



Maoist Information Bulletin - 19

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Special Issue in Memory of Comrade Azad

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Cherukuri Rajkumar is no more, AZAD lives on forever

July 1, 2010 will go down as one of the darkest days of the revolutionary movement in India. On that day one of the boldest, clearest, uncompromising voices of the Indian oppressed masses was silenced forever. A heart which bled at the miserable conditions the poor people of our beloved country lived in was shot at. A brain which functioned with the sole aim of liberating the working people was forcefully stopped from thinking. A steadfast communist and a proficient leader of the Indian revolution was murdered in cold-blood by the Indian ruling classes.

True. They feared Azad. But they feared more the truth for which he stood, the justice for which he fought, the ideas he represented and more than anything the material force they turned into. As an individual Azad may have been exceptionally talented, brilliant, hard-working, sincere, modest and many, many other things which define a good individual. But all these qualities reached their highest point because first of all he was a communist, a Maoist in this era of revolutions.

The transformation from phenomenon which was Nor was it achieved in a short which had continued through greatness of Azad lies in of an ordinary individual into overall class struggle which a classless one. Azad's place those great martyrs of the selflessly served the oppressed liberation by embracing and scientific theory till date,

Those of us who grieve loss is irreparable should pay he achieved; the into such a beloved, talented Indian oppressed masses. Just fellow radical students grieved Janardhan, the deaths of who were martyred later in the brutal offensive of the enemy.



Rajkumar into Azad is not a achieved with a change of name. time. In fact it was a process out his life, each minute of it. The realizing that the transformation a true communist is part of the aims to transform this society into thus rightfully lies besides all World Socialist Revolution who masses and worked for their applying in practice the most Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

the death of Azad and feel the attention to this transformation transformation which made him and dedicated leader of the like Azad, did when he and his the death of Surapaneni many, many great communists

Though it may sound clichéd, we have to say this – sacrifices are inevitable in a revolution. Because it is a bitter war which is being fought in our country between the people and the ruling classes. The Indian ruling classes, to be more specific the feudal lords, comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie with the full support of the imperialists, particularly the US imperialists have launched a multi-pronged offensive on the Indian masses as part of the LIC strategy. This LIC strategy was prepared by the US imperialists and at present it is implemented in the form of Operation Green Hunt (OGH) in India.

LIC policy has many names and avatars in India and abroad but the basic principles remain the same. Two of the most important aspects in this strategy are

1. Target the leadership of the revolutionary parties; decimate the movements by damaging the brain.

2. Carry on psychological warfare on an unprecedented scale and at a strategic level.

With the formation of CPI (Maoist) by the merger of the two main streams of Indian revolution on September 21, 2004, the Indian ruling classes perceived the consequences and the augmented dangers it posed to their (and imperialists') indiscriminate loot of the country's abundant resources. CPI (Maoist) was declared the biggest internal security threat to the country. The consolidation of the Unity and the formulation of clear and specific tasks (establishment of base areas by developing PLGA into PLA and guerilla warfare into mobile warfare) in the Unity Congress-9th Congress of the CPI (Maoist), in January 2007 sounded like a death-knell to them. A man-hunt was launched with unparalleled cruelty for the Maoist leaders and several of them were caught in the dragnet. Most of them were put in jails and some of them were unscrupulously killed in fake encounters. Comrades Vadkapur Chandramouli, Sande Rajamouli, Patel Sudhakar, Sakhamuri Appa Rao and Cherukuri Rajkumar are the most prominent Maoist leaders who were killed in such fake encounters since eve of the Unity Congress. Apart from them, scores

of Maoist leaders right from the state level to the area level were either jailed or killed in fake or real encounters. Comrade Azad's martyrdom should be seen as part of this whole conspiracy of the ruling classes implemented with the guidance and full connivance of the imperialists, particularly the US imperialists.

And – this would not be the last one too. As long as this severe confrontation between revolution and counter-revolution rages in this country such sacrifices are inevitable. The victory of the New Democratic Revolution in this country is the only solution to end these brutal killings of leaders and massacres of masses. In other words, fulfilling the dreams of these great martyrs is the way forward for us.

When we talk of Azad, another important component of the LIC strategy – Psychological War - unavoidably comes to mind. The reason is Azad was the Maoist leader, the Politburo member and Spokesperson the Central Committee who led the revolutionary psy-war against the enemy psy-war from front. An extraordinary combination of lucid, sharp, scathing, logical, convincing writing and deep commitment towards the cause of the oppressed people turned Azad into the formidable opponent to the torrent of ugly, vulgar poisonous trash which is recycled and injected into the minds of the people on a daily basis by the ruling classes through a section of the media as part of their psy-ops. He was the Commander of an ill-equipped troop of illiterate peasants and poorly educated workers with no hi-fy media or resources to back them up in this war taking place in the sphere of ideology and politics. But lead he did them in the path of victory as truth and justice marched in step with this army. Successes in this sphere is in a way predetermined (liars and blood-suckers can never win in this war) it requires a commander like Azad for it to be realized. Azad's role in this sphere would forever remain a model to emulate.

Azad was a sniper of words and his weapon was always ready. This weapon jumped out of the holster whenever any vulnerable part of the enemy classes became visible. Never did it miss the target. The number of ruling class ideas he killed with his words are innumerable. The discomfort of the likes of Chidambaram and the way they bristled whenever Azad's weapon spit fire are the best proof of their affectivity. Along with Azad's huge cache of writings, the eighteen issues of Maoist Information Bulletin which were published under his able editorship are now an inseparable part of the ammunition depot of the revolutionaries in their counter psy-war against the enemy. We at MIB are proud of its contribution to the People's War and also of the legacy Azad left us through his work at MIB.

Due to the incessant onslaught and the severe losses suffered by us as part of the OGH offensive, particularly that of Azad, the work of MIB was affected and we were unable to bring out the bulletin after the July 1, 2010 issue. Now we are happy to announce that MIB bulletins would be published from now on.

Numerous condemnations and protests against the killing of Azad and Hemchand poured from all over the world and from all sections of people inundating the Indian government. The brutal murder of Hemchand has galvanized the whole journalist community and a surge of protests followed. Revolutionary parties and organizations, working class, democratic, patriotic and progressive organizations, many prominent intellectuals and individuals including writers, artistes, civil rights activists, historians, judges, scientists, lawyers, and journalists condemned in severe terms these murders and demanded independent probe into them. The outpouring of grief and anger is so large and from such a wide section of people that the murderers are not finding a single crevice into which they can escape and hide. Azad would haunt the killers till their end. He haunted them when alive and haunts them now in his death too. The revolutionary masses would teach them a fitting lesson by intensifying class struggle and expanding the movement.

We request the readers of MIB to understand the pressures and constraints we are working in, courtesy the OGH, to bring out this bulletin regularly and to support us in whatever ways you can in this venture. We request our readers to send us your suggestions and views and also all kinds of written material worthy of publishing in MIB. We at MIB feel that bringing out this bulletin effectively and regularly to counter the enemy psy-war would also be part of the tribute to the memory of our beloved leader Azad. We expect our readers also to realize this and support us in every manner they can.

MIB humbly pays homage to Azad and HemChandra Pandey who have incidentally used the pen as a weapon in the service of the oppressed masses of India – Azad as a Maoist leader and Hemchandra as a freelance journalist.

We are dedicating this bulletin to the memory of Comrade Azad .

With revolutionary greetings,
Editorial Board
Maoist Information Bulletin

The working class intellectual, a Great leader of the oppressed masses and Politburo member Comrade Azad is immortal!

Nobody can kill the ideas of Azad...

Nobody can stop the March of Revolution ...

Comrades,

July 1, 2010 is a day of great grief for the oppressed, toiling masses of India. As part of the fascist Operation Green Hunt (OGH), the ruling classes which are perpetrating massacres of revolutionary leaders and people have resorted to another cold blooded butchery. The beloved great leader of the Indian people, the Central Committee member, Politburo member and official spokesperson Comrade Cherukuri Rajkumar (Azad) was caught by Andhra Pradesh Special intelligence Bureau (APSIB) and central intelligence agencies near Nagpur in Maharashtra along with a freelance journalist Hemchandra Pandey. At that time he was traveling to Dandakaranya to teach Political Economy to the party cadres. The blood-thirsty intelligence officials took them to Jogapur, Sarkepalli forests in Adilabad district and viciously murdered them just as they had murdered many other revolutionary leaders in the past. The enemy assessed that he would not be able to extract anything from him in spite of tortures and so they gave him sedatives in an injection as soon as they caught him. So it is very clear that they caught him with a clear-cut aim of killing him. They killed Hemchandra Pandey along with him to cover up this brutal murder. This murder was done as part of a conspiracy hatched by Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram gang and later the police spanned the much repeated encounter story as usual and announced that an unidentified person was killed along with Azad in an encounter in Adilabad forests.

Comrade Azad was leading the entire urban movement on behalf of our Central Committee and was also looking after political propaganda and other such crucial responsibilities. He was one of the most popular mass leaders. He maintained close relations with many comrades at various levels and with the revolutionary masses. In the midst of severe repression, he worked selflessly and unflinchingly in spite of the many risks involved. It is under such circumstances that the enemy came to know about his whereabouts somewhere and could catch him by laying in wait.

We cannot separate Azad's life from the revolutionary history of the past forty years. Particularly, he played a key role in the ideological, political spheres, party education and running of periodicals and such. He fulfilled the responsibility of the party spokesperson since the new party's Unity Congress as 'Azad' in the most excellent and exemplary manner. He used his intellect and sharp pen outstandingly in fighting back the 'War on People' led by the Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram gang. He stood as the powerful voice of the people against the rulers and exploiters. In the development of the party's political line in the past 35 years, particularly from 1992, in the development of the party, people's army and mass organizations, in extending the revolutionary movement, in the emergence of organs of new democratic power and in all the victories won, Azad's ideological, political work and practice played a key role. Unflinching commitment in face of any number of odds and during the ebb and flow of the movement, great sacrificing nature, selflessness, simple living, indefatigable work for the revolution and for the interests of the people, astounding study, study of changing phenomena in the society from time to time, being with the people always are some of the great proletarian ideals established by Comrade Azad. Though he is no more, it is undeniable that he would serve as a revolutionary role model to every revolutionary and particularly to the youth, students and intellectuals.

