis Inácio da Silva, popularly known as “Lula.” Brazil’s economy is the size of the rest of the continent’s combined, and it is home of the region’s most organized and potentially powerful working class and *potentially radical* landless peasant movement led by the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST: Rural Landless Workers’ Movement). The concentration of land is one of the most

skewed in Brazil and it is almost as old as Brazil itself. Right from the beginning of the colonization of Brazil in the 16th century by the Portuguese emperor the crown turned to the hereditary donatory captaincy system. Under this system, each donee was responsible for colonizing his own captaincy at his own expense. This step was significant because it led to the establishment of latifundia (landowners) in Brazil which hold almost half of the farm land of Brazil and which is only 1% of the population. Tension is high in the Brazilian countryside. Some 4.5 million landless families await resettlement on farms, while 27,000 landowners each sit on estates of more than 15,000 hectares that they have vowed to defend with their own militias. President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva promised to redress the balance by buying up huge tracts of disused land and redistributing it to poor families with no home of their own. His government says 81,000 families were resettled last year. The total is well below the president’s target of 115,000 resettlements. The MST initially after the victory of Lula suspended criticising the government and concentrated their campaign against the rural land owners. The land owners private army and goons have killed almost 65 activist over a year.

The PT is a party based on the working class, which in the past had proclaimed socialism as its aim and promised to repudiate Brazil’s massive foreign debts as well as radically redistribute the land. Millions throughout Latin America hoped that its rise to power would show a way out of the imperialist crisis, as, after coming to power on 27 October 2002 Lula and PT leadership promised to break with neo liberalism through agrarian reform, self-sufficiency in food, investment in public services, social inclusion and participatory democracy. These were the tenets of the government programme, called the “*new paradigm*”. These illusions were fed by many prominent self-proclaimed socialists, who celebrated the PT victory as a turning point in the struggle for democracy and socialism and even “*the end of neo-liberalism*” — the imperialists’ free market ideology. In its first 2 years the PT government has already betrayed its promises to the workers, landless poor and the masses. It implemented IMF-backed austerity measures that the previous, openly rightist governments could not have hoped to get away with. The Brazilian masses’ fate for years to come, and to a great extent that of the rest of the continent, will be determined by whether the working

class can break from the revisionist PT’s grip and lead a successful struggle against it and the imperialist system it represents. The key will be whether revolutionaries learn the lessons of the PT’s betrayal and build a genuinely revolutionary party to lead those struggles.

Through a series of electoral campaigns, the PT leadership signaled the ruling class and imperialists that it would not challenge the system. As the capitalist crisis deepened, PT state and city governments increasingly implemented privatization and cuts in spending on social services, and used the police and army against strikes and land occupations. In the election that brought Lula to power in 2002, by which time the masses had had the experience of the PT in local office, the vote for local PT candidates fell. Thus while illusions in Lula led to him winning 61 percent of the popular vote overall, in local elections the PT did miserably.

By 2002 the Brazilian ruling class was facing a political crisis. The previous Cardoso regime had advanced neo-liberal austerity measures as far as it could. The economy had deteriorated, mass unemployment and poverty were growing, and the government was embroiled in corruption scandals. Meanwhile, mass struggles were erupting across the continent. When Argentina’s pro-IMF government was pushed from power, Brazil’s ruling class feared it could be next. Lula saw his opportunity and launched a new campaign to win bourgeois support. The PT leadership offered to use its remaining prestige and power over the masses to push further neo-liberal reforms. Seeing the capitalists’ fear of the growing upheavals and of the prospect of Brazil defaulting on its debts, the PT leaders planned to win imperialism’s backing by promoting themselves as the only alternative to growing radical anti-imperialism and socialism throughout Latin America. The PT leaders planned to offer to continue to pay the country’s debts in order to negotiate a lowering of U.S. barriers to Brazilian products. **But to win the support of the compradors and the imperialists, the PT leadership understood that it would have to prove that it was ready to rule by overturning every one of the party’s important commitments to the masses. All references to socialism and anti-imperialism were purged from the party program. The demand to repudiate the debt was junked, replaced by a call to audit and re-negotiate it. Then Lula and his advisors decided to forge an electoral alliance with**

**the openly imperialist Liberal Party; its leader, textile magnate José Alencar, joined Lula as his running-mate and vice presidential candidate. This deal proved that the PT campaign was for a class-collaborationist popular front, an alliance with openly comprador classes designed to carry out the imperialist program.**

During the election campaign, in a move designed to pressure the PT from the left, a referendum was organized by the CUT, the MST, left organizations and churches on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the foreign debt. Ten million people participated, with 95 percent voting in favor of repudiating both. In response, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick arrogantly warned that Brazil would have to choose between keeping the FTAA or trading "with Antarctica." Lula had in the past condemned the FTAA as a "type of economic annexation of Latin America by the U.S.", and the outraged masses expected him to hit back at this arrogant imperialist. Instead, he rejected the referendum and committed the PT to paying the debt and renegotiating the FTAA with the Bush Administration. "We have a number of things to settle with Comrade Bush," Lula quipped.

Then, when incumbent President Cardoso signed an emergency \$30 billion loan to prevent a default on the debt, Lula rushed to embrace the deal. When the MST occupied the estate of Cardoso's son, Lula condemned the occupation. He further demanded that the MST cease all occupations for the duration of the electoral campaign. The MST leadership dutifully agreed in the hope of receiving places and influence in a PT government. To maintain popular support, the PT did promise some reforms, including raising the minimum wage, implementing a modest and gradual land redistribution, and launching a "Zero Hunger" campaign that would provide food subsidies for Brazil's millions of malnourished poor. Lula on the one hand is trying to save his face before the landless poor and MST and on the other hand allowing the Imperial agro business which is concentrating more and more lands with the collaboration of traditional landlords for producing cash crops and genetically

modified crops like soybean, cotton, sugarcane for the world market.

The imperialist agro business TNCs already identified Brazil as their future reserve of readily available land from where they can reap and are already reaping huge profits. They are very much worried at the mild land distribution programme as those lands will go out of their hand. "Agro business is violent. The big producers have their project, where profits and capital are the priority. They are connected to the rulers in the state of Pará. They are the ones that finance the election campaigns for the governor and state MP's... They have their accomplices within the corrupt police and courts... that collaborate with their passivity", says Dom Tomás Balduino, chair of the CPT (a church movement that deals with the land issue). The violence in the countryside, against landless, small peasants, trade union activists, lawyers etc, is endemic, especially in the north and the state of Pará. Between 1985 and 2004 there were 1,379 registered killings connected to land conflicts, and according to the CTP 523 (38 per cent) of those occurred in Pará. Only ten cases, or 1.9 per cent in Pará, lead to trials! Only 13 people have been convicted. During the 23 first months of the Lula government alone 58 rural workers were killed, far more than the 44 killed during the last three years of the last president, Cardoso. The missionary Dorothy Stang was killed because she fought against illegal logging and the interests of the timber industry. According to the FSC (an NGO that monitors forest management) illegal logging stands for 42 per cent of the total logging in the Amazons and has a turnover of 2.5 billion dollars a year".....(socialistworld.net). Lula has completely aligned himself with the landlords and big agro business run by imperialist capital.

The PT leadership's campaign for imperialist support was strikingly effective. Soon leaders of various business associations were rushing to endorse him. Soon even the IMF's Managing Director, Horst Köhler, had words of praise for Lula, calling him "really a leader of the 21st century." Germany's State Secretary of Finance, Caio Koch Weser, summed up how

Lula's presidency could be so advantageous for imperialism: "The key is that the [neo-liberal] reform momentum gets the benefit of the enormous credibility that the president brings." (Financial Times, Jan. 27, 2003.)

**The parliamentary political parties in any semi colony, despite the fight among the parties for political power, on the basic question of economy, there is no fundamental difference between them. This should not be considered surprising however. We have seen the phenomenon in other countries too, where similar "center-left" formations, which came to power on a wave of anti imperialist sentiment followed the same, and sometimes, even worse economic policies than the military dictatorship or right wing regimes which preceded them. This is a direct result of the pernicious effect of imperialism and the comprador nature of the big bourgeoisie and shows the increasing irrelevance of the legislative institutions of the state, such as the parliament, in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society.**

The hero of the WSF has been proved to nothing more than a imperialist stooge. So it is crystal clear now that no "center left /social democratic" alliance can bring real revolutionary change in a semi colony .They only act as a populist mask for the oppressive ruling class .To free Brazil from the grip of compradors, landowners and imperialists a strong Maoist party is needed which can lead the proletariat and poor and landless peasants towards a true new democratic revolution, which will remove all the feudal and imperialist landholdings, distribute land to the landless and poor, create a local market for the nationalist self reliant bourgeoisie and take the country in the path of true socialism . The massive proletariat and landless poor of Brazil must come out from the spell of reformists and revisionists and wage militant battle against the cronies of imperialism. Even the spontaneous peasant movements of the peasantry are bound to lead to a dead-end unless it is guided by a genuine communist party to build a powerful armed struggle.



## Continued from page 17

Barman( later killed in a fake encounter by the police) of Dakshin Parokata, Chikliguri, his nephew Dipen Roy was arrested. It was a case of 'badli arrest'. The sons of the elder brother of Ramani Barman, the elder brother of Rohini, came all the way from Assam to meet them after hearing the news of their uncle's death. They were picked up from the road and detained illegally. In the

absence of Bijoy Barman of Pashchim Nararthali, Kamakshyaguri, two of his brothers, Bimal and Shbhas were arrested. These are cases of 'badli arrests'. Prajit Das (later killed in Jalpaiguri jail) of village Changmari, Kumargram was at one time re-arrested after being released on bail in one case.