On behalf of the party, PLGA, mass organizations, organs of new democratic power and the entire revolutionary masses our Politburo is paying humble and rich tributes with great respect to Azad with a heavy heart and bowed heads. It is upholding his great ideals. It is vowing to intensify the people's war to accomplish his unfulfilled aim. The enemy classes are celebrating that they had given a severe blow to the revolutionary movement by murdering Azad. But let us boldly face this challenge on behalf of the whole oppressed people and the revolutionary camp. Let us openly declare to the enemy that we would definitely politically avenge the murder of Azad by developing Maoist people's war to newer heights and spread to

all the corners of our country to destroy this rotten system and establish a new democratic system.

On this occasion the Politburo is expressing deep condolences to his life partner (one of the senior comrades of our party), friends, relatives and to all the comrades who worked with him. It is fully sharing their grief. The murderers of our beloved comrade Azad are the real reason for all our tears, grief and troubles. The Politburo is earnestly requesting that all of you should fight against them with renewed determination and hatred.

Comrades,

Let us briefly take a look at the important aspects in the revolutionary life of Azad, a great ideal communist who was always brimming with revolutionary inspiration, in order to imbibe his great qualities and carry them forward.

Family background

Comrade Cherukuri Rajkumar (Azad) was born on May 18, 1954 in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. He was the second among five siblings. His mother was Karuna and father was Lakshmayya Chowdhary. His father died a few days back. Her old mother is still alive. He has three brothers and a sister. Azad's elder brother worked in the Indian army and retired as a Colonel. Both his younger brothers were doctors. Their ancestors lived in Penumathsa village in Pamidimukkala Mandal of Krishna district. During the tenure of Azad's grandfather, their family went to Nuziveedu and settled there. His father did service in the Indian Army for some time. Later he ran a hotel in Nuziveedu. Later they went to Hyderabad and settled there. There too they ran a hotel. Azad was born in a rich peasant and educated family and was from the beginning a brilliant student. He finished his primary schooling in a convent in Hyderabad and then he was joined in the Korukonda Sainik School in Vizianagaram district. There he finished his secondary schooling. He was good at sports and was a voracious reader from the beginning. He loved reading literature too. He was loved by his peers and teachers right from his school days.

First steps in the long inspiring revolutionary life

The dynamic, militant revolutionary life of Azad was initiated in 1972. He joined B.Tech in Regional Engineering College (REC) of Warangal that year. In the decades of 1970s and 1980s the Warangal REC was like a bastion for Naxalbari politics. As Azad was a voracious reader from the beginning, he started thinking about the contemporary social and political issues. In those days he saw slogans like 'Down with feudalism', 'Down with imperialism', 'Long live New Democratic Revolution' 'Let us turn Warangal into another Srikakulam' on the walls of Warangal and was influenced by them. He was already sympathetic towards the Srikakulam movement. Rajkumar entered revolutionary politics with the inspiration of Surapaneni Janardhan who was later martyred in a fake encounter in Girayipalli forests along with three more students during the dark days of Emergency. Comrade Janardhan was a famous revolutionary student leader in REC in those days. He was like the apple of their eyes. Azad used to go to his hostel room at night and discuss revolutionary politics with him. As a result of many rounds of discussions and his own study, he completely committed himself to the revolutionary politics. The students of this college played a crucial role in the formation of Andhra Pradesh Radical Students Union (APRSU) in 1974. This college gave birth to many revolutionary leaders, cadres and soldiers. They strove to advance revolutionary movement not only in Andhra Pradesh (AP) but all over India in many fields. Many of them had laid down their lives for revolution. The murder of Janardhan in 1975 grieved Azad to no end. But soon he turned his grief into steely determination and advanced in the path of revolution. Once he had embraced this path, he never looked back. Thus from 1972 to 2010, for about 38 years his revolutionary life continued without any interruption or gap.

After the setback of Naxalbari and Srikakulam struggles, Telangana became the centre for revolutionary activities. The party reviewed the past practice and started working again after taking lessons from left adventurist and right opportunist wrongs. Thus relations with people began developing. The process of various sections of people getting organized increased. This began getting consolidated in the form of people's movements. The movements which came to the fore later, had proved that if we spread correct ideas among the people then they would turn into material force in practice. In this process Azad's social consciousness took the form of student power. Later it advanced further and played a prominent role in leading the Indian revolutionary movement. The party again consolidated itself basing on the lessons learnt after the setback of the Naxalbari and Srikakulam movements and concentrated on developing broad mass base and broad mass movements. Azad was an effectual representative of a generation which came to the fore due to this initiative.

Dynamic Revolutionary student life

Due to his commitment Azad was given party membership in 1972 itself. Azad worked with initiative in building student and youth movements by mobilizing students on many issues in Warangal. He developed contacts among college professors and other staff employees. He had good contacts among the workers and employees of the college. In 1974, he was elected as the president of Warangal district RSU. Resisting goondalism in the town came to the fore as an important task in the course of development of the student movement in Warangal. It had to face the goonda gangs of RSS-ABVP, district leader and Congress MLA Hayagrivachary, CPI (M) leader Omkar etc. There were many clashes and many students were arrested. Azad managed the court-related legal work to get them released.

In 1974, the right opportunists belonging to CP Reddy group engineered a split in the revolutionary student movement and tried to form PDSU. Azad was one of those REC students who had played a prominent role in forming the RSU by politically defeating them. Along with Azad many students strove hard to bring the majority of the students to our side. It is due to their efforts that the revolutionary students could establish RSU in 1974 by defeating the right opportunists. Immediately after this, Emergency was declared in 1975. The enemy targeted Azad as he had built united movements against Emergency. During the fascist Emergency period of Indira government RSU was banned and hundreds of student activists were arrested. As part of this, the government arrested Azad under MISA and put him in jail for six months.

Though Azad was young, he influenced not only students but also many professors, writers and intellectuals with his profound intellect, great initiative, convincing nature and patience. Comrade Rajkumar played a leading role in all the students movements conducted in Warangal in those days. Azad had read literature widely in his student days and took interest in the developments in the literary and cultural fields. He had attended all their meetings and programmes in those days and even after he went underground he followed the changes in these fields. He was in touch with them and gave his valuable suggestions to them whenever necessary.

Widespread Activities in Visakhapatnam

The party transferred Azad to Visakhapatnam in 1977 keeping in view the needs of the party and the student movement. He took admission in M.Tech in Andhra University (AU) as it would facilitate his work among the students. He concentrated on strengthening the student movement in Visakha. At that time a successful and militant movement flared up in Visakha with the demand for nationalization of city bus services. That movement shook the whole Visakha city in those days. RSU led this movement. As this movement was successful the prestige of RSU increased a lot. Azad's role in this movement is crucial. In those days upper caste domination was very high in AU. The Reddys, Kammas and others belonging to the so-called upper castes used to harass the 'backward' and dalit castes in many ways. Azad mobilized the students and lecturers in AU with progressive and democratic views into struggles against these upper caste chauvinists. He insisted on the need to view caste issue with a class outlook. The impact of this struggle could be seen on other sections in the city. Just like in Warangal in Visakha too Azad endeavored to attract people of all sections to the revolutionary camp. He won their affection and love.

After Emergency, the Radical students and youth took up large scale political propaganda campaign about agrarian revolution with the slogan of 'Go to Villages'. This campaign was held every summer. This was very much helpful in building a strong agrarian revolutionary movement and in developing party contacts among the broad peasant masses. Like in Warangal, in Visakha too Azad strove hard to make this 'Go to Villages' campaign a success. He held revolutionary political classes for batches of students going for such campaigns. Under his leadership propaganda campaign was held right from rural areas like Uddanam in Srikakulam to urban areas like Rajahmundry. Party contacts developed well due to this.

After being transferred to Visakhapatnam district in 1977, Azad was elected to the party joint committee of Srikakulam-Visakha districts. Azad attended as a delegate to the AP state party conference held in 1980. He participated in the discussions enthusiastically.

Gallant defiance in captivity

In July 1975, Azad was arrested under MISA and was held captive in Warangal for six months. At that time his family members, friends, lecturers, workers and all sections of people went to jail and courts and met him. He was a role-model for the students and workers at that time. His impact and influence was very wide. After his release from the jail, he collected the necessary evidences for the court trial against Girayipalli

‘encounter’ which took place during Emergency. He helped the Bhargava commission and Tarkunde committees a lot and worked hard to prove that it was a fake encounter. He worked along with many democratic intellectuals, lawyers and civil rights activists for this. Thus apart from looking after the responsibilities of the student movement Azad also gained a grip over legal and court related matters. This helped him a lot in developing open struggles in the later period. Through all these efforts he could expose the brutality of the state very well. Later in 1979 he was arrested under NASA in Visakhapatnam. The case on him was that he hoisted a black flag in AU. On both the occasions when he was arrested, he stood very firm.

Inspirational President of RSU

In the second state conference of RSU held in Warangal in 1978, Azad was elected as the state president. Along with developing state student movement as president, he also took up the responsibility of building and consolidating revolutionary student movement in other areas in the country.

As part of this process, a seminar on ‘Nationality Question’ was held in Madras (now Chennai) in 1981. Azad toured more or less all over India to make it a success. He met many student organizations and other organizations and individuals and held discussions with them. This seminar was successful in deeply understanding the Nationality question in India, in understanding the viewpoint of various nationality organizations and in making them understand the viewpoint of the revolutionary organization. Azad played a commendable role in clearly stating the viewpoint of communist revolutionaries on the nationality question and in establishing unity with various organizations. This seminar held in 1981 created a background for the All India Revolutionary Students Federation (AIRSF) formed in 1985. Thus Azad played a great role in the formation of AIRSF.

Uday – the Founder of Revolutionary movement In Karnataka

The special characteristic of the AP revolutionary student movement is that many cadres and leaders who emerged from this movement had gone to various parts of the country and hoisted the revolutionary flag there. Party leadership consciously and with forethought scrutinized and recognized the students, youth and intellectuals joining the movement, educated them in MLM ideology and sent them to various parts of the country. Thus it facilitated the spread of revolutionary peasant struggles and urban movement. The party Central Committee sent Azad to Karnataka in 1983 as the state party organizer to lay the basis for building revolutionary movement in the state. There he started the work of the party depending on his contacts among the progressive and democratic intellectuals. Very soon party and mass organizations began to be built up in Karnataka. He attracted student-intellectuals like Saketh Rajan into the party. Azad worked among students, women, workers, peasants youth and cultural field. Thus the process of development of party and revolutionary movement began there. Many mass organizations were built. By 1985 a leadership team was formed to guide this movement. By 1987, this developed into the state committee. Azad became the first secretary of the Karnataka state committee.

Azad strove to consolidate and run militantly a movement which started on the nationality issue in Karnataka after declaring support for it. The state committee released a document supporting the separate state movement which started in Kodagu area of Karnataka. While working in Karnataka he also played a leading role in building the All India revolutionary student movement. He toured many states. He left an indelible mark as ‘Uday’ in the hearts of the people and comrades of Karnataka.

Azad concentrated party work in Hyderabad-Karnataka area, particularly in Raichur district with the aim of building the revolutionary movement in rural Karnataka. He studied the rural conditions in Karnataka and inspired his fellow comrades politically with the determination of intensifying anti-feudal struggles. He put considerable efforts in intensifying the peasant struggles in that area. Comrade Saketh Rajan studied the history of Karnataka and wrote a book called ‘Making History’. (Saketh was martyred in an encounter with the police in 2005 while working to build an armed peasant struggle in Malnad area in Western Ghats as the secretary of Karnataka state committee). This book earned a great place in the Karnataka society. This has been included in the syllabus of Karnataka universities at present. Azad supported Saketh Rajan in many ways in writing this book.

Keeping aloft the revolutionary flag in internal struggles of the party

In 1985 the AP state committee of the erstwhile CPI (ML) (People’s War) decided to take up a rectification campaign against the six wrong trends (non-proletarian trends) it had identified in the party. As a continuation of it, the first internal struggle was conducted in People’s War party in 1985. Satyamurty,

Veeraswamy and another two comrades in the Central Committee had created a crisis situation inside the party. In that period Azad played a great role in making the party cadres stand firm and united with the party line in Karnataka and Tamilnadu states. Thus he strove hard to isolate the liquidationist opportunists. The document released by the Karnataka leading team under the leadership of Azad to oppose the liquidationist opportunist wrong trend in the Central Committee contained deep analysis politically and ideologically. That helped the development of our party in Karnataka a lot. It helped in preserving the unity of the party by protecting it from the conspiracies of the liquidators.

In the central plenum of the erstwhile CPI (ML) (PW) held in 1990, Azad was elected as a member of the Central Organizing Committee. Within a few months after this a second internal struggle started in the PW party in 1991. The party secretary KS himself created this crisis. In this period, Azad fought back the liquidationist politics of KS, Bandaih, Prasad and other opportunists and careerists. In the critical note prepared on behalf of the Karnataka state committee he exposed the opportunists thoroughly. After expelling KS and other liquidationist opportunists from the party, Azad was one among the new young team of leaders which developed at the central level. In fact, we could be successful in keeping the party united and in enriching our party line by exposing the opportunists only due to the joint efforts of this new leadership team.

Efforts for uniting the revolutionaries

As a member of CC delegation Azad put lot of efforts for unity with revolutionaries, revolutionary parties and organizations in our country. Particularly he played an important role in the merger of erstwhile CPI (ML) (People's War) and CPI (ML) (Party Unity) in 1998. Later, in the historic merger of the two prominent revolutionary streams of India – the CPI (ML) and MCC on September 21, 2004 and in the phenomena of it turning into a mighty current the role played by Azad is very great. In the bilateral meetings held in many phases between the two erstwhile parties Azad had participated as a member of the CPI (ML) (People's War) delegation. On that occasion, effort done by Azad in exchange of documents, study, debate, conducting discussion in a tolerant manner, in synthesizing the positive aspects in the practice of the two parties and incorporating them in the new documents of the united party is unforgettable. In the chapter on unity of revolutionaries in Indian revolutionary history the name of Azad would definitely be written prominently.

Guiding the revolutionary movement in AP

Azad used to be in lively contact with the AP revolutionary movement even while leading the Karnataka movement. As a CC member he toured North Telangana, attended party committee meetings and guided the movement. After the Party Congress of erstwhile PW party in 2001, he took up the responsibility of AP state committee as a Politburo member. He participated in the meetings of the state committee and guided the movement. Particularly, during the period of talks with the government in 2004 he played a prominent role. He played an important role in preparing the agenda for the talks and in deciding the political aspects. He exposed the hypocritical and repressive nature of the exploiting ruling classes through various articles, statements and interviews in magazines. He effectively gave paper statements as the official spokesperson 'Janardhan' of the three state level committees in AP. While he was the in-charge of AP movement and even later Azad keenly followed the various social, economic changes and the changes in AP political scene and gave suggestions and instructions to the party in many forms. One cannot forget his eagerness to preserve the AP movement and his agony when that movement suffered a setback. Though this movement suffered a temporary setback he used to express great confidence that it would again give rise to a deluge once again and would sustain its place in the Indian revolutionary movement.

Highlighting the DK, Bihar, Jharkhand and Bengal movements

Azad had close relation with the revolutionary movements of DK, Bihar, Jharkhand, Bengal and other areas. Wherever he may be, he used to keenly follow every incident happening in those states. He used to express his joy at every success won by the people and PLGA. He sent his revolutionary greetings to the entire DK comrades after the historic attack at Tadimetla (Mukaram) where 76 mercenary jawans were annihilated. He paid tributes to the martyrs. He wrote a great poem in English hailing this. His love for people was boundless as was his hatred for the enemy. Every incident of martyrdom and the memory of each martyr comrade pained him a lot and he expressed his anguish towards such incidents. He used to be ecstatic at every success of the PLGA in annihilating the class enemies and their mercenary forces.

The Salwa Judum was started in the Bastar area of DK in 2005. The bourgeois media wrongly

propagated it as a 'voluntary movement of the people'. The ruling classes launched brutal, mopping up campaigns in various states by forming Sendra, Nagrik Suraksha Samiti, Cobras, Santi Senas etc along with Salwa Judum. Azad tirelessly propagated against all these and supported the revolutionary struggles erupting in various states. It was due to such diligent efforts by the party and various pro-people intellectuals that the world could understand that Salwa Judum and such counter-revolutionary organizations are nothing but state-sponsored fascist repressive campaigns. The support extended by Azad in the sphere of political propaganda with the aim of defeating the counter-revolutionary Salwa Judum and other such organizations is very immense. After the launch of Operation Green Hunt (OGH) in the country the massacres of adivasis have increased manifold. Azad put lot of efforts in exposing many massacres and in attracting the attention of democratic forces all over India towards them. He used to translate and edit the reports sent from the field and publish them in the magazines. He even wrote an article sending revolutionary greetings on the occasion of 25 years of DK movement. In that article he insisted on the need to build broad, militant struggles and a powerful united front against MNCs and companies of the comprador big bourgeoisie who are trying to exploit the valuable natural resources in DK. Most of the time, he used to be in touch with the CC comrades who were guiding the revolutionary movements of Tamilnadu, Kerala and Maharashtra. He used to develop an affectionate bond with the comrades in the states he visited as part of his work. The cadre always showed enthusiasm to meet him and talk with him. He used to be friendly with them and taught them politics. He discussed problems of the movement with them. With his death the entire party, PLGA units, commands and the people of our country have lost an adored well-wisher and leader who stood by them in all their troubles and difficulties, successes and defeats.

An indefatigable ideological warrior

Between 1995 and 2004 he worked as the in-charge of SCOPE (Sub-Committee on Political Education) which was formed for conducting political and ideological training in the party. It was under his leadership that SCOPE had prepared study notes on MLM, Marxist Philosophy, Political Economy and Party History. He played a prominent role in the classes conducted by CC all over the country to educate the party leadership ranks. He conducted classes in Telugu, English, Hindi, Kannada and Tamil languages. In 1992, he strove hard to prepare the study notes on international situation and in preparing the dictionary of important political and economic terms needed for it. His role in preparing the party text book on Indian economy is enormous. In that he analyzed the Indian social phenomena with a historical dialectical materialist viewpoint. This book is very useful in ideologically understanding the current social situation. He used to suggest to comrades at various levels what books and articles to read and how to understand them.

Azad always paid attention to what literature is being published from the communist camp and from the counter-revolutionary camp. His role in the preparation of documents for presenting in party conferences and Congresses is huge. In political and ideological matters and in formulating programmes he played a crucial and dynamic role in the committee. He had an unflinching confidence on the people and MLM. He applied the Marxist method of combining theory with practice and developing the theory again by basing on the lessons gained in practice.

From the days of RSU until his last days Azad edited various party magazines. He wrote articles to many magazines. He wrote critiques. He had good grip over Hindi, Kannada and Tamil apart from English and Telugu. Especially his knowledge in English was fine. His style of writing was outstanding. Due to this skill of his, the party and the revolutionary movement have gained a lot. Apart from writing many articles, documents, drafts and circulars in English he had translated many articles from English for the study of comrades. Initially he looked after the 'Radical March' and 'Kalam' magazines of the student organization. He prepared propaganda material in various forms on a wide scale during agitations and propaganda campaigns of APRSU and AIRSF. He wrote many political and ideological articles in 'Vanguard', 'People's March', 'Maoist Information Bulletin' etc. He edited the 'Vanguard' between 1992 and 1993. His role in bringing out 'People's War' and other magazines was immense. The articles he wrote in the form of questions and answers on various ideological and political matters in 'People's War' for the education of the party are memorable. Not just this, whenever he had time he used to attentively go through the various magazines run by the party in various states and told them about the strengths and weaknesses in them. Thus he attempted to develop the magazines as effective 'organizers'.

Azad was proficient in conducting political debates. Whenever there was any attack on the party ideology, on its practice or its line from the revolutionary camp or from others Azad used to confront that

strongly with his pen. In 1993, Balagopal (the leader of APCLC and later HRF) who was once a revolutionary intellectual had raised some basic questions on the relevance of Marxism. This spread confusion among the intellectuals. Azad had written an article in 1995 in the name of Nishant and a book (Balagopal Taatvika Gandaragolam – the philosophical confusion of Balagopal) in 2001 in the name of Sameer. Both of them were in Telugu. In these he had very effectively criticized the philosophical confusions of Balagopal. In this ideological and political book he effectively exposed the reactionary nature and the political bankruptcy of post-modernism. Writers and intellectuals in the revolutionary camp had greatly appreciated this book. Azad used to be in the forefront in giving fitting replies condemning the wrong accusations and political bankruptcy of various types of right opportunists and revisionists.

Azad played main role in formulating a new document by enriching the document 'Our work in urban areas – Our perspective'. For the past few years he was the in-charge of our urban work. He educated the party cadres. He played a prominent role in finalizing the perspective documents on the women issue and the caste issue. From 2001 to 2006 he led the Central Mahila Sub-committee as its PB in-charge. Azad's deep understanding about the Marxist understanding on the women's question and his concern for the development of women's movement and for the development of women comrades in the party and army had helped advance the work of CMSC. He guided the ideological, political works and mass works undertaken by the CMSC and along with those comrades established a basis on which this work could be developed further.