All these instances clearly make a

mockery of Buddhadev Bhattacharya's tall claim that rule of law prevails in West Bengal. It is not the rule of law but the rule of the jungle that prevails in this so-called oasis of democracy called West Bengal. How long will the ruling classes and their political representatives be allowed to continue to do so is a question to be decided by the people?





# Kamtapuri People Face Brutal Repression by CPM Govt. of West Bengal

—Rudra

For the last 4 years or more, the CPM-led Government of West Bengal has been pursuing a policy of ruthless state repression against their political opponents like the CPI(Maoist), the Kamtapuris and others. A large number of people have been arrested and tortured. **The total number of people arrested for their alleged Maoist connection by the CPM-led government so far is more than 1100 and the number of those arrested for their Kamtapuri connection is nearly 1400.** Most of those arrested are poor villagers who find it difficult to make both ends meet, be they settled in south Bengal or in the north.

The government has particularly targeted the erstwhile CPI(M-L) People's War and the Maoist Communist Centre of India for marginalisation and elimination from the political map of West Bengal, as has been made amply clear by Buddhadev Bhattacharya, the chief-cum-home minister in his budget speeches of 2001, 2003 and 2005 as also in speeches made from time to time on various occasions. Buddhadev Bhattacharya, the self-declared champion of human rights, is in reality, the most cunning violator of it. His government has given the widest possible powers to the police and para-military forces to arrest, intimidate and implicate anybody on fake charges if they are in any way associated with or have belief in Maoism or Kamtapuri ideology. In this way, he has encouraged the policy of impunity for oppressive police personnel and arrogantly brushed aside all criticism of his government's repressive policy. The recent arrests, among others, of Sushil Roy, who happens to be one of the leading members of the CPI(Maoist), and who, is now in his mid sixties and in poor health, having lived a fearless, sacrificial life dedicated to the cause of fundamental social transformation, shows clearly that freedom of political activity and freedom to have and express one's political opinion is being trampled underfoot by this fascist government.

We would like to give our readers an idea of the extent of state repression that is being perpetrated in north Bengal by the CPM-led government, particularly of the Rajbanshi Kamtapuri people. A team of the Bandi Mukti Committee (BMC), i.e. the Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners, went to North Bengal to investigate into allegations of state repression on the Kamtapuri people in areas such as Siliguri, Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar in late April this year. The BMC issued a Press Release of its findings on 3-5-2005. We have got a copy of it and reproducing

it to let our readers know how, in the name of 'Marxism' and 'democracy' the Buddhadev-led government, has already imposed a fascist type of repressive rule in West Bengal. The following is the essence of that report:

The repression on the Rajbanshi people is of such an acute nature that they are mortally afraid to even let themselves be known as of the Kamtapuri nationality. This fear-psychosis is very much evident in areas such as Moynaguri, Chikliguri, Kamakhshaguri and Kumargram. Once, in late December 2000, when the West Bengal government started '*Operation Kamtapuri*', about 1000 people were picked up, brutally tortured and thrown into prison and the total number of arrests rose to nearly 1400. The terror has become so widespread that any person having surnames such as 'Roy' or 'Barman' were branded as 'terrorists' or a member of the KLO (Kamtapuri Liberation Organisation). There was a time when no resident of Kumargram was allowed lodging in any hotel in Siliguri due to police directives.

The situation is such that even people connected with the KPP (Kamtapuri People's Party), which is a parliamentary party, are being driven from pillar to post to evade repression and harassment by the police and the ruling CPM party.

There are at least 12 cases of 'fake encounters' leading to deaths, according to Kamtapuri sources. Two of the victims were Haripada Roy (David) and Rohini Barman. The investigation team went to the hamlet of Haripada Roy at village Uttar Bairatiguri, Dhupguri on 22 April and met his family members and talked to them. The body of Haripada was found at Mathabhanga, Beltali. The bullets that caused his death were shot from behind and pierced his body which shows that bullets were fired from close range. The other victim, Rohini Barman has his village hamlet in Dakshin Parokata, P.O. Chikliguri. He died possibly in the month of September 2002 at a place called Hatipota, Moinabari. The BMC team met Rohini's mother Sarathi Barman and his wife Rebati Barman. Rebati was all tears when she related the incident. A total of 14/15 bullets pierced through his chest and the right side of his face. He was shot from the front.

To suppress political opponents and to terrorise the people the CPM-led govt. has resorted to all sorts of brutal methods which are only comparable to the black days of the S.S.Ray regime of 1970. Even political prisoners are being murdered in cold blood in the prisons. There are three such deaths — Kalidas Roy and Prajit Das in Jalpaiguri Jail and Yasin Kabir (arrested for his alleged

connection with SIMI activists) in Malda Jail. The team went to the place of Prajit Das (Natal) at village Changmari, Alipurduar. He was arrested on 20 March 2004 and died on 8 March 2005 in Alipurduar Jail at 11 PM. There were marks of injury on his body.

No human rights organization is being allowed to meet the political prisoners. When the BMC applied for permission to see political prisoners in Siliguri and Jalpaiguri jails, they were told that prior permission from the IG (Prison) was necessary. And the reality is that permission is never given. It appears that the government has much to hide from the public.

The physical tortures perpetrated by the jail authorities on the political prisoners remind one of the brutal state repression of the Siddhartha Ray regime of the 1970s. Very recently, Animesh Chakrabarty and Pradip Chatterjee have been tortured brutally on the direction of the Superintendent of Siliguri Sub-jail. The whole administration has become so de-humanised that they did not at all care to make any arrangement for Bijoy Roy to go home on parole to see the dead body of his father who died on 22-04-05.

Although all these prisoners, with alleged Maoist or Kamtapuri connections, have been charged with the so common 'offence' of waging war against the state, none was given the status of political prisoner. This is not only a clear departure from the existing 1992 Act, passed by the government of West Bengal, but also a clear and deliberate violation of it.

As in South Bengal, so also in North Bengal, there are innumerable cases of illegal detention, re-arrest, and 'badli arrests' (substitute arrests). Never, at the time of arrest, has the WB police force cared to adhere to the Supreme Court's 11-point guidelines (vide Justice D.K.Basu versus Government of West Bengal 1996 case). In the absence of Haripada Roy (later killed in a fake encounter by the police and para-military forces) of Uttar Bairatiguri, Dhupguri, his father, Ganapati Roy was forcibly taken to the police station, kept there for 3-4 days without framing any charges and without producing him in the court. It is a case of illegal detention. In the absence of Biswanath Roy of Uttar Madhabdanga, Mainaguri, his father Upeshwar Roy, and mother and uncle were illegally detained in the police station for 3 days and all the members of his family were subjected to humiliation and physical and mental torture. In the absence of Rohini

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## One Month Long Anti-imperialist Campaign

— Ranjit

This year, like the last one, Lok Sangram Manch of Punjab (LSM) commemorated 23rd March as martyrs day to pay revolutionary homage to martyrs Shahid Bhaghat Singh, Rajguru & Sukhdev. For this a month long campaign was launched by organising mass meetings, flag hoisting, slogan writing, culminating in big functions at different places. During this campaign the revolutionary ideas and goals of the martyrs were widely propagated among the people. It also called on the people to fulfill the martyr's unfinished dreams. This time, this campaign presented a different look because it carried the message of the unity of two revolutionary democratic or anti-imperialist and anti-feudal organizations i.e. LSM and Jamhoori Morcha and acquired the new name LSM. The unity of the two organisations into one was by itself a real homage to the martyrs of 23rd March. This unity highly enthused the followers of both the organizations. This unity also cherished the hopes of the common people, that it will carry forward the struggle, representing the interests and problems of the people.

In this enthusiastic atmosphere, thousands of leaflets and posters were displayed in many areas. Through this material the message of the martyrs was conveyed to the people to fulfill their objectives, unfinished dreams and unfinished work through intensifying the people's struggles. The anti-imperialist campaign primarily focused on three political points: The first was the exposure of the impact of so-called economic reforms and imperialist penetration on the lives of the people. The second was on the US imperialist's aggressive war-mongering policies worldwide, with the focus on Iraq. And the third was the imperialist and expansionist role in Nepal to suppress the growing Maoist movement in the country.

This campaign was initiated from Hussaniwala, Distt. Ferozepur on 23rd March by holding a programme at the 'martyr's column'. But on that day the CM of Punjab was to arrive there. Hence there was a big rush of lumpens, chamchas and governmental sycophants. The district authorities refused permission to the Manch to hold a function on that day. After a long struggle this restriction was removed and permission was granted. This was granted only two days before the function in the background that the Manch had already declared to hold a function there, even if permission was not granted. Then

there arose the problem of acquiring a proper place for the programme. The co-operation of the village people in every respect not only helped in solving this problem but also proved their real bond with the Manch. The village people also arranged a 'langar' for the Manch programme. When early in the morning the Manch leader, Balwant Makhu, reached the site of programme with his team of cultural workers, there were police everywhere. There were lots of police nakas everywhere together with the cheap film songs. At that time the number of people was not many as the police created much hurdles for the team. They were allowed only when they threatened to organise a protest. Hence the real inheritors of the martyrs reached the martyrs column and paid homage, shouting revolutionary slogans and by taking an oath to carry forward the unfinished task.

Thereafter two diametrically opposite programmes were held there. One was organised by the real followers of the martyrs represented by the LSM and the second was organised by the murderers of the martyrs i.e. hypocritical Congress leaders. They sang songs on the supposed independence while the Manch called it a fake independence. In the Congress programme vulgar songs were relayed, while from the Manch platform revolutionary songs, plays, action songs and choreographies were displayed. The leaders of the revolutionary mass organisations addressed this function and highlighted the ideals of the martyrs, and called on the people to carry on their unfinished tasks. The cultural team presented their revolutionary programme. In the evening the demonstration organised by the Manch attracted the attention of thousands of people. The rally held at the martyrs column was highly surcharged. For the successful completion of this programme, meetings and rallies were organised in dozens of villages since many days before, and a fund collection campaign was also successfully carried out. Ferozepur city too was covered by this campaign.