While attending the party conferences and congresses he used to work hard and go with full preparation. In the polemical debates that are conducted there he used to express his opinions in a straight forward manner with lot of conviction clearly and without any room for vagueness or ambiguity. The years 1992, 1995, 2001, 2004 and 2007 are very crucial in the history of the Indian revolutionary movement. These were great years when unity in party was achieved, party line was preserved, party experiences were synthesized and party line was enriched by fighting back the right and left opportunist wrong trends which had raised their head in the party. On all these occasions, Azad played an effective and prominent role. In the central committee meetings and the state committee meetings or in other party forums, Azad used to state his views lucidly. He was very firm in expressing his views and was equally firm in implementing the majority opinion in accordance with the principles of democratic centralism. He was a front ranking comrade in displaying such proletarian revolutionary fine qualities such as great knowledge, proletarian outlook, grip over dialectical method of analysis, foresight, bravery, courage, the urge to learn, mingling with the cadres etc. His nature was completely opposed to arrogance, careerism, selfishness and he never craved for name and fame. His loss is a great loss to the entire party. This loss would be the most serious for the CC. However, he had imparted to our CC great experiences and great communist values. They are a great treasure for our CC and the entire party. They would help our CC in leading the Indian revolutionary movement along the path of victory.

Warrior of words who fought back the enemy's Psychological War

From 2007, Azad worked as the official spokesperson of the party. Since then he was known in India and abroad as Azad. After the emergence of the new party on September 21, 2004 the exploiting, reactionary ruling classes of our country had intensified suppression campaigns on a large scale with the aim of destroying the revolutionary movement completely. In the name of Salwa Judum in DK, Sendra, TPC, Nagrik Suraksha Samiti etc in Jharkhand, in the name of various black gangs in AP, Harmad Bahini in West Bengal and Santi Sena in Odisha, a series of fascist multi-pronged offensives were launched. Later, since 2009 a countrywide, fascist, counter-revolutionary massive military offensive had been launched in coordination by the central and the state governments. These suppression campaigns are in accordance with the LIC strategy of the imperialists and their counter-insurgency policies. Foul propaganda war plays an important role in enemy offensives. It is an important component of the enemy's psychological war. The enemy classes shamelessly misused the media and through some media barons and journalists who lick the boots of the corporate bosses have launched a massive misinformation war.

As the official spokesperson, Azad had very effectively countered this offensive. He exposed the real aims behind the Operation Green Hunt (OGH) and endeavored to make people in our country and abroad understand that this is a brutal and unjustified war launched against the people by the Indian government for the profits of imperialists and comprador big bourgeoisie and for continuing the exploitation of the feudal lords. He propagated that this war is particularly dangerous to the existence of the adivasis and the oppressed peasantry. He conducted a formidable revolutionary propaganda campaign against the foul

psychological warfare done by the Sonia-Manmohan-Chidambaram clique. He released press statements from time to time and placed the stands of the party before of the people. When the ruling classes were inundating the people with fake proposals about 'peace talks' and 'abjuring violence' Azad had exposed their cruel, repressive character and proved that it is the ruling clique which is the staunch enemy of peace by clearly declaring the party's stand and understanding through interviews and statements. That is why the specter of Azad is haunting Chidambaram clique even in their sleep. With the death of Azad the Indian revolution has lost a matchless ideological warrior.

Azad was not only an avid reader but also an active, creative, serious and indefatigable writer with depth. He wrote on each and every issue ranging from economic crisis to the changes in Nepal. He wrote a series of articles in the party magazines about imperialist globalization which came to the fore in the 1990s. His great efforts in the form of innumerable press statements, regular publication of Maoist Information Bulletin, interviews and articles etc would remain a model to the party ranks. Pointing at the tactical counter offensives done by our PLGA and the people and using some of the mistakes done by us during military operations as pretexts the enemy had done foul propaganda in various forms on a wide scale against our party leadership. The whole party had effectively countered this misinformation campaign which was done with the aim of spreading confusions among the party ranks and to turn away the urban middle classes and the intellectuals from the revolution. The role of Azad in this is inspirational and leading.

Azad had vision only in one eye. He could not see properly with the other eye. Lately this other eye had become almost blind. Though doctors operated on it, there was no result. Even the one eye with which he could see was very weak. In the past six years his eye problem went on worsening. But this did not in the least deter him from following and understanding each and every change in the contemporary world. He used to work without rest or gap for 18, 20 hours too in a day. He studied deeply. Wherever he was - in forest or in towns whether traveling or drinking tea in a dabha he was always trying to learn, read and understand. He used to sit in front of the computer for hours together to read and write with his one functioning eye. As the official spokesperson he clearly stated the party's response on almost every issue. Whether on Democratic party Obama's policies or atrocities of the saffron terrorists, Israel's horrible attacks on Gaza or the world economic crisis - he had released statements and written on every issue, on each aspect. Recently when a well known reactionary writer/editor B.G. Verghese had written an article in Outlook nakedly displaying his neo-colonial ideology, Azad wrote an article in reply to this. In this article along with criticizing Verghese he also placed very effectively before the people the Maoist understanding about development of our country. Before this, he gave a long interview to 'The Hindu'. In this apart from giving clarity about our party's stand regarding talks or ceasefire he threw light on various aspects of the Maoist movement very efficiently. That was his last interview. Before this he has written many articles on behalf of our party to Economic and Political Weekly, to many Telugu magazines and other magazines.

Azad had used satire most successfully against enemies of the revolution, particularly against the likes of Chidambaram, GK Pillai, Raman Singh, Arnab Goswami, Viswaranjan who were most reliable servants of the big corporations. He attacked their baseless arguments, lies and bankrupt policies mercilessly with sharp satire. His writing style was politically rational and intense. From the practical point of view it was balanced and tolerant. When Chidambaram was replying in Lok Sabha in April 2010 during the discussion on Tadimetla, he was quoting our documents and had been referring to his own parliament as a 'pig sty' many times. Azad shared his amusement with comrades about this in his letters to them. His pen used to respond very sharply to reactionaries, various kinds of revisionists, right opportunists and liquidators. He even had a modest style of writing which could win over the vast majority of the masses towards the revolution. There was no place for any intellectual snobbishness, unnecessary explanations in his writings. His arguments and the evidences he produced in his writings to prove them were so well-knit that it was almost impossible for his opponents to deny them bluntly. With Azad's death the oppressed people have lost an unambiguous voice and a sharp pen.

Widespread condemnation of the brutal murders

Immediately after hearing about the brutal murder of Comrade Azad along with journalist Hemchandra Pandey, democratic, progressive, revolutionary organizations and individuals who wish for peace in our country and abroad have expressed their indignation and protest against the exploiting governments. Many human rights organizations, democratic organizations, many writers, artistes, journalists and media friends had condemned Azad's murder and demanded independent probe on it. Many prominent magazines had written articles. Many revolutionary organizations and parties in our country and abroad

had sent messages to our party expressing their condolences. In one word, the working people, democrats and revolutionary camp as a whole in our country and abroad considered this loss as their own loss. They felt it was their own grief.

Journalist Hemchandra Pandey who was brutally murdered along with Comrade Azad belonged to Devarthal village in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand. Media persons, particularly those in Andhra Pradesh, democrats and intellectuals all over India had not only condemned on a wide scale the murder of a journalist but had also commented that fascism is implemented in India in the name of democracy. They demanded an independent probe into this fake encounter. Many democrats attended Pandey's funeral.

The Maoist party ranks and the revolutionary people would always remember this dynamic journalist and the pro-people budding intellectual born in Uttarakhand far away from AP who had laid down his life along with Azad without getting deterred by the deadly state violence and the risks involved. He would be given a respectful and deserving place along side the martyrs of the revolutionary movement. His martyrdom would be hailed.

On this occasion, on behalf of our CC, our Politburo is sending Red Salutes and appreciation to all these organizations and individuals who had condemned these brutal murders and expressed solidarity. It is this kind of democratic and revolutionary spirit which would give constant inspiration to the masses.

Let us uphold the ideals of Comrade Azad

Let us vow to create thousands of 'Azads' in his path

The exploiting ruling classes are dreaming that they can stop the revolution by snatching Azad from us. Though Azad's death is a huge loss to the Indian revolution and to the fighting people of the world, the service he rendered to the revolution would live on forever. In fact, it was the people and the revolutionary movement that had given birth to a 'Azad'. The bitter class struggle has steeled him. Revolutionary movements give birth to leaders in this manner. In turn, these leaders lead the revolutionary movements along the path of victory. The sacrifice of many leaders is also inevitable in the revolutionary movement. The very conditions which give birth to the revolutionary movement and help its advancement would give birth to its leadership too. This has been proven repeatedly in the world revolutionary history. So the material conditions which are favorable for the rapid advancement of the revolutionary movement in our country today would give birth to thousands of leaders like comrade Azad. They would steel themselves in the flames of class struggle. This is an undeniable fact of the course of history. The ideological-political and practical work done by comrade Azad and the communist ideals he established have created the basis for such an eventuality. The martyrdom of a Surapaneni Janardhan had placed an ideal in front of many comrades like Azad. Similarly many more revolutionaries would be born by taking the sacrifice of Azad as an ideal to emulate. They would lead the Indian revolution. The enemy could eliminate the physical existence of Azad but it would be impossible to stop the ideas he had spread in the party and among the people from turning into a material force.

The PB appeals to the entire party, PLGA and people in all the states and guerilla zones of our country to wipe their tears and vow to spread people's war to all the corners of the country to realize the uncompleted aims of Comrade Azad and mobilize millions of people into the revolutionary movement and to create thousands of 'Azads'. Let us vow that we would successfully accomplish the New Democratic Revolution by destroying this blood thirsty brutal state.

Let us fight back and defeat the brutal enemy offensive!

Let us vow to fulfill the tasks set by the Unity Congress-9th Congress and establish base areas!

Let us effectively carry on political propaganda and fight back the enemy's psywar !

Let us build a strong Urban movement to advance the protracted people's war!

Let us bolshevize the party with the proletarian ideals of Azad!

Fulfilling the above tasks would be the real and fitting homage for comrade Azad.

Politburo,

Date : 28 July, 2010

Communist Party of India (Maoist)

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MAOIST)

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Press Release

July 4, 2010

***Hail the Martyrdom of Com. Azad, Leader of Indian Revolution
and Member of Politburo!***

***Condemn with one voice, the Fake Encounter that took place as a part of
the war against people and Operation Green Hunt!***

***Make a success the Protest Week from July 8th to July 14th and
Bharat Bandh on 13th and 14th of July, as a part of this Protest Week!***

A bright star of the Indian revolution fallen down! Three days back, Com. Cherukuri Rajkumar (Azad), the great leader of the proletariat who played a key role in the Indian revolutionary movement for nearly four decades; the central committee member of Communist Party of India (Maoist), the Politburo member and the official spokesperson of the Central Committee, and the beloved leader of the Indian toiling masses, was brutally killed along with a freelance Journalist, Hemachandra Pandey by the watch dogs of the Imperialism, i.e. the Indian ruling classes.

Com. Azad had to come to Dandakaranya in the first week of July, to teach political economy classes to the party cadre. For that purpose, he set up an appointment with the Special Zonal Committee of Dandakaranya, on July 1st, in Nagpur town. He even informed the Dandakaranya Comrades about his arrival on 30th June. The Dandakaranya Committee sent a comrade to bring him in. But that comrade returned as Com. Azad didn't turn up at the specified place and time. The police murdered Com. Azad along with Hemachandra Pandey in the name of 'encounter' in Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh at the wee hours of 1st and 2nd July. As Com. Azad informed that he had started on 30th of June and not reached the particular place on July 1st suggests that, the murderous and monstrous APSIB personnel might have abducted them during his journey to Nagpur or after reaching the Nagpur town. The murderers tortured them cruelly and shot them up on the same night in Adilabad district.

We appeal to all to condemn this dastardly murder with one voice. We appeal all the people to agitate against the cruel and suppressive acts of the ruling classes, which on one side are hunting and brutally killing the revolutionaries standing for the cause of the people, and chanting the mantras of democracy, peace, law and justice with that same blood spilling mouth on the other side.

Some exploiting powers are trying very hardly to pocket our beloved country for their will or to mortgage it to their imperialist masters and are even trying to sell it. As a part of that they are giving out our forests, mines and the rivers to the imperialists. The innumerable agreements including the nuclear deal that our ruling classes made with the imperialist countries and multi national companies stand as naked evidences to this. Digging out the minerals from our mines is the part of this exploitation only. The projects on our rivers that are under construction and to be constructed are meant only for the speedy shifting of our fortunes through the ships by the imperialists; and the widening roads are to pave the way to exploitation. The proposed SEZs, corporate farmlands are for the interests of the imperialists only. The ruling classes fondly named this exploitation as 'development'! This 'development' is meant for the exploiting classes only and it is a fact that even 1% of this 'development' wouldn't reach the large sections of the Indian masses. Because of this 'development', our lands, the land produce, our water resources and our culture have been alienated from us. This unconditional surrender of the ruling classes is a great shame to us and it throws us into slavery. These exploiting powers which are selling our beloved mother land are shamelessly calling themselves as patriots.

The oppressed people of our country endeavored to demolish this conspiracy of these traitors in the guise of patriots, and chose the path of revolution. The workers, peasants, adivasis, students, intellectuals, women and minorities, the true inheritors of this country, are actively taking part in this movement. The Communist Party of India (Maoist) is the inspiration to this struggle and stood in solidarity with the struggle, and proudly leading this movement. Because of this only, in the view of Sonia, Manmohan and

Chidambaram clique, the Party became a serious threat to the internal security of the country. This clique and its imperialist masters clearly know that Maoist Party is not at all a threat to the country's internal security but indeed a threat to their security and their interests of the exploitation. This clique is trying to deceit the people and is day dreaming to gain authenticity to the ruthless suppression that it is launching on the struggling people, by showing the Party as a serious threat to the internal security. From the day it dubbed the Party as a serious threat to the internal security of the country, it is enforcing serious repression on the Party and the people that are struggling under the leadership of the Party. It is thinking that by making the people to believe that the Maoist Party as an internal threat, it can suppress anyone, who opposes its exploitation, by dubbing them as Maoists. We all see that the government is suppressing the people's movements that are not at all in any way related to the Maoist Party, by dubbing them as Maoist related movements.

To overcome the serious economic crisis that they are facing now, the imperialists have no alternative other than intensifying the exploitation. As a part of that they are severely trying to rob the produce of our forests, especially they are keeping their eyes on the forests of Dandakaranya, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, the rich sources of minerals. But it's becoming impossible to them to move the assets from these areas, as these areas are under the influence of Maoist Party. That is why; they tried to suppress the movement in the name of Salwa Judum and Sendra. But the people and our Party defeated the attack by resisting heroically, and so they put forward the Operation Green Hunt now. From 10 months to till date, they brutally killed hundreds of ordinary people, from infants to elderly people, and killing more and more people in the name of Green Hunt. They are resorting to mass rapes on women, putting fire to hundreds of villages and demolishing the people's property. In Dandakaranya only, they killed 150 ordinary people, put fire to innumerable villages and resorted to sexual violence on hundreds of women.

While killing the general people on one side, they are targeting and hunting the Maoist Party and trying to wipe out the leadership to the people. The brutal killing of Com. Azad is a part in that. Com. Azad worked with strong conviction for the Indian Revolution for the past four decades. He began his journey as a Radical student and in a very short period spread to several arenas. He completed his M.Tech. in Warangal Regional Engineering College and dedicated his life to the revolution with the inspiration of martyr Com. Surapaneni Janardan and Com. Kondapalli Seetharamaiah, the then leader of the movement. He exhibited extraordinary intelligence and capabilities right from his childhood and maintained the same heights in the study of revolutionary ideology, its implementation and revolutionary practice. He laid foundation to build the revolutionary movement in Karnataka state. He was elected to the Central Committee, became the member of Politburo. He worked hard in different arenas like ideological, political and constructive work and also worked as an official spokes person of the oppressed masses, targeted against the ruling classes.

The murder of Com. Azad is significantly notable. For some time, the home minister Chidambaram, with his high-flown talk, about bringing to an end to the Naxalite violence and trying to conceal the inhuman violence that they are executing on the people. While Chidambaram has been waging an unlawful war against the people of the country and concealing innumerable atrocities that he was committing against the people, resorting to bad propaganda in a big way against the resistance of revolutionary forces; Com. Azad had been instantly and incessantly made the Party's viewpoint and the voice of toiling masses, audible loudly to the world. When some democrats along with Swami Agnivesh came with peace proposals recently, Com. Azad put "forward the Party's opinion. He proposed that to solve this problem, the Operation Green Hunt should be stopped immediately and the ceasefire should take place from both sides at a time. While pretending to continue this process and prevaricating the people on one side, the Sonia, Manmohan, Chidambaram clique determined to kill Com. Azad. That is why Chidambaram impeded Swami Agnivesh's initiation. It is crystal clear that Com. Azad's murder was a part of a big conspiracy and the clique of the ruling classes has no sincerity in peace, peace talks, and solving the problems of the people.

The main reason for the murder of the freelance journalist, Hemachandra Pandey, who is traveling with Com. Azad, is only to erase the evidence to Azad's killing. This is also a warning given by the ruling classes to the journalists and democrats that are with the people. The brutal murder of Hemachandra Pandey is also a warning to some journalists and intellectuals who visited Dandakaranya recently and exposed the factual situation to the world. It is a good example to understand that how hostile the ruling classes can be with the freedom of the press.

The ruling classes are day dreaming to eradicate the movements by murdering the leaders of the

revolutionary movement. With the murder of Com. Azad, the toiling masses of our country lost a great revolutionary intellectual, a great communist warrior, and a great scientist of Marxism. It is indeed a big loss. But, the people and the revolutionary movement themselves created and will create a great leader like Azad. Thousands of the country's youth will definitely fulfill the loss of Com. Azad by following the path that shown by him, and will make the Indian Revolution a success. This is an indisputable historical truth.

We, the Central Committee appeal the people of this country to observe a protest week from July 8th to 14th, to organize protest rallies, dharnas, and meetings for five days i.e., from 8th July to 12th July, and to make the 48-hour Bandh, i.e., on 13th and 14th of July, a success. We are exempting the emergency services like medical services from the bandh. We also appeal all the masses, to demand in several forms, for the complete investigation of this fake encounter, for the severe punishment to the culprits of these brutal murders, and for the immediate withdrawal of Operation Green Hunt.

Sonu

Sonu

Politburo member
Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)

Homage to Hemchandra Pandey

Journalist Hemchandra Pandey who was brutally murdered along with Comrade Azad belonged to Devarthal village in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand. Hem was born in a middle class family and completed his post graduation in Economics from the Kumaon University. He completed his diploma in translation and another diploma in journalism and entered the field of journalism. He wrote many articles in 'Nayi Duniya', 'Dainik Jagran', 'Rashtriya Sahara' and other such dailies. At the time of his death, he was working as a sub-editor to a magazine named 'Chetana'. He chose journalism not only for his livelihood but also with a social consciousness and social consciousness that he participated in the movement for separate Uttarakhand. He was a member of the All India Students Association. He used to speak against injustice done to the oppressed people. He valued democracy in our country. He had all the qualities which are why he accompanied Azad to bring to light the atrocities committed on the adivasis in the name of Operation Green Hunt.



As part of OGH the central and state governments are also targeting all those democrats, journalists, progressive people who are using their pens and voices in exposing the brutal violence perpetuated by the security forces on the poorest of the poor of our country. Hemchandra was killed so that there would be no evidence of murder of Azad and also to serve as a warning to all those journalists and democrats who are supporting the just struggles of the masses for Jal, Jungle and Zameen. The murder of Hemchand is a severe blow to the freedom of speech and expression.

Media persons, particularly those in Andhra Pradesh, democrats and intellectuals all over India had not only condemned on a wide scale the murder of a journalist but had also commented that fascism is implemented in India in the name of democracy. The AP media persons stood in support of Babita Pandey, Hemchand Pandey's partner in life, who came from Delhi to claim his body and also collected some money to give to meet the expenses. His dead body was kept in Swami Agnivesh's office in Delhi. Many journalists paid their tribute to this young, committed journalist. Democrats like BD Sharma and writer Arundhati Roy spoke in the meeting held commemorating Hemchand. They demanded an independent probe into this fake encounter. Many democrats attended Pandey's funeral. Babita produced all evidence to show that he worked as a freelance journalist and that he was killed in a fake encounter. She vowed to continue the struggle for justice in this case, till the culprits are brought to book.