The Campaign's next big programme was launched in Smalsar (Moga) on 24th March. In the past this village was a stronghold of movement but there has been no activity since a long time due to many reasons. After many years the Manch held an attractive propaganda campaign and mobilised the masses. The gathering of people was beyond the expectations of the Manch. Leaders of the BKU (Krantikari), Pandu Mazdoor Manch, LSM,

Aurat Mukti Manch's and a leader, Surinder Kaur Dhudike addressed to the gathering. Revolutionary songs, action songs, choreographies were presented by the revolutionary cultural front (Krantikari sabhiacharak kender). The plays like 'Behkda Roh', 'Chone Tamassa' 'Maowad' were also presented. About 2000 people gathered for the function.

The next programme was held on 25th March at Matta village, Distt. Faridkot. For the preparation of the programme at Matta village, mass meetings and rallies were held in the villages Ajit Gill, Dalianwali, Rameana Matta, Romana, Sawewala, Bhagtuana, Rorkipura and Dhapai. During the campaign committees were organised at villages Rameana, Dalianwali and Romana. Although the programme started late about 1500 gathered. Darshan Singh Sarawan was the stage secretary and a number of leaders from the mass organisations spoke. A revolutionary cultural front from Moga presented the plays "Behkda Roh", "Begmo Di Dhi", "Maowad", "Chone Tamassa", and revolutionary songs.

This was followed by a programme on 27th March at Kassoana village, Distt. Ferozepur. For the programme at village Kassoana a big meeting was held. Here, about 400 people gathered.

On the same day a programme was also held at Baggike Modd, Distt. Ferozepur. Because of the backwardness of the area this is a stronghold of religious activists like Dera Sachcha Sauda, Dera Beas, and because the coming festivals of Holi and Bhandara of Dera Beas people were busy in these activities. In spite of all this the Manch has developed a strong democratic base in the area by continuing a fight against all forms of oppression, violence, discrimination, during the last few years. On the call of LSM approximately 3000 gathered for the programme. Before the programme a propaganda and fund raising campaign were conducted in over 15 villages of this area. Revolutionary songs, revolutionary plays, choreographies, action songs were presented by teams of the cultural front, Ferozepur and also the Lok Kala Manch, Mandi Mullanpur.

On 29th March the next programme was held at Dhuri, Distt. Sangrur. This took place at night. The preparations for the programme was done by holding mass meetings in nearby villages. LSM was a new name for that area because the front was made after the unity. Leaders from the LSM, Aurat Mukti Manch and Radical Student Union addressed the gathering. The people's gathering was near about 700.

The revolutionary cultural team from Dhuri and Moga presented their plays.

The next programme was held on 30th March at Guru Harsahai village, Distt. Ferozepur. In this area of Punjab the LSM is emerging as a rising force in comparison to the anti people parliamentary parties. The people of dozens of villages came to know about the Manch as a 'Vote boycott' organisation and as a fighter of militant struggles. This was the result of constant and comprehensive activities of the Manch over the years and the propagation of revolutionary democratic politics. The Manch achieved this prestige because of its militant struggles through which it challenged the evil gentry of the area and also due to the struggles against murders, kidnappings, police repression, robberies, and thefts and gundaism, protected by the authorities. This time the gathering of the people on 23rd March in commemoration of martyrs was qualitatively different. Among the gathering of about 2,500 people the number of rural workers and poor peasants were larger. People reached the venue in their tractor trolleys shouting slogans. Despite the absence of women organization leaders it is a matter of satisfaction that hundreds of women participated in the programme. Before this programme a big campaign of propaganda and collection of funds was launched covering the large and small villages. The leaflet published by the Manch reached every door. The people gave an encouraging response to the campaign. During the later stages big meetings and rallies were organised in specific villages. Because of this successful campaign a large

number of men and women from about 15 neighbouring villages reached the site of the programme. Huge martyr's gates were erected on the roads to Muktsar, Faridkot and Goluke from Guruharsahai. The programme was initiated in the pandal decorated with flags, Mattos. A two minute silence was observed with the flag hoisting. The Manch's young leader, Jail Singh, from Chappa Chiri solmanised the flag hoisting. Balwant Makhu, Kundan Arniwala, Gurmeet Judge, Ajmer Singh, Baldev Abohar were the main leaders among the people who paid their homage to the martyrs. In addition to this the revolutionary cultural teams from Moga and Ferozepur presented their programmes. By the raising of hands some resolutions were passed by the people: to remove the emergency in Nepal, to stop the brutal violence upon the peasant movement in Andhra, Bihar, Dandkarania, to stop the privatization of the Electricity Board, to abrogate the bank loans and debt of moneylenders of the peasants and workers, to stop the detention of the peasants, to eradicate satta, gambling and sale of poisonous medicines in the market and to provide employment to E.T.T. teachers and unemployed youths.

On 31st March a programme was held at village Kawanwali (in Monga district). This area comes in a belt of small sized villages. It was the initiation of the Manch in this area. In dozens of villages of this area rallies and meetings were arranged. The revolutionary cultural team front Moga's artists boys and girls wrote the slogans on walls the whole day and met the people directly. The gathering of people was

approximately 10,000. The revolutionary cultural team from Moga presented their plays on the stage. Leaders of the BKU (Krantikari), LSM and Aurat Mukti Manch addressed the gathering.

Then a programme was held on 2nd April at Dhapali village, Distt. Bathinda. Before the programme the meetings were held in the area. Posters, leaflets and a fund campaign were launched. The gathering of people was approximately 2000. The pandal was packed and the people even sat on the roofs of houses. Revolutionary songs, plays, choreographies and actions songs were presented by the revolutionary-cultural front of Moga.

The final programme was held on 3rd April at Nathana village, Distt. Nathana. Rallies were held at Nathana, Bhuchio, Poohla, Jandawala, Kalyan, Khialiwalwa for the preparation of the programme. About 1000 people gathered for the programme. Besides speeches, the Lok Kala Manch, Mandi Mullanpur presented their plays "Mein Phir Partaga", and "Begmo Di Dhi". Also the revolutionary-cultural front Moga presented their play "Maowad" and "Choone Tammassa Hindustan" and other choreographies and action songs.

Through this campaign the Manch paid homage to the martyrs as well as presented the martyrs ideology from a revolutionary point of view. The Manch called on the people to carry forward the militant struggles and make the people aware about the present political situation. The people were also made aware of the ongoing peasant struggles in the hilly and forests regions of the country. ■ ■

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the rulers of Nepal to crush the Maoist movement going on in that country. The statements made were even more aggressive than that of the NDA. The Congress's foreign minister's first visit was to Nepal for this very purpose. It also sabotaged the SAARC meeting due to be held in Bangladesh and have made open threatening noises against that country. It has been more actively intervening in the events of Sri Lanka and working to split the LTTE and prop up a renegade faction to promote internecine killings.

Such then are the ruthless plans of the UPA government to crush any discontent of the masses by brute force. Behind the human face of a so-called secular Congress-CPM combine one has the vampire-like policies of a monster which has a long tradition of serving the ruling classes from the times of British rule. Yet all is not bright in the UPA camp.

#### Factional Feuds and Internal Crisis

The massive and open feuds within the BJP have been the best performance aspect for the UPA. The public squabbling amongst even the leadership of the BJP/RSS outfits was so intense that all opposition to the UPA has been minimal. This has been its major asset and has hidden the factional feuds within it. In Bihar the infights were so acute that even a government could not be formed, with two UPA constituents treating each other as their major enemies. In Kerala a major section of the Congress (I) split and formed a new Party. In Maharashtra the relations between the Congress and the NCP has reached breaking point on a number of occasions. In Delhi the entire Congress leadership revolted against Sheila Dixit who continues due to her close links with Queen Sonia. At the centre a number of ministers are at loggerheads with others. Power, of course, unites them all, but the unity is fragile and can break with the smallest of

disturbances.

It is these growing infights within the ruling classes and their parties that can help act as a stumbling block on some of their plans. Though they are fully united on basic policy — economic reforms and brutal repression — the widening cracks can paralyse action to some extent.

There is no real opposition to these policies of the UPA from within the framework of parliament. All are party to these games, with each seeking to gain the maximum for itself. On policy there are nominal differences. So any really opposition has to be built outside the framework of the parliament through a huge mass movement of all progressive and revolutionary forces. It is this and this alone that can act to beat back the reactionary policies of the UPA and their hangers on throughout the country. ■ ■

# Polarisation within the M-L Camp : Maoists — Revisionists

— Suman

With the merger of the PW and the MCCI and formation of a revolutionary Centre in the CPI(Maoist), the line of demarcation between Marxism and revisionism is getting more clearly drawn. All fence sitters are being forced to take a stand — either with revolution or against it. And so it was with the formation of the ‘new’ party, the CPI(ML) at a conference in Vijaywada. It is yet another ML revisionist centre following in the lines of the Liberation. But this new grouping, unlike the Liberation, which has a programme similar to that of the CPM, maintains some rhetoric of its Maoist past. Other such types of revisionists and right-wing groups are also going in the same direction. Of course, all these revisionist parties claim to be the inheritors of the great Naxalbari struggle, with which they have nothing in common today. They even evoke the name of Charu Mazumdar whose great legacy they have betrayed. All this is only to usurp the past revolutionary glory to justify their present revisionist practice.

In end January of this year the Kanu Sanyal led CPI(ML) {which itself was formed by the merger of some groups} and the CPI(ML)Red Flag merged to form yet another CPI(ML). As per their Bulletin released in March 2005 the basis of their unity was against revisionism and left-sectarianism (i.e. the Maoists). Both of which they have put on an equal plane. In fact there is greater emphasis on attacking the Maoists, with a separate article devoted to that, and entitled “*Maoists are not the inheritors of Naxalbari*”. In this article and throughout the Bulletin, just like the government, they call the Maoists “*anarchists and terrorists*”. In the entire Bulletin there is not a single mention of armed struggle, or the need to prepare for it, and merely continue to harp on mass struggles and mass line as the point of demarcation with the so-called *terrorists*. All armed struggle is clubbed as “*individual annihilation*” and as being opposed to the mass line. But nowhere through the Bulletin do they say how they will seize power, or how the mass struggle will be linked to the armed struggle.

In fact Lenin has said that the seizure of state power by armed force is the central task of any revolution. But on this key question they are totally silent. And this is where their revisionism comes in, no matter even if they invoke Mao’s name. Theirs is not a mere deviation from the path of protracted people’s war but the very

negation of it. It is then not surprising that their Conference was held in AP just at that time when the State government had begun to launch a massive killing spree not only against the Maoists, but even against three to four other ML groups.

## Question of Mass Line

Right through the Bulletin the main point on which they keep harping is *mass struggle and mass line*. They use the two interchangeably as though those involved in *mass struggles* automatically adopt the *mass line* while those involved in armed struggle go against it. As this is the central point that they seek to make, particularly in order to demarcate themselves from the Maoists, it is necessary to expose the confusion sought to be created on this issue.

Firstly, mass struggle is not equivalent to mass line. A mass struggle entails the mobilisation of the masses, whether on partial demands, or political demands or even for armed struggle. On the other hand the mass line is an ideological approach to be adopted in one style and method of work. It is an attitude that should be adopted in all work, whether amongst the masses or in the Party or even in the Army. It demands of all cadres and leaders to be attentive to the needs and views of the masses with whom they are working and is diametrically opposite to a bureaucratic style of work. As is well known even those leading *mass struggles* have, in many places, not at all been adopting a mass line, as is evident with most trade union leaders and their bureaucratic style of functioning. Amongst the masses the mass line entails the approach “*from the masses to the masses*”. In the Party the *mass line* entails taking into consideration the views of all cadres and not lording it over them, and being concerned with their well being. In the Army it entails mobilising the entire masses for the people’s war and building vast militias in addition to the regular forces. It also entails not functioning like a bourgeois army with commanders acting in an autocratic way.

In 1945 the CPC in its *Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party* explained the question of Mass Line thus: *As Comrade Mao Tse-tung says, the correct line should be “from the masses to the masses”. To ensure that the line really comes from the masses and particularly that it really goes back to the masses, there must be close ties not only between the Party and the masses outside the Party*

*(between the class and the people), but above all between the Party’s leading bodies and the masses within the Party (between the cadres and the rank-and-file); in other words there must be a correct organisational line. Therefore, just as in each period of the Party’s history Comrade Mao Tse-tung has laid down the political line representing the interest of the masses, so he has laid down an organisational line serving the political line and maintaining ties with the masses both inside and outside the Party.*

So, from this it is clear that along with the political line based on the mass line an “*organisational line*” has to be adopted both within the masses and the Party. Within the masses it entails going deep amongst them, finding out what are their needs and thinking and then linking these to the immediate tasks of the revolution. To merely go by the views of the masses and not link it to the tasks of the revolution would result in tailism; to not consider their views and needs would result in sectarianism and dogmatism. The former would negate the role of the vanguard Party; the latter would result in alienating the masses as the views we express would in no way be connected to their existing level of consciousness. The new CPI (ML) type revisionists have, in fact, no need to go deep amongst the masses and study their life and consciousness as they only plan to mobilise them in mass struggles and not for revolution. Such mass struggles come out of their existing life conditions and is easily seen; the task of drawing them towards revolution is far more difficult and therefore requires deep study of the masses and their situation.

Such mass struggles have been undertaken by the CPI, CPM and in fact all bourgeois parties on a bigger scale than either Red Flag or the erstwhile COI(ML) could even dream about. And as for mobilization of the masses, did not the CPI(Maoist) in AP indicate the massive mass support through the lakhs that attended their meetings in spite of the repressive hurdles just a couple of months earlier, before the crack-down was once again started? The same type of support is seen to exist in most areas of armed struggle, like Jharkhand, Bihar, Dandakaranya — that too in an atmosphere of repression, arrests, killings and various other forms of harassment. In fact the Maoists have built large mass organisations amongst the peasantry and tribals, and to some extent amongst the workers, students and also various other



sections of the masses. For their three decades of existence can this 'new' party indicate even a fraction of the mass mobilization as that of the Maoists?

But the question is not only the ability to mobilise the masses or not. The question is as to what direction are we leading the masses. Is it for people's war and for the seizure of power or for something else? This is the cardinal question before any serious Marxist. If it is the former the approach will get reflected in all aspects of one's practice, including methods of organization and methods of struggle. If it is the latter, that too will get reflected.

So, for example, the entirely legal functioning of the leaders of this new party for decades is an indication of their lack of seriousness about revolution. India is not a developed country where there may exist such legal functioning of a genuine revolutionary Party for quite some period (even that may now get affected in the post 9/11 growing fascistic environment). It is a country which has no such democratic niceties as can be seen by the brutal repression on even any militant trade union struggle, let alone revolutionary struggle. What happened to the recent Rajasthan peasant struggles, what happened to the struggles of the UP electricity employees; what happened to the numerous struggles of the government employees; and what happens to the hundreds of struggles of workers in the unorganized sector who are allowed absolutely no rights what-so-ever? Though we will use legal opportunities to the extent that it exists, it is unforeseeable that a supposedly communist party having revolutionary tasks in a country like India can remain legal for so long. The continuous legal existence of the top party leaders, let alone leading revolutionary struggles, indicates that they restrict even the mass struggles so that it stays within legal confines.

So, there is mass struggle and mass struggle — done by the ruling class parties, done by the revisionists and also done by genuine communist revolutionaries. The question is as to what is the aim and direction of these mass struggles even while taking up the partial demands. Most use it to create and electoral base for their future vote-banks, while CRs use it for furthering the armed revolution. If revolution is not on the agenda of such parties as the new CPI(ML) the State feels no threat and they allow such a legal existence. And this new party's continuous attacks on Maoists as "*anarchist and terrorists*" are nothing but music to the ears of the enemy forces. Not surprisingly the AP government gave full freedom to these

people to launch their new party, while at the same time mowing down others in cold blood. And through this entire Conference there was not a word of condemnation against the state government's actions though it had already reached cruel and brutal forms by the time of their Conference. By then, in AP, even liberals had come out in condemnation against the brutalities and the fake encounters, but not these so-called proletarians. Why? That too when the Conference was being held in AP!!!

So, the genuine cadres in this party should seriously consider as to what is the real role of the leaders of this party and not get misled by their subterfuge of counterposing their so-called mass struggle to the armed struggle and totally distorting the understanding of the question of "*mass line*".

### Question of Unity of CRs

Here there is one other important question that revisionists and right-deviationists seek to capitalize on — i.e. the desire for unity amongst the rank-and-file of the various ML groups and parties. Unity is not a goal in itself but one aspect of a means to the goal. The goal is the New Democratic Revolution and the unity of communist revolutionaries is an important step for the achievement of that. But, at the level of the Party, Unity must be of those who really desire revolution and are working in a revolutionary way. Not revisionists, who merely use the Maoist label to dupe the people. After all, the unity one seeks at the level of the party is that of a vanguard — no flabby 'vanguard' can lead a revolution, for that it requires decisiveness, determination, foresight and revolutionary practice. It should not be forgotten that there was a united party in this country for nearly half a century but the revolution did not go even one step forward due to its revisionist line. It required Naxalbari to make the clear break from this past and bring revolution onto the agenda in India. Though then a small force compared to the revisionists, the future lay with the new forces, not the degenerate and old worn-out 'Marxists'.

As Lenin said, in order to unite, clear lines of demarcation needs to be made between Marxism and revisionism. He further clarified that unity must be based not only on ideological and political questions but also on the question of the tactics of the proletariat. The point before us all, is to further the revolutionary process for the seizure of power. Mass struggles have gone on in this country for nearly eight decades under different types of 'communists'; a full century has nearly

passed. But are they even one step nearer the revolutionary transformation of society? They are not. So, any unity must further the revolutionary struggles and organisations and not act as a hurdle to it, or dilute it in any way.

So the unity must be principled, and so only by a common understanding and practice on all the above questions can this process be furthered. As has been reported in the media the unity between the MCCI and the PW was achieved only after five detailed documents were first finalized and a full critical review of their past was done, before going for organisational unity. Unless there is a commonality on all basic questions, the unity can be short-lived as has been seen with some earlier unities. It is utopian and harmful to expect unity between those serious on armed struggle and those not. Of course, at the mass level and on specific issues there can and must be unity with many for basic minimum tasks. What we are talking about here is the unity to form an effective vanguard to lead the revolutionary movement forward and build a new society free from exploitation.

No doubt, with the unity of the bulk of the genuine Maoists into the CPI(Maoist) — the process has been going on since the past decade with many forces merging with the two main revolutionary streams of the M-L (PW, PU) and the MCC before both themselves merged — the polarization will fast take place between those serious about revolution and those not. The formation of this second CPI (ML) is part of this process where the revisionists are also being polarized to save themselves from extinction. Now, within the M-L camp there are two clear-cut centres — the revisionist centre of the two CPI(ML)s and the revolutionary centre of the CPI(Maoist). In between there lie many groups and individuals all will have to choose on which side they stand. Do they stand on the side of the real revolutionaries or do they jump into the revisionist quagmire. These are the only two alternatives before all; any centrist position in effect means joining with the latter.