The Maoist party ranks and the revolutionary people would always remember this dynamic journalist and the pro-people budding intellectual born in Uttarakhand far away from AP who had laid down his life along with Azad without getting deterred by the deadly state violence and the risks involved for siding with the people. He would be given a respectful and deserving place along side the martyrs of the revolutionary movement. His martyrdom would be hailed.

Condemnations and Solidarity messages from the four corners of the Globe

Communist Party of the Philippines

Communist Party of the Philippines Condemns Summary Execution of Azad

Filipino People Join Indian People in Condemning Execution of Comrade Azad

July 5, 2010

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and all Filipino revolutionary forces join the Indian people in condemning the summary execution of Comrade Azad (Cherukuri Rajkumar) and his companion Comrade Hem Pandey (Jitender) by the fascist Indian police last July 2 in the Adilabad jungles near the Maharashtra border, Andhra Pradesh.

Comrades Azad and Hem Pandey were en route to meet other comrades in Nagpur District, Maharashtra when they were abducted by the notorious Andhra Pradesh Special Branch Police. They were likely flown by helicopter to the jungles where they were summarily executed.

To cover up its fascist crime, the Indian police claim that Comrade Azad was killed in an armed encounter and to have recovered an AK-47 rifle at the scene. According to reports, Comrade Azad was traveling unarmed when he was accosted. His killing was carried out by the Indian police in cold blood and in complete disregard of international laws of war.

Comrade Azad was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) and served as its spokesperson. He was a disciplined student of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism who dedicated three and a half decades of his life to the revolutionary struggle of the Indian people. He was well regarded for living a simple life and working hard for the revolutionary cause. His death is mourned by the working class and oppressed people of India, the Philippines and the world over.

The CPP pays the highest revolutionary tribute to Comrade Azad and encourages all its members and revolutionary forces under its leadership to read and study the life story of Comrade Azad and be inspired by his revolutionary dedication.

Centro Brasileiro de Solidariedade aos Povos (Brazilian Center for Solidarity with the Peoples)

Azad: Prominent Revolutionary Leader Killed by the Fascist Indian State

Cherukuri Rajkumar, "Comrade Azad," political leader of the Indian people, a Central Committee's member and spokesperson of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) along with the young journalist Pamdey, were killed on July 2.

The action was carried out by Indian special police and secret service, who kidnapped and murdered them in Andhra Pradesh, which proves, once again, with what methods the old Indian State acts against the people's fighters. It clearly demonstrates the escalating fascism orchestrated by U.S. imperialism, and developed by Indian State.

That is the context of Operation Green Hunt, developed mainly against the resistance of the Adivasi

people, who constantly fight for their lands taken by imperialism and the Indian State. That operation has made a string of killings of revolutionary leaders and fighters of the people in India.

Those killings are a response from the fascist State in India to the advancement of popular and revolutionary struggle in that country, that has the People's War led by CPI (Maoist) its most advanced front. Recently, actions directed by this party caused heavy casualties to the forces of reaction that has about of 250.000 staff (largely composed of military and special forces).

Azad was an outstanding leader and was part of a generation of revolutionaries who is waging a deep struggle against opportunism and revisionism, building and developing a process increasingly prominent in the liberation struggle of the Indian people.

The Cebraspo of Brazil is expressing their outrage and condemning those killings.

The Cebraspo is expressing their unconditional support for the struggle of the Adivasi people, as well as the Indian people, led by CPI (Maoist). We demand an immediate end to Operation Green Hunt and all the military incursions of the fascist State in India to the lands of the people!

- Cebraspo 07/07/2010

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Communist Party of Greece (Marxist-Leninist)

Stop the Mass Crimes in India!

The Communist Party of Greece (marxist-leninist) condemns the ongoing murderous crusade of the Indian repressive forces, both official and paramilitary, against millions of peasants and Adivasi (tribal people) in central India. The so-called "operation Green Hunt" that was jointly launched by the Central Government in Delhi governments of Indian states like Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh etc, have turned into a bloodbath with killings, mass arrests, tortures and displacements, moving populations and whole villages is nothing short of a genocide. It aims to eliminate the armed revolutionary movement and to serve the plans of the multinational conglomerates. Meanwhile with this escalation of the political violence and terrorism against the cadres and the members of the revolutionary movement of the country as well as the harassment and intimidation of every progressive person that attempts to denounce these mass crimes continue to extend the reign of fascist terror across the country. The last and characteristic incident was the extrajudicial cold-blooded murder, of two cadres of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), following their arrest and torture by the Intelligence Service of Andhra Pradesh.

The CPG(M-L) conveys its revolutionary greetings to the militant communists in India and expresses its rage to the Indian government for the murder of comrade Azad. We call on all revolutionary and democratic forces in Greece to support the struggle of the popular masses in India and to take part in the mobilization organised for today to condemn these crimes and atrocities against the people of India, outside the Indian Embassy in Athens.

- Communist Party of Greece (Marxist-Leninist)

Athens, 06/07/2010

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Turkiye Komunist Partisi/Marksist-Leninist (Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist)

To the Communist Party of India (Maoist)

Central Committee

We have been informed that on July 1, 2010, comrade Cherukuri Rajkumar (Azad), member of the Central Committee and Politburo of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) has been assassinated by the

Andra Pradesh military forces together with Hem Pandey, who was accompanying him.

On behalf of the Central Committee of the TKP/ML, the party cadres and its fighters, we extend our heartfelt condolences to your Party's Central Committee, its cadres and fighters for the martyrdom of comrade Azad, the spokesperson of CPI(Maoist). Comrades, your loss is our loss; your anger is our anger!

At a time when the imperialist-capitalist system and the reactionaries in the world have launched a broad and intense attack against all progressives, revolutionaries, and the oppressed people and nations in the world that also specially target Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, the vital liberating struggle that the comrades of the CPI (M) are waging brings great hope to the oppressed people and nations in the world and is cause for much fear in the camp of our enemy.

Such immense struggles also bring along big losses, because, the struggle for democracy, independence and socialism can only advance through much self-sacrifice and hardship. Your heroic history is the best example for this. Until today thousands of comrades have generously with unhesitant attitude of dedicating their lives to the struggle in India, become red hopes of the international proletariat. For this reason, the liberating struggle that you waging is being followed with great interest and concern around the world. This of course, increases your tasks and the burden of responsibilities.

The martyrdom of comrade Azad, at a time of increasing tasks and responsibilities is specially a big loss. The present situation demands much courage in order to take new leaps forward. It demands from all of us to continue to wage a steady and determined war. In this path our martyrs symbolize our dedication and self sacrifice that guarantees our victory. Our biggest remembrance of our martyr's is to realize their ideals. We are certain that you the comrades of the CPI (Maoist) will observe your historical responsibilities towards the heroic martyrs of the international proletariat.

With this belief and historical responsibility, we salute your Party's Central Committee, its cadres and fighters with our most fraternal feelings and wish you much success.

The militant of the international proletariat and heroic leader, comrade Azad, will continue to live in our struggle!

Long live International Solidarity

Down with the fascist Indian state!

Down with imperialism and all reactionaries!

- TKP/ML Central Committee

July 2010

Maoist Communist Party of France Assassination of Comrade Azad by Indian State

The 1st of July, Comrade Azad, Pout Bureau member and spoke- person of the CPI (maoist), along with Comrade Hem Pandey, were murdered by the indian state's armed forces.

Police says that it was an "encounter". We know too well that the so-called "encountered" between revolutionary leaders and police always end with the revolutionary leader dying with a bullet in the head or in the back...

We associate ourselves with the Communist Party of India (maoist) and with all the oppressed people of India in memory of Comrade Azad and Comrade Hem Pandey.

Long live martyrs Comrade Azad and Comrade Hem Pandey!

Long live Indian revolution!

- Maoist Communist Party of France

* * *

Statement of PBSP (MUG) condemning the murder of Com. Azad and Com. Hem Pandey by the Indian state

We are deeply shocked at the news of murder of comrade Azad along with com. Hem Pandey by the Indian expansionist state. We express our anger and hatred against this monster that is not only killing Indian revolutionaries and masses but also Bangladeshi people in the border.

They must be punished for their crime!

Indian Maoists are our big inspiration who stood up in resistance when leaders of the Communist party of Nepal (Maoist) surrendered to imperialism.

Indian regime is that coward who tells lie and make false stories to hide their crime. So do their Bangladeshi junior partner. They don't have the courage to say the truth.

Comrade Azad is a glorious son of India. We express our best sympathy to the Communist Party of India (Maoist) and the families of martyred comrades.

We need a direct coordination with Communist party of India (Maoist).

We want a joint fight against the Indian and Bangladeshi state.

Long live Indian revolution!

Long live Bangladeshi revolution!

Polas

On behalf of the provisional leading body

Of the Maoist Unity Group of the

Proletarian party of East Bengal, PBSP (MUG)/Bangladesh

Date: August 1, 2010

International League of Peoples' Struggle ILPS Condemns Murder of Azad and Pandey by Andhra Pradesh Special Intelligence Bureau

The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) condemns the summary execution of Indian revolutionary Com. Azad and the journalist Hem Pandey by the Andhra Pradesh Special Intelligence Bureau (APSIB). The Indian authorities have deceived the public by reporting through the press that Azad and Pandey were killed in an encounter.

The Communist Party of India (Maoist) has clarified in a statement what really happened. Azad and Pandey were arrested in Nagpur City around 11'o clock of July 1. They were taken by the APSIB to the Adilabad jungles near Maharashtra where they were killed in cold blood. They were murdered in the forest to make it appear that they were killed in an armed encounter. The Indian authorities even claimed that they seized an AK47 from Azad.

Azad and Pandey were unarmed when they were arrested. Azad traveled to Nagpur to discuss with his comrades the proposal for mutual ceasefire between the revolutionary forces under the CPI (Maoist) and the Indian government. Azad was a Politburo member of the CPI (Maoist) and the spokesperson of the Party. He had been involved in previous peace negotiations between the Indian government and the CPI (Maoist).

Hem Pandey was a freelance journalist who wrote for Hindi newspapers such as Nai Dunia, Rastriya Sarara and Chetana.

The APSIB which is trained by the Israeli MOSSAD is notorious for carrying out abductions and summary exeëutions of suspected revolutionaries. And as is the practice of reactionary governments around the world confronting revolutionary movements, they cover up their crime by concocting stories

of fake encounters.