It is also reported that the CPI(Maoist) maintains that there are still genuine revolutionary forces and individuals outside their party. And they will endeavour their best to have unity with them in the course of development of the revolutionary struggles. It may be commented here that the revolutionaries outside the CPI(Maoist) too have to take initiative. No doubt, the coming tide of revolutionary people's struggles will make the lines of demarcation even sharper. ■ ■

# The Issue of Water of Punjab Rivers

## A victim of divisive politics of Indian rulers

—Amrit

With the Punjab Termination of Water Agreement Act, 2004 unanimously passed by the Punjab Legislative Assembly lately, the issue of waters of Punjab again hotted up on the political scene of India. It is also still smouldering. This act achieved the status of legislation on July 12, 2004, on a single day by being put up, passed, and approved by the governor. The Captain Amerinder Singh's Congress Govt of Punjab put it up all of a sudden. Except for the BSP, all the ruling class vote-grabbing parties, the members of Punjab Legislative Assembly, particularly Akalis and the Punjab unit of BJP, supported it. It is to be remembered that a two-member bench of the Supreme Court, by its decision on June 4, 2004, directed the central government that the pending work of digging up of the Satluj-Yamuna Link Canal in Punjab should be organised by handing it over to some central agency by the 15th July of last year. The Punjab Govt. should hand over the documents of land concerning the link canal to that central agency. It should provide security to the employees and labourers of that agency. This decision has been taken in view of the non-implementation of the supreme court's decision on 15th January 2002 and after rejecting the Punjab Govt.'s petitions to the Supreme Court for consideration. The Supreme court has even decided that the Punjab Govt. should compensate for the expenditure on the litigation. In such a situation there were two alternatives before the Captain's Govt. of Punjab—First, to implement this belligerent and wrong decision of the Supreme Court; Second, it should not be implemented, it should be postponed. This Bill is a part of the latter choice.

### The factors pressing the Congress Rulers

Had the Captain's Govt. of Punjab implemented the decision, the peasantry of Punjab already facing an acute problem of water shortage would have badly resented it. The plight of the Congress manifested during the parliamentary elections would have further been affected negatively. The implementation of the decision in this situation would have proved such a bone in the throat of the Congress rulers, as would neither go down the throat, nor come out.

Secondly, the implementation of the decision of the Supreme Court would have provided a fully fertile ground for the Akalis of various hues — the arch rivals of the Congress — to further strengthen their

political position and win over the peasantry of Punjab to its side.

Thirdly, the internal feud in the Congress party would have further aggravated. The Captain's faction itself would have been isolated in the Punjab Congress. The UPA central government led by the Congress would have joined the list of the old Congress governments in the eyes of Punjabi people with a single stroke. The aura of a Sikh becoming the prime Minister in the eyes of a section of Punjabi people would have lost its luster, which would have been a bad bargain even for the central Congress rule. In the above situation, the Captain's gov't. of Punjab got the Punjab Termination of Water Agreement Act 2004 passed with the tacit support of a section of Central Congress gov't.

With the passage of the Act the issue of the Satluj-Yamuna link canal has once again been further enmeshed into legal tangles. With it, not only has the Punjab gov't. been saved from being defamed among the people, but the Punjabi press, a large part of the intellectuals and except from Badal Akali Dal; all the vote-parties, including Akali Dals of various hues, have also started blowing the trumpet of the Captain's along with the Congress gov't., led by the Captain for the present.

Secondly, this tactic has not only, for the present, snatched an important issue from the Akali Dal, but it has also forced the Akali Dal to support the Captain's gov't. The Captain's gov't. has succeeded in impressing the public that the Congress has performed the feat which the Akali Dal could not do during its rule. Likewise the Akali Dal has changed its tactics a bit. It has started saying that all the agreements on the issue of Punjab waters prior to 1981 should also be scrapped. It has started saying to its allies that it is the conflict on waters between two states. It is not the issue between parties. So they should

remain neutral on this issue. Though the Punjab unit of the BJP sides with the Akali Dal, the B.J.P. units of Haryana and Rajasthan indulged in burning buses and trucks in Ambala, Jeend and Hisar. The ex-Chautala gov't. of Haryana not only gave a long rope to such elements, but also justified them.

With these tactics the Captain's gov't. of Punjab has succeeded in cornering and mitigating the contradictions which sharpened with the defeat of the Congress in the parliamentary elections and with the changes in the cabinet before and after the elections and also succeeded in creating obstacles for any Congress leader aspiring to supersede the Captain.

Apart from these factors this decision has created a headache for the central Congress rulers in Haryana and Rajasthan. On account of elections in Haryana in Feb. 2005 the Haryana Congress had strongly opposed this act, as they saw in it the scope of a negative impact on their hope to capture power in the elections. Already in distress, the Congress in Rajasthan, like their counter parts in Haryana, have wailed hypocritically before Sonia Gandhi. There was a lot of furore in the last budget session of parliament (2004) on this issue for many days. The BJP argued that the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was kept in the dark and Sonia Gandhi knew before hand about this legislation to be passed in the Punjab legislative assembly. The question was raised that Sonia should issue a statement, but Sonia Gandhi kept a conspiratorial silence on this issue. There has also been a promise with the Congress and Chief Minister of Rajasthan about safeguarding the interests of Rajasthan. Somnath Chatterji, the speaker of parliament, gave the clarification that he could not ask Sonia Gandhi to issue a statement on this affair. Sonia Gandhi is the very chairperson of the UPA ruling over the centre. While these dramatic events happened in Delhi, the Central Govt. immediately appealed to the supreme court to issue fresh instructions to tackle the situation created after the passage of the Act in the Punjab Legislative Assembly unanimously. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, made an attempt to pacify the Congressmen and Chief ministers of Haryana and Rajasthan by offering them lollipops of a "*stable solution acceptable to all.*" If this whirlwind had not subsided it was not ruled out that Sonia could put Amerinder at stake. So the central and the State Govt. have been stressing that the



verdict of the Supreme Court would be final. This type of position is common to these ruling class parties that seek to freeze the issue and use it when convenient for their electoral games. This tactic is suited to the crisis ridden situation of Haryana and Punjab. Although the judiciary and its highest body the Supreme Court is projected as a neutral institution to dodge the people, yet in reality it is such a ruling class political institution as provides judicial credibility to the political decisions of the section in power. What type of changes the UPA Govt. and Congress govt. of Punjab want to bring about in the former decision —this will be known in the next round of the unfolding of the events, but with these new tactics they have, for the present, succeeded in adjusting the above contradictions and in delaying the implementation of the verdict of the Supreme Court.

## The Congress and Akali rulers are accused, Not Heroes

Here it is important to discuss the question whether the legislation passed unanimously by the Punjab. Legislative Assembly can provide a permanent solution of the issue of the Punjab. waters. We hold that it can not be so because the issue of the Punjab waters is not only not linked with merely building or not building the Satluj-Yamuna link canal, but is linked, on the one hand, with the distribution of water according to the riparian law, and on the other hand, with the distribution of water on a class basis. The completely correct distribution of canal water on a class basis is not possible until the

stranglehold of capitalist-type big landlords and usurers hold on the land is not smashed, and until the rural labourers, the poor, small landholder and middle peasants of Punjab become the architects of their land and fate. The Congress and Akali govts. ruling over the Centre and State for the last 57 years can neither effect the correct distribution of waters according to riparian laws from a true national angle, nor does their ruling class and political interest allow them to do so. Not to speak of the class angle, even the solution according to the riparian law from a nationality angle is not their need. Their need is to exploit the sentiments and interests of the Punjabi and Haryanvi people related to this issue.

So, by flouting their own laws they have always indulged in the politics of unjust distribution in this matter. They have misled the people. Article 5 of the recently passed legislation has provision to continue the portion of water to Haryana and Rajasthan as before, where as according to the riparian law these two states along with Delhi are not riparian states of Punjab. So when we talk of the rights, Punjab has rights to these rivers. So even if the non-riparian states have to use the water of the Punjab rivers, they can use it, but not as a right.

Secondly, it is obvious that the matter of water distribution falls in the jurisdiction of the states. Only the states can frame any law about it. The act passed by the Punjab Legislative Council is also not unconstitutional. All the agreements reached on the water issue during the period gone by, those decisions were taken under the Congress Chief Minister Kairon, Giani Jail Singh, Darbara Singh and the August

85's Rajiv-Longowal accord, by the Akali Chief Minister Surjeet Singh Barnala with the connivance of Central Congress rulers. In all these agreements, instead of acknowledging the rights of the Punjabi people on the Punjab waters, they have been betraying the interests of the Punjabi nationality by acknowledging Haryana and Rajasthan as riparian states. Through these agreements, the central govts. and the Chief ministers of the govts. of Punjab themselves have been violating the constitutionally approved Acts.

Where as the roots of this betrayal lie in their ruling class character, they lie politically and legally in the articles 78,79,80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966. At the time of the formation of Punjab state in 1966 the central Congress rulers acceded to the demand of a Punjabi state but under the above mentioned articles of the Reorganisation Act, 1966 they considered Haryana as a riparian state and brought water, a natural source of Punjab, under the jurisdiction of central rule. They declared the Bhakhra -Bias-Management Board as an autonomous body and handed over the control of water and electricity head works to it, which works under the central government. The Punjabi people, particularly the peasants, have been tasting the bitterness of all the agreements concerning water made after that. The issue of the Sutluj-Yamuna-Link Canal is one such agreement. The wrong recommendations of the Eradi tribunal are the out come of the same wrong basis.