The Indian revolutionaries led by the CPI (Maoist) are waging a new democratic revolution with a socialist perspective. In recent years, they have made significant strides in their struggle and in winning the support of a growing number of the peasant masses who continue to suffer from feudal and semi—feudal exploitation and of the workers who are oppressed and exploited by the big comprador-bourgeoisie and foreign capitalists. Millions of peasants and minority nationalities have been displaced from the land to give way to agro-industrial projects involving comprador and foreign capitalist firms.

The Indian Maoists have succeeded in leading the masses in these struggles. The Indian government has been alarmed at the gains of the Maoists and have launched a massive counter-insurgency campaign called Operation Green Hunt. This campaign has been accompanied by forced mass evacuations, illegal arrest and detention, torture, extrajudicial killings and other forms of gross human rights violations.

The ILPS condemns these gross violations of human rights and supports the struggle of the Indian masses for national freedom, democracy and social justice. We call on the people of the world to denounce the Indian authorities for their war crimes and crimes against humanity' and support the just struggle of the Indian people.

- Prof. Jose Maria Sison,

Chairperson, International Coordinating Committee

International League of Peoples' Struggle

July 10, 2010

* * *

**International Campaign Against War
on the People in India (ICAWPI)
Condemn the Assassination of Azad,
Spokesperson of CPI (Maoist)
Support the Resistance Movement of Indian People**

On July 1, 2010 the special police branch of the Indian state assassinated in cold blood, Azad, (Cherukuri Rajkumar) the spokesperson of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) having earlier forcefully abducted him and Hem Chandra Pandey, a freelance journalist accompanying him. Both were tortured and executed and their bodies dropped and left in a distant forest. Yet the state and the media at its disposal claim that the two were killed in an “armed encounter”.

The assassination of Azad is a continuation of state terror and war on the people of India. This act exposes the disinformation campaign surrounding the state's “ceasefire” proposal, which is nothing but a deception by the Government of India. It puts a spotlight on the real intentions of the regime in launching “Operation Green Hunt” which has turned the whole of India into a war zone and hurled the unrestrained brutality of 250,000 paramilitary and police forces against the people, in its attempts to auction off the natural resources of the country.

Those in power in India know full well that the brutal abduction and killing of Azad and other popular leaders of the resistance will deter neither the tribal people nor his party the CPI (Maoist) nor any who oppose the “Operation Green Hunt.” This is an act of desperation of a system in deep crisis that seeks to extract maximum profits through unbridled exploitation. The Indian state does not and will not hesitate spilling the blood and extending terror against the majority of the people, in order to plunder every inch of the country for profits of the multinational corporations.

India has a long history of heroic popular resistance to the savage brutality by the imperialist powers and local reactionaries. The glorious struggle of independence against the savage domination of the British colonialists and the martyrdom of freedom fighters like Bhagat Singh eventually led to the end of the colonial rule in India. Today, it is “Operation Great Hunt” and the contemptible assassination of Azad, a prominent leader of a people's movement which has challenged the exploitative rule of the state, and

who had been willing to negotiate for a ceasefire so that the poorest of the poor of India could get a respite from the military campaign by the state. This is a sign of the coming ruin of the Indian ruling classes which conceal its service to imperialism and reaction by masquerading as “the world’s largest democracy.”

Azad was assassinated but we know there are many more Azads in India. While the Indian ruling classes and their controlled media continue their jubilant pretence about their recent “success”, they tremble, knowing that Azad is immortalised and continues to live in every chant, in every dream and aspiration of the oppressed calling for *Azadi* (freedom) not only in India but in every region and in every country and every prison and torture chamber that the imperialist powers and reactionaries have constructed to continue their domination.

The struggle of the people of India against state terror and war deserves the support of all people across the world joined in common struggle against the plundering of natural resources and the exploitation of the common people for the benefit of the imperialists, fascists and their cohorts.

As democratic and freedom loving organisations and individuals across the world we condemn the brutal assassinations of Azad (Cherukuri Rajkumar) and journalist Hem Chandra Pandey, and support the call to join together to express solidarity with the people in India in their just struggle against the war and terror perpetrated by the Indian state in the name of “Operation Green Hunt”.

Let us join our efforts and support the just struggle of oppressed everywhere!

The International Campaign Against War on the People in India (ICAWPI), further calls on organisations and individuals supportive of the campaign and all other progressive, democratic and freedom loving people across the world to join together and wherever possible take initiative to launch protest actions in front of the Indian embassies and consulates in order to :

- Denounce the criminal war on the people of India,
- *Condemn the recent brutal assassination of Azad, the spokesperson of CPI (Maoist) and other leaders of the popular resistance by the Indian state; and, to demand*
- *An end to "Operation Green Hunt";*
- *Freedom for all political prisoners in India*

Please forward this call widely; and join others in protesting the war and targeted assassinations of people’s leaders by the indian government. For further details please visit: www.icawpi.org

* * *

South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy (SANSAD)

SANSAD is proud to join people and organizations around the world in condemning the Indian state’s militarist approach to people standing up for their rights, including the routine use of extra-judicial killings, the latest of which is the murder of CPI (Maoist) leader, Azad and the journalist, Hem Chandra Pandey. We have endorsed the statement issued by ICAWPI.

- Board of Directors, South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy (SANSAD)

Federation for Democratic Rights-Partizan Turkey

News has arrived that Cherukuri Rajkumar, popularly known as “Comrade Azad”, Central Committee member, Political Bureau member and Party Spokesman of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) had been arrested by the Andhra Pradesh Special Police Forces along with Hem Pandey (Jittender) and brutally murdered in the forests of Adilabad on the border Maharashtra. The Communist Party of India (Maoist) has stated that both Azad and Hem Pandey have been murdered extrajudicially and that their deaths were portrayed as if there was a military encounter between the military and the revolutionaries. This method of “fake encounters” is a popular method among the State forces of India who employ such dirty tactics especially in regions where Maoists are powerful. Contradictory to the announcements of the Indian State, both Comrades, Azad and Hem Pandey were murdered while unarmed.

Azad and Hem Pandey, whom we regard as leaders of the Indian people's struggle against poverty, starvation, exploitation and imperialist domination, have been murdered in a despicable manner. This has only sharpened our hatred of the Indian State. The Indian State's recent violent, oppressive attacks on all revolutionary forces, including the Maoists further deepens the grudge we hold against India. Today the peasantry of India who strive to live off the land, and especially the Adivasi people, and the Maoists who lead the exploited millions in their struggle for freedom are targeted by the brutal and savage "Operation Green Hunt." Through the course of this operation the Indian State has murdered countless people, including members of the vanguard of the people of India. Thus the State of India has shown the world its true face. The recent murder of Azad and Jitender displays the immutable political line pursued by reactionary states such as India, against the people and their political vanguard.

We turn our attention to the working class and oppressed millions of India. We turn our attention to their confident march towards a better future. The Indian People's struggle for New Democracy, lead by the Maoist Communists gives inspiration to all oppressed peoples of the world. It also frightens the imperialist-capitalist reactionaries all over the world. From thousands of kilometers away, we salute the Indian People's struggle for revolution with our sincerest internationalist feelings. We also firmly state that we embrace their perspective of struggling for People's Democracy. With the same determination, we condemn the reactionary State of India. We embrace the values created by the People of India in their struggle for the golden age of mankind as if those values were our own. We also see all their martyrs as if those martyrs were our own.

We send this letter of condolence by the working people's of our own country to the Indian People who have lost two of their comrades. Comrades Azad and Jittender are immovable barricades in the universal revolutionary battle against the reactionaries, and their memory will live on forever. The oppressed millions of India, lead by the Maoists, are struggling against this system of exploitation and oppression. The brutal, genocidal attacks by the State of India against these millions in struggle will inevitably fail. We are fully confident that the Revolution in India will succeed. We once again declare that we will not stay silent in the face of brutal attacks by Indian Expansionism against the Indian and Nepali People's struggles for independence, democracy, socialism and communism.

Comrades Azad and Jittender are Immortal!

Long Live International Solidarity!

Long Live the Struggle for Revolution in India!

Down With Imperialism! Down With Indian Reactionaries!

**Federation for Democratic Rights Partizan
Turkey**

July 15, 2010

On the Occasion of Martyrdom of Comrade Azad: Expressing solidarity with Communist Party of India (Maoist)

Comrade Azad, spokesperson for Communist Party of India (Maoist), was murdered on July 1st 2010. Let us honour his memory and continue on his path!

Comrade Azad was a member of central committee and also a member of the politbureau of the Communist Party of India (Maoist). His death is a big loss for the CPI (Maoist), the Indian revolution, the revolutions of the region, and also the global revolution. He would have played a very critical and decisive role at the current juncture: at a time when the reactionary Indian state on one hand has mobilized more than 250000 police and mercenary forces against the Maoist peoples war within the framework of a large military campaign called Operation Green Hunt, and on the other hand it is espousing a deceptive propaganda about "peace talks" and "ceasefire." His murder at the hands of Andhra Pradesh's special forces, and that even in another state, which is even illegal under the laws of the Indian state, illustrates the fact that the reactionary state is using the false propaganda around "ceasefire" and "peace talks" as a façade for hiding its anti-people brutal repression and for this purpose they would even break their own laws. The resistance of the masses under the leadership of CPI (Maoist) against "Operation Green Hunt" that spreads across twenty states out of 28 Indian states is a resistance against the comprador policies of the reactionary Indian state which is making possible the vast plunder and pillage of the natural resources

of India by multinational corporations. In the process of the ongoing resistance, which continuously expands and spreads, the masses of people are selflessly giving sacrifices and also give tough blows to the vicious and repressive forces of the reactionary state. The officials of the reactionary Indian state and at its helm the Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, since the last few years is continuously declaring that the Maoist peoples war is the biggest threat to the Indian state.

The armed struggle and the current peoples war in India that is being led by CPI (Maoist) is the continuation of the Naxalite uprising that began a few decades ago in that country. Now this revolutionary war has spread across the vast and populous country and directly affects the lives of hundreds of millions of Indian masses, the martyrdom of comrade Azad, as one of the central and top leaders of the movement is considered an important success for the reactionary and atrocious Indian armed forces. But, among the hundreds of millions of the revolutionary Indian masses, there are many more 'Azads' and many other 'Azads' will join the battle. The people's war in India can and should successfully overcome this loss and continue ahead until the total victory of the revolution.

Communist (Maoist) Party of Afghanistan on the path of struggle for starting the peoples war in Afghanistan, whose specific character at the current juncture is the people's revolutionary national war of resistance against the imperialist occupiers and their puppet regime will commemorate comrade Azad and expresses its solidarity with CPI (Maoist) and the peoples war in that country on the occasion of this loss.