## Punjab in the grip of water crisis

The agriculture of Punjab including the entire irrigation system linked with

### According to the agreement of 29 Jan,1955 (During the rule of Congress C.M., P.S. Kairon)

Punjab	5.90 M.A.F.
Pepsu	1.3 „ „ „
Rajasthan	8.0 M.A.F
J.&K.	0.65 „ „ „
Total	15.85 „ „ „

### According to the notification (Indira award) of 24 March ,1976

(During emergency at the time of Congress Chief minister Giani Jail Singh)

Punjab	3.5 M.A.F
Haryana	3.5 M.A.F
Rajasthan	8.1 M.A.F
J.&K.	0.65 M.A.F
Delhi	0.20 M.A.F
Total	15.95 M.A.F

### According to the agreement of 31 Dec,1981

(During the period of Congress Chief minister Darbara Singh)

Punjab	4.22 M.A.F.
Haryana	3.50 „ „ „
Rajasthan	8.60 „ „ „
J.&K.	0.60 „ „ „
Delhi	0.20 „ „ „
Total	17.12 „ „ „

### According to the recommendation of Eradi Tribunal on 30 Jan,1987

(During the period of Akali Chief minister Surjeet Singh Barnala)

Punjab	5.00 M.A.F
Haryana	3.83 M.A.F
Rajasthan	8.60 M.A.F
J.&K.	0.65 M.A.F
Delhi	0.20 M.A.F
Total	18.28 M.A.F

1 M.A.F : Million acre feet

2 There is no mention of the source of 1.18 M.A.F water in the report of Eradi Tribunal.

agriculture, is in the grip of a serious crisis. According to official statistics the total cultivable land of Punjab is 105-106 lakh acres. Out of the cultivable land 35 lakh acres land is irrigated by canal. 50 lakh acres land is irrigated by tubewells. There are more than 13 lakh tubewells in Punjab. A major part of them are operated by electricity, the rest of them by diesel engines. 20 lakh acres of land is still deprived of any type of irrigation. Out of the total cultivable land in Punjab 70 lakh acres of land is not comm- and land bereft of canal water. For the total cultivable land of Punjab 43.5 M.A.F. water is required. Whereas 34.08 M.A.F. water flows in the rivers of Punjab, if the whole of the fertile land is to be irrigated by canal water, then more water is needed.

Punjab is known as the land of five rivers and is chiefly an agricultural border state. The land of Punjab is counted as one of the most fertile plains of the world, which the Indian rulers praise as the food basket of the country. It is the main source of grain stock of the country. Its main natural resource is its river water, but due to the ruling class policies of the Central and State rulers and due to the agreements so far made, the main dependence of agriculture of Punjab is not on canal water, its natural resource, but on tubewells, which mainly run on electricity.

Further, its dependence for production on electricity, is chiefly based on thermal plants running on coal rather than on water, its natural resource. Coal is not a product of Punjab, but of Bihar, Jharkhand, etc. Even diesel is a natural resource imported from Arab countries controlled by imperialists, particularly the American imperialists. The Punjabi people have to pay for both these natural resources. On the contrary, the central rulers including the rulers of Haryana and Rajasthan (not the people) exploit this natural capital (resource) of the Punjabi people freely and on the other hand, Punjab has become a big market for expensive coal and diesel and so a mine for exploitation.

Thirdly, they charge revenue from the people of their states, particularly the peasants and workers, for the drinking and irrigation water supplied, which they get free of cost from Punjab. They even instigate their people against the Punjabi people.

Thus, because of the Centre's anti people, particularly the anti peasants and workers, policies they strike at several targets. One, they exploit the only natural resource of Punjab, water, free of cost; two, they sell coal and diesel at high rates; and three, they sell the electricity produced by coal at high rates to people, particularly peasants and workers. On the contrary, hydro-electric power is far cheaper. Four,

they exploit the peasants and workers through electric motors, engines and other equipment. Five, the fall in the water level has generated a big market for agricultural loans.

Due to the continuous exploitation of underground water, the water level in Punjab is continuously falling. In 86 blocks out of 138 blocks of Punjab the water level falls down by one foot every year. If the exploitation of underground water by tubewells continues unhampered, there is every likelihood of all the tubewells of these blocks going dry by 2015. According to an estimate the peasantry of Punjab needs 2000 crore rupees for further digging tubewells during the coming one and a half decades.

On account of the falling water level apart from expenditure on further deepening the wells, the deaths of the earning sons of workers and peasants have become a common phenomenon. The death of three workers in Dhudi-ke (Distt. Moga) is a fresh and conspicuous instance of this phenomenon. As the supply of canal water has been reduced to half due to lack of rain in Punjab, wells are being deepened. Due to the crisis of electricity, 24.89 lakh hectare land under paddy in Punjab suffered drought in 2004. The crisis of electricity is further aggravated due to the lowering of the level of water in all the three dams. The water level of the Bhakhra Dam in 2004 came down by 107 feet from that of the year 2003. It was 1583 feet in 2003. Then it came down to 1476.00 feet. The water level of Pong Dam came down by 486.89 feet. It was 1775.89 feet in 2003. It came down to 1289.00 feet in 2004. The water level of the Thein Dam got lowered by 15 feet. Due to the lowering of the water level in these dams the supply of canal water in Punjab was reduced by half. At this time when the peasantry of Punjab is suffering a serious problem of canal water not reaching the tails, the supply to Haryana and Rajasthan continues unhampered. Despite the legislation 8225 cusec of water is being given to Rajasthan at this time — 7325 cusec water through the Rajasthan canal and 900 cusec through the Sirhind feeder. Likewise, there is no cut on water supply to Haryana. The cut is only on canals of Punjab.

The peasantry of Punjab is engaged in extracting underground water in order to save the paddy crop. The underground water in Punjab is divided in three layers. Formerly the water was available by digging the Earth from 15 to 35 feet from the first layer ranging up to 100 feet. Now the water has sunk deeper. The second layer ranges from 100 to 250 feet. The third layer of water ranges from 300-500 feet. For this layer the

landless peasants and middle peasants are finding it a problem to dig wells. Installing a submersible pump at the second layer incurs an expenditure of 1.25 to 1.50 lakh. 75% of the total area of Punjab is suffering from a serious problem of water level going down. Only 28% area is saved from this problem. This problem is affecting not only the agricultural sector but also the pumps extracting drinking water deeply. The multinational companies selling drinking water have entered Punjab known as the land of five rivers. The coming serious water crisis is bound to damage crops. The problem of drought in Punjab is bound to come up in a more serious form. Already facing an agricultural crisis, the peasantry of Punjab, particularly the poor, landless peasants and middle peasants will be further ruined.

This problem has not been created by the peasantry of Punjab to which the rulers and their so called agricultural experts deliver sermons, but due to the warped development of agriculture pushed by the imperialists and their Congress-Akali agents in the name of the green revolution. Due to this, agriculture of Punjab is not based on canal water but tube wells which have destroyed the ground water and soil. Instead of scientific utilization of the land through crop rotation, water-guzzling crops are taken that further deplete the ground water resources. And as the expenses to remove this water rises it is only the big landed elements that can afford the rising costs crushing the smaller farmers. For centuries agricultural production in Punjab faced no problem due to its abundant, year-long flowing river waters, but today it is facing a grave problem of water.

## The baseless claim of Haryana Government

We hold that Haryana is not a riparian state of Punjab. The flow of the Punjab rivers have no link with Haryana. Not even in these rivers does water enter from any part of Haryana (see map). Riparian states are those in which the rivers flow and from those regions water flows in those rivers. Ghaggar has no link with any of the rivers — Satluj, Ravi, Beas of Punjab. Therefore Haryana does not become a riparian state of Punjab. So, due to this Haryana has no right over the river waters of Punjab. The Riparian law which is a well acknowledged doctrine for the settlement of river water disputes at the national and international level does not stand in favour of the Haryana government.

To justify their claim in this dispute the basin theory is also mentioned. This theory is also the second acknowledged theory after the riparian theory by which such



disputes are settled. According to it the state whose rivers flow into the same delta or into the sea is considered to be in the same basin. As far as Haryana is concerned, its Ghaggar river ends in Rajasthan. All the rivers of Punjab flow into the Indus river, which are also known as the branches of Indus river which flows into the Arabian sea (see map). According to this theory even Haryana has no right over the waters of Punjab rivers.

Here it is important to take note that during the dispute on river waters between Pakistan and India, the Indian rulers and the Indian secretary of irrigation Mr. Gulati in their need to claim more water put forward a wrong argument that the Ghaggar river was part of Punjab's river waters according to the riparian and basin theory. The Haryana rulers have been using this argument to this day, which is quite wrong and baseless, and which should be plainly rejected. This argument should not have been used even while settling the water dispute with Pakistan.

The third argument the Haryana govt. uses to claim its right over water is that at the time of reorganisation of states it was settled that the assets of Punjab would be divided 60:40. Haryana claims to divide waters in this ratio. Haryana talks of waters of only the present Punjab. It is to be remembered that at the time of a joint Punjab 5.6 M.A.F. water was drawn from the Yamuna. Now the whole of it is with Haryana. To claim their right over this water the exploiting rulers of Punjab and their lackey intellectuals project Punjab's claim over the water of Yamuna.

We hold that only Haryana has a right over this water. Now with the water of Punjab prior to 1966, in 1961 the area of present Punjab and Haryana got 1.9 M.A.F. water. At the time of division in 1966 Haryana again got an equal quantity of water. The next point relates to the 60:40 assets in the Reorganisation Act of 1966. We hold that the division of water lies beyond the purview of the above. The issue of this division comes under the riparian law.

For example, Rajasthan's claim over river Narmada was rejected. The distribution of river Krishna flowing through Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka was settled on the basis of the acceptance of the two states as riparian states. The Central government also played its role, justifiably so, because these two were riparian states. But by implementing the same thing conspiratorially on non-riparian states of Punjab and Haryana in 1966 the Central government established its own right under article 78 of the Reorganisation Act of 1966. It is the violation of the constitution drafted by the Indian rulers themselves. The issue of the

distribution of water being under the jurisdiction of the states can be tackled by legislation by the state government and not by the central government. But just the opposite happened in the case of Punjab. Whether it was the agreement of 29 Jan, 1955 or of 24 March, 1976; whether it was of 31 Dec, 1981 or were the recommendations of the Eradi Tribunal of 30 Jan, 1987 – in all of them the central Congress rulers and the Congress or Akali chief ministers of Punjab, Partap Singh Kairon, Giani Zail Singh, Darbara Singh, Surjeet Singh Barnala betrayed the Punjabi people by over-ruling the riparian law. So the rulers of Haryana have been asserting their right over the waters basing on Articles 78-80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act, whereas these articles in the Act have a wrong basis.

### **The claim of Rajasthan government also baseless**

The Rajasthan high court by using these articles issued the verdict of handing over the control of head works of Punjab to the Bhakra-Beas-Management board within 30 days only to further complicate the matters. The verdict is quite absurd. Rajasthan is neither a riparian state of Punjab, nor has any basis for its claim.

In order to justify its claim over Punjab water Rajasthan has projected the issue of drought in it. The pro-imperialist and semi-feudal policies of the Indian ruling classes and their central and state governments are responsible for this. These policies are responsible for keeping the states like Rajasthan backward out of their class needs. Because of this the drought like situation in these states has become a common phenomenon. The lack of proper distribution and utilization of river waters of Rajasthan is a part of this policy. Apart from river waters, lack of any plan to make sea water fit for drinking by filtering it, or not providing special facilities to the peasantry of Rajasthan to preserve water through various schemes of water-shed management and forestation are aggravating the situation in the State. Under the same policy formerly they made a futile claim over the river Narmada which was rejected. Now through this verdict an unjust claim is imposed over the river waters and their head works of Punjab. The high court of Rajasthan has given the above mentioned verdict at the instance of the BJP government of Rajasthan. Here this aspect has been ignored that already under the water crisis Punjab can also turn into a desert like Rajasthan. There is wisdom in turning a desert into greenery, but it is utter absurdity to turn greenery into a desert.

After this verdict the Captain's government of Punjab decided to file a special leave petition to challenge the controversial articles 78-80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1966 in the supreme court. When it brought about The Punjab Termination Of Water Agreement Act, 2004 and accorded it the status of legislation, the Captain's government of Punjab kept silent on these articles. After their victory in the elections in Haryana the Congressmen of Haryana have kept silent on this issue but the Haryana Lok-Dal and BJP government of Rajasthan are in glee at the verdict of the Rajasthan high court. Although the Congress Captain's government of Punjab has decided to file the special leave petition against articles 78-80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act, yet this problem cannot be solved merely by judicial proceedings or commissions. What is required is that the central government take political decision and abrogate these articles of the Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966. The central government should recognise the right of the Punjabi people over the waters of Punjab. Also the other issue related to Punjab should be resolved with a genuine approach. Neither the central UPA government is ready to take this course, nor any such efforts are visible on the part of the Congress government of Punjab. The Captain's government of Punjab is certainly taking some legal steps out of compulsion due to the aforesaid factors and to use the above issue of the Punjabi people and the religious sentiments of the sikh-religious minority. Under this very policy they can adopt the tactic of raising the issue of merging the Punjabi speaking areas and Chandigarh into Punjab. On this issue instead of genuineness they are following a policy to use the sentiments of the Punjabi people and to out manoeuvre their rivals.

### **Project the correct politics : Condemn the ruling class politics.**

What ever hulla-baloo the Congress-Akali rulers, who have passed the fresh legislation in the Punjab legislative assembly, may be raising, until these articles are scrapped, on a political basis, and all agreements ignoring the riparian law are scrapped, neither the central government nor other governments would recognise the right of Punjab over the waters of Punjab nor would any just settlement of the issue of water be effective.

Does abrogating the riparian law and all other agreements mean that water would not at all be supplied to other states? We do not mean it. It means that we should establish the point that the ownership over

**Continued on page 27**

## **Enron & the Sell-out of India's Power Sector**

The imperialists have been eyeing India's huge power sector to gain a share of the massive Rs.26,000 crore market. For that the numerous Electricity Bills passed by the Central government has aimed at the privatization of the power sector. This privatization hands over India's power sector to the MNCs and the local compradors. The stranglehold of foreign capital of such a crucial sector as power has not only important economic implications but also implications regarding the sovereignty of the country. For foreign powers and their lackeys in India to have control over such a strategic sector as power they can hold the country to ransom by cutting off the supply.

Through this sell-out, while the MNCs gain a big market and huge profits it seriously impacts the lives of the masses. In order to maximize their profits the pliant government has raised electricity prices enormously and plans to raise them still further. The high rates are crushing not only the poor but also the middle classes, in both urban and rural areas. The peasantry, who is already neck deep in debt, has to now pay huge sums for their electricity bill in order to boost the profits of the MNCs/compradors. But the process has just started; once the privatization is complete the prices of electricity would have increased many fold. Not only this, privatization will badly hit the electricity employees who will have to face retrenchment, increased work-load and casualisation of labour.

The nefarious deeds of the parties in power show to what extent they are prepared to go to sell India's power to the TNCs and in the process putting a backbreaking burden on the Indian people. The Enron episode goes to show the extent to which they will go. The agreement signed at the earlier stages of the economic reforms entailed buying power from Enron at Rs.7 per unit when at that time the MSEB was purchasing it at between Rs.1 & 2 per unit. That means to give windfall profits to Enron the masses would have to pay a minimum of Rs.8 per unit. All the major political parties were involved in the signing of this notorious agreement — at the Maharashtra level it was a first Sharad Pawar who was primarily involved; then it was Bal Thackeray's Shiv Sena;; and at the Centre the first 13-day government of Vajpayee did only one job, which was to sign a counter-guarantee for the Enron agreement. Even after considerable hikes over the past few years the electricity price is about Rs.3-4 per unit.

The recent events in Maharashtra —

the power shortage and the public anger against the MSEB (Maharashtra State Electricity Board) — have been accompanied by the State governments decision to privatize power supply and to also re-start the Enron (called the Dahbol Power Corporation — DPC) company. The orchestrated campaign against the MSEB and the state-wise power cuts was a clear ploy to create the necessary environment for the immediate steps announced to privatize power distribution in Maharashtra and to restart the Dahbol plant at humiliating terms (once again). The present Finance Minister, has been the chief legal advisor in India of the collapsed Enron company for it to recover its dues. Also it is the present Planning Commission deputy Chairman, Montek Singh Aluwalia, who, as the then finance secretary, gave the Centre's counter-guarantee to Enron. With such a bunch of Enron dalals and stooges in power we can well understand what would be the fate of the new deals being struck.

### **Background to the Sell-Out**

It was the biggest foreign deal in India involving FDI of a massive \$3 billion. The plant was to be based fully on LNG imported from the US oil giants in the Middle East. The two US TNC giants, GE and Bechtel, owned 10% share each in the Dahbol plant. The Indian banks (IDBI, IFCI, SBI, ICICI) have loaned a huge \$1.3 (over Rs.6,000 crores) to Enron — unlikely to be ever recovered. In the first phase the plant began to generate 744 mw of power in 1999 and in the second phase another 1444 mw of power was to be added. The MSEB was to buy the full amount of the power or else pay a penalty of 90% of the value. This agreement was given a guarantee by the Maharashtra government and the first phase was counter-guaranteed by the Centre. So, Enron made sure that if the MSEB did not pay up, the money would be given by the Maharashtra government. And if the latter did not pay the Centre would have to pay.

Two years later, in 2001, the highly profitable MSEB which had been pushed to bankruptcy due to the high payments to Enron, rescinded on the agreement and stopped payments to it. Meanwhile, in the US, Enron, which had risen to become the seventh largest TNC in the US and was the biggest donor of the Bush election campaign, was involved in high level fraud and deceit. It went into bankruptcy cheating the American public of billions. In India, its two partners, General Electric and Bechtel, (both of which are also close to the Bush

administration — both are heavily involved in Iraq) bought out Enron's 65% share for a pittance of \$20 million. {65% of a \$3 billion project would amount to roughly \$2 billion or \$2,000 million!!} Now, these two giant companies own 86% of the DPC.

Since 2001 this DPC plant (of which only the first phase was ready) has remained closed. The Godbole review Committee, in a report presented in 2001, suggested the plant be restructured and re-negotiated. He openly stated that the government, while signing the agreement, had allowed the DPC to massively inflate costs and charge to huge amounts for electricity. The two mafia TNCs have clamped a case on MSEB for a huge Rs.26,000 crores for breaking the agreement. Besides this, the Indian Government has been forced to spend to spend crores in arbitration in international courts. Recently in London and 'independent' arbitration panel awarded Bechtel damages of \$125 million (Rs.550 crores) from Maharashtra and its agencies. Now a US court has attached the 15% share of MSEB in the DPC as it has not paid this amount by the due date of May 27<sup>th</sup>. Bechtel's two affiliate in Mauritius and Netherlands have filed two additional claims against the GOI to recover the value of their lost investments in DPC which could total \$ 6 billion (i.e. a gigantic Rs.2½ lakh crores!)

Not only did Enron, in its two years rob the country (through MSEB) of millions of dollars; not only has it swallowed up the massive Rs.6,000 crores lent it by Indian banks; the TNCs now want to further rob the country of millions more through 'damages', 'arbitration' etc. and our servile rulers are quietly paying up as they themselves have swallowed crores of rupees while signing the agreement and even now in finding a solution.