Communist (Maoist) Party of Afghanistan

July 15, 2010

Nepal Maoists condemn Azad's murder and Indian operation against rebels

Kathmandu, Nov 28, 2010

The week-long plenum of Nepal's largest party, that ended in a remote village in western Nepal on November 27, 2010 (Saturday), has formally condemned the 'immoral and planned murder' of Cherukuri Rajkumar, who was the spokesman of the Indian Maoists under the nom de guerre Azad. The 14-point statement also condemned India's 'Operation Green Hunt', the offensive started in five Indian states in November 2009 to flush out underground Maoists.

'We condemn the oppression of the Indian people in the name of Operation Green Hunt,' the plenum declaration said. 'We urge for a peaceful resolution of the problem.'

Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL)

11th July, 2010

The PUCL condemns the killing of CPI (Maoist) spokesperson Cherukuri Raj Kumar Azad and the Delhi based Uttarakhand Journalist, Hem Chandra Pandey, who were killed in the forest area of Adilabad on the 2nd of July, 2010 by the Andhra Pradesh Police.

Reports from various sources lend credence to the large perception amongst the public that the encounter story put forth by the AP State police is unacceptable and it is quite plausible that the incident is a case of fake encounter.

In the present case nobody from police side was injured. Nor are any reports of any injuries on the side of Maoists except two killed even though a large scale exchange of fire was reported between the two parties. According to press reports the villagers near the encounter site did not hear the sound of any continuous gunshot.

All these facts need to be independently verified.

If the Central Government is genuine in its peace efforts, the minimum bonafide it needs to show is the setting up of a judicial enquiry by a retired Supreme Court Judge.

In the event of its failure to do so, the Government's bonafide, that it is keen to have peace talks and mutual ceasefire would obviously be suspect and unacceptable to the people of this county.

Prabhakar Sinha
(President)

Pushkar Raj ,(General Secretary)
Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties,
National Office, Delhi

Peoples' Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR)

Peoples' Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR) strongly condemns the killing of Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad and a free lance journalist Hemchandra Pandey at Adilabad District in Andhra Pradesh on 2nd July 2010. It has been claimed by the Andhra Pradesh police that Azad and one Sahadeva were killed in an encounter near Sarkepalli village in Jogapur forests in Wankhidi mandal, Adilabad, while some other Maoist members escaped. However, the police version is contradicted by media reports which claim that both Azad and Hemchandra Pandey (Sahadev) were picked up by the Andhra Pradesh police from Nagpur at 11 am of 1st July 2010 and brought to Adilabad and killed there. It has also been reported in the press that villagers deny having heard of any gun shots between 10pm to am in the night of the alleged encounter. Also it is strange that no policemen was injured in a 4 hrs long encounter. Thus, the police version of the incident is full of contradictions. And the killing could be a part of the official policy to use encounters as a means to eliminate unwanted voices through extra judicial killings.

In its directive of 1996, NHRC had clearly stated that all cases of encounters are cognizable offence until the police version is verified by an independent investigating agency and that 'whenever information is received of encounter and death is ascertained as a result of firing by the police during the encounter, prima facie the ingredients of culpable homicide under appropriate sections of the IPC are satisfied and a magisterial inquiry shall be instituted against the encounter'. An Andhra Pradesh High Court's ruling on encounter killings states that 'the state is responsible to register an FIR against the encounter killing and the plea of self defence be proven before the court of law by the involved security personnel'.

In the light of all of this, PUDR demands registration of an FIR and initiation of investigation into the incident of killing of Azad and Hemchandra Pandey, without any delay. We also demand an independent magisterial inquiry as per the NHRC guidelines.

Moushumi Basu, Asish Gupta

Secretaries, Peoples' Union for Democratic Rights, New Delhi
July 04, 2010

Submission By The Human Rights Forum

6-9-2010

To,
The District Collector,
Adilabad

Sub: Submission by Human Rights Forum to Magisterial Enquiry into alleged encounter deaths of Maoist functionary C Rajkumar alias Azad and journalist Hemchandra Pandey

Sir,

We have gathered from media reports that a magisterial enquiry under Section 176 of CrPC is being conducted into the deaths of C Rajkumar alias Azad, a member of the Maoist party and a journalist Hemchandra Pandey, in an alleged encounter with the police in the Sarkepally forest region of Wankhedi mandal in Adilabad district on the intervening night of July 1-2, 2010.

The Human Rights Forum (HRF) is a citizens' forum established with the objective of working for the protection of Constitutionally guaranteed/internationally recognised rights of the people. We are concerned with ensuring, among other things, that the agencies of the State, like the police, adhere to the law in the discharge of their duties. We believe that citizens must be tried and punished, if found guilty, only in accordance with a procedure laid down by the law of the land and no one can be subjected to extra-judicial execution by the State. That would be contrary to Articles 14 and 21 of the Indian Constitution. We therefore place before you the following:

A five-member fact-finding team of the HRF enquired into the alleged encounter in the Sarkepally forest. The team visited the area on July six and apart from examining the exact place where the two bodies were found, we also spoke with local residents. We are of the firm belief that there was no exchange of fire as is being stated by the police on that occasion. Rather, it was a cold-blooded deliberate liquidation of two persons by the police.

That the police version of a nearly four-hour encounter in the dead of night in the course of which over 300 rounds were exchanged following which 'two top Maoists' died is an utter falsehood is proven by a perusal of the hillock where the alleged encounter took place. The hillock is about a km from Kensuguda village amidst fairly thick forest. Apart from a few bullet holes in the tree trunks below which the bodies of Rajkumar and Hemachandra were found, there are no other details of bullets lodged elsewhere or ricocheting off the rocks in the area, something that surely would have happened if there was a fierce gun-battle as the police claim. According to the police, there were about 25 armed Maoists who took part in the encounter. It raises the question why not a single policeman was even injured. If indeed there was an exchange of fire, the police could not have come out unscathed as the Maoists clearly had the advantage of terrain with the police below the hillock and clearly at a disadvantage. Moreover, adivasi residents in the area did not hear any prolonged exchange of fire which they would have if it was really a fiery four-hour gun-battle as the police claim.

We believe that Rajkumar and Hemchandra Pandey, the latter who, contrary to police claims, was not a 'dreaded Maoist', but a journalist, were both apprehended by the police, brought to the Sarkepally forest region and shot dead on the said hillock. Instead of abiding by the law and producing the two in a court of law, the police killed them and subsequently put out the story of an encounter. We have no hesitation in stating that this was an incident of deliberate and intentional killing of two persons by the police.

As you are aware, an encounter by definition means an exchange of fire. Every killing in an encounter, is therefore a killing in self defence. At the conclusion of every alleged encounter, the police officer in charge of the police party that has participated in the alleged encounter gives a complaint in the local police station, which is registered as a crime under Section 307 of the IPC (read with other appropriate sections). This means that the crime is registered as one of attempt to murder by the now deceased as a consequence of which the police, according to the complaint, had to resort to firing in self-defence causing death.

It is the HRF's considered view that such an incident must be registered as two crimes, that is under Section 307 and 302 respectively. The first is a crime of Attempt to Murder by the now deceased and the other a crime of Culpable Homicide Amounting to Murder by the police purportedly in self-defence. The burden of establishing a preponderance of probabilities in favour of the exception relating to self-defence to a competent court rests upon the police personnel who have fired causing death.

Thus every alleged encounter, as the one on the intervening night of July 1-2, has to be registered as a crime under Section 302 IPC (read with other appropriate statutes) against the police, and the concerned police personnel have to be arrested and put on trail for Culpable Homicide Amounting to Murder. The burden of raising sufficient presumption in favour of the plea of self-defence then rests with the accused police officer/personnel. Importantly, the case must be investigated by an agency

completely independent of the State police. This lawful procedure has not been followed by the law enforcing authorities in the present case. We reiterate that this must be done without further delay in the present case.

We also urge you to issue a public statement assuring those who wish to depose before you that no harm will befall them. We say this because in most cases relating to police lawlessness intimidation is resorted to by the police so as to prevent people from deposing.

Sds/-

VS Krishna (HRF State general secretary),

Md Anwar (HRF State secretary),

A Bhujanga Rao (HRF Adilabad dist. general secretary),

K Bakkaiah (HRF Adilabad dist. president)

Press Statement issued by Campaign for Peace and Justice

We, as concerned citizens, feel extremely disturbed by the recent events of violence in the region of Chhattisgarh and other parts of Eastern India. We condemn the spiral of violence and counter violence between the State Security Forces and the Maoists. Though the violence has been continuing unabated, yet following the Peace and Justice March by a group of concerned citizens from Raipur to Dantewada, a peace process had been initiated. Letters were being exchanged between the Home Minister Mr. P. Chidambaram and the spokesperson of the CPI (Maoists) Mr. Azad.

However, the recent murder—it was not an encounter as reported widely— of the person who was leading the peace process on behalf of the Maoists Mr. Azad has shocked us all. It has derailed the peace process. We condemn this killing and expect the State to:

1. set up an independent enquiry into the killing of Mr. Azad and Mr. Hem Pandey and take appropriate action.
2. clarify its position on the peace process.
3. initiate steps to facilitate the peace process and take it ahead.

Signed by :

Prof. Banwarilal Sharma, Dr. V.N. Sharma, Medha Patkar,
Rajeev Lochan Shah, Radha Bhatt, Neeraj Jain, Ajit Jha

3-7-2010

We strongly condemn the heinous killing of Cherukuri Rajkumar aka Azad, spokesperson and Politbureau member of CPI(Maoist), and Hemchandra Pandey, a freelance journalist. Although the Andhra police claimed that they were killed in an alleged encounter in the hills of Adilabad in Andhra Pradesh, multiple reports strongly indicate that they were abducted by the Special Intelligence Branch (SIB) of Andhra Police from Nagpur, Maharashtra and then murdered, before their dead bodies were left in Adilabad. We join all democratic-minded people in demanding a thorough enquiry by an independent citizens' group into the incident which would provide a clear picture of the sequence of events that led to their illegal abduction and killing and which should lead to the prosecution of all personnel involved in the crime. Simultaneously, we demand the immediate disbanding of all such quasi-secret branches of the security establishment, whose sole aim seems to be silencing the voices of resistance.

These killings are occurring with the Operation Green Hunt in the background, in the name of battling the influence of CPI(Maoist) in the forest areas of East-Central India. But, in reality, the Green Hunt is a militarized project of the central and state governments for grabbing land, by