### **Reconstruction Package — A double sell-out**

The government is now promising to pay all the foreign liabilities while it plans to not only write off the Rs.6,000 crores of Indian Bank loans, it is asking them to lend another Rs.1,500 crores to re-start the plant. To settle the issue the UPA government has set up a GoM (Group of Ministers) headed by the Defence Minister(???), Pranab Mukherjee, to organise the sell-out. It is asking the NTPC and GAIL to help re-start the plant.

The government has agreed to pay out a massive Rs5,600 crores bailout package to the foreign promoters and lenders of the dubious US power company and its

contractors. The amounts include \$ 230 million to offshore lenders; \$450 million to Export Credit Agencies; \$138 million to Overseas Private Investment Corporation; \$111 to OPIC political risk insurance; and \$350 million to GE-Bechtel's stake and dues. This amounts to a total pay-out of a massive \$ 1.3 billion to the imperialists. All these are amounts owed by the bankrupt Enron which now is being paid by the Indian government.

All the deals are being conducted in complete secrecy, without any disclosure to the media or even to parliament. And when the matter was raised in the Rajya Sabha the Minister of State for personnel, Pachuri, said *"it is improper to give out details since the issue is at negotiation stage"*. So, the entire deal will be conducted secretly and finally it will be disclosed only when it is all over!!! The GE chief (CEO) was in India recently and he was given the importance more than that of a prime minister of another country. He met the Prime Minister and the ministers of power, finance and commerce and industry. After dragging the country through international courts he has now said he is willing to immediately start the plant — no doubt in his terms.

Not only this, the massive pay-out to the foreign lenders is planned to be done through funds taken from the Employee's

Provident Fund (EPF). In Feb.2005 the government set up a Gas and Power Investment Company Ltd (GPIC) for this purpose. The GPIC, of which the Indian Banks are a part, has asked the EPF Commissioner for the funds to be collected through bond floated by the GPIC. Such risky investments by the EPF go against its own rules which states that it must only invest in government securities. With the massive new investment pumped into the Dabhol plant amounting to over Rs.13,000 crores (Rs.5,600 to the foreigners + Rs.1,500 crores to be raised by GAIL & NTPC + the write-off of the Rs.6,000 crores lent by the Indian banks) it is clear that the DPC will be unviable unless the centre gives huge subsidies of the electricity charges are hiked up enormously. This is over and above the high cost of imported LPG that will be used as the main fuel.

But, revival they will to keep the imperialists happy.

### **High Cost to the Country and its People**

While the Enron, BE, Bechtel and their Indian agents have made huge money without even generating much electricity the country will suffer gigantic losses and the people are being forced to pay the high cost of the electricity. These TNCs not only

made vast sums in the first two years of payment at the rate of Rs.7 per unit, but also through penalties, arbitration agreements and fraudulent credit and insurance charges. Why should India pay all this when it has been defrauded by these companies? Why should the foreign creditors be paid and not the huge loans given by the Indian banks? Why should employee's savings be used to pay the foreign creditors? The reason for all this is that those taking the decisions are their agents for which they get fat commissions. Those that struck the first deal are none other than all who are in power in key positions. And the chief person behind today's economy, the Finance Minister, was de facto on the Enron pay-roll as their lawyer.

The people of the country must demand that all details of the agreements past and present be made public and not done in secrecy. They must try all these culprits in a public trial demanding the disclosure of the funds they swallowed, which should be paid back with compound interest. They must demand compensation from Enron and the other two TNCs. Electricity for the poor, middle classes and the peasants must be subsidized while that for the rich must be charged at high rates.

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### **Continued from page 25**

the rivers belongs to the people of those nationalities through whose states those rivers flow. If the rivers give profit it belongs to those people and if the floods cause damage it also belongs to the people of that nationality. It applies to the people of Haryana as well as to those of Punjab, Rajasthan, Andhra, Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam etc. When the right of the people of Punjab over the water of Punjab, as well as those of related nationalities over the waters flowing through Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam etc. is recognised, the next question arises as to on what basis water should be given to the people of other states or nationalities. For the present, water already going to the neighbouring states should continue, until a more equitable solution is found.

Thirdly we hold that while giving water to the other states or nationalities the agricultural and drinking water needs of the people of the related nationalities, particularly the poor, the landless peasants and middle peasants should be fulfilled first of all. The conditions of peasants in Punjab is that they are continuously losing land. They do not get the canal water according to their agricultural needs. They are incapable of or are becoming incapable of

digging new wells. This section has fewer electricity connections. Neither are the fresh connections available nor can they afford the expenditure of submersible pumps. So we hold that this section of the peasantry should be provided water fulfilling all their agricultural needs, through restricting the huge extraction of ground water by the pro-capitalist landlords and redistributing their large holdings on a just basis. Also systematic conservation projects and watershed management needs to be adopted to maintain an increase water flow. Out of this, priority should be given to drinking water.

In brief the Captain's government of Punjab along with the opposite parties Akali Dal and BJP have passed the legislation abrogating the agreement of 31 Dec, 1981. In this way they have postponed the schedule of digging the Satluj-Yamuna link canal decided by the supreme court. But they have not yet completely annulled the self determined basis in order to prevent the digging of the canal on a wrong basis. This issue is more dramatised to gain credit whereas everything is practically going on as before whether the water belongs to Haryana or Rajasthan. So the responsibility lies on the revolutionary democratic forces that :

1 They should make the people conscious against the misleading and divisive tactics of the central and state rulers on the issue of water;

2 They should demand distribution of water according to riparian laws. They should get the rights of Punjab on its waters acknowledged.

3 They should reject all the former agreements concerning water and expose the criminal role of the Congress-Akali rulers;

4 They should raise the demand to abrogate articles 78-80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act-1966;

5 They should raise the demand to distribute water on a class basis. They should raise the demand of completely fulfilling through canal water the agricultural needs of poor, landless peasants and middle peasants of Punjab. They should raise the demand of commanding completely their uncommanded lands;

6 They should raise these demands from their independent platforms. They should expose the policies of unjust distribution of water by the vote-parties.

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**Press Statement**

## **Strongly Condemn The Arrest Of Coms Sunil Roy, Patit Pavan Halдар & Others Demand Their Immediate & Unconditional Release**

On May 21<sup>st</sup> senior Politburo member comrade Sunil Roy (Ashok/Shome/Barunda) was arrested from a street in Kolkata along with com. Halдар (Tapas), CC member and secretary of the West Bengal State Committee of the Party. The CPM-led government of West Bengal has acted with the utmost viciousness against the newly formed CPI(Maoist) in line with the policies of the Central Home ministry. The arrests were followed up with a series of other arrests using their intelligence network against the Maoist movement. This has also been followed by harassment of many sympathisers and ordinary democrats and the foisting of false cases. Their actions do not at all differ from that of the Congress, BJP or even the TDP when it was in power. Not only that, false cases have been foisted on the comrades, including com. Shome.

Though com. Shome was arrested in Kolkata, cases have been foisted in Midnapur, Jharkhand, etc on him and he is being produced in Midnapur courts. Though the two comrades were arrested on May 21<sup>st</sup> they were produced in court only on May 24<sup>th</sup>. The ruthless CPM rulers, unmindful of his frail health and age, have been repeatedly putting him in police custody and subjecting him to harassment. Not even his medicines are being supplied to him. Though he is a senior and veteran communist revolutionary he is being treated like an ordinary criminal by CPM Government.

Comrade Shome is one of the founding members of the MCCI and had played the leading role as the Secretary of the Party after the martyrdom of Comrade Kanai Chatterjee in 1982 until 1996. He stepped down from secretaryship due to serious health problems. His vision was affected after he lost one eye due to a cataract operation. However, in spite of his serious ill-health, comrade Shome continued to play a very important role in the MCCI, participated as a leading member of the high-level delegation in the entire merger process between the MCCI and the CPI(ML)[people's war] and became the member of the new Politburo after the formation of the CPI(Maoist) Party in September 2004. In the new Party, he bore a great share of the work of the CC and PB in spite of serious health problems.

It is clear that the reactionary ruling classes of India, with the assistance and blessings of the imperialists, have been drawing up meticulous plans to arrest or eliminate the leadership of the newly-formed CPI(Maoist) party and the advancing people's war led by it. Accordingly, special intelligence agencies and networks have been set up Centrally, similar to the SIB of AP, and in most of the states where our Party is active. The CPM-led government of West Bengal, under the leadership of the Chief Minister cum Home Minister, Buddhadev is as brutal as the Congress/BJP, but acts more cunningly.

The Indian ruling classes, whichever the Party in power, is implementing all the policies of "economic reforms", which is having a disastrous impact on the living conditions of the people. These imperialist demons and their Indian agents know full well that it is only the CPI(Maoist) that can lead the people in effective battle against the bloodsuckers. It is due to this fear and panic to protect their ill-gotten wealth that they seek to brutally crush this rising force. It is hardly nine months since the new party was announced and in that short period they made the Maoists their number one enemy and have taken systematic and aggressive steps to crush it. In this all the parliamentary parties are collaborators, with the CPM playing an active role. They seek to hide their black deeds behind their Marxist mask.

There is no doubt that such repressive measures will only intensify the revolutionary movement as people's anger against the rulers will intensify. History of earlier movements has shown that repression begets revolt.

All democrats must realize that an attack on the revolutionaries is an attack on the democratic movement in general. Today it may be the revolutionaries tomorrow it will be others. We have already seen the ruthlessness adopted in crushing peasant, trade union and other movements. All democratic and revolutionary forces should rally around to fight back these ruthless attacks on the revolutionaries and demand the immediate and unconditional release of comrades Shome, Tapan and others.

**Ganapathy**

General Secretary  
Central Committee

Communist Party of India (Maoist)

June 6, 2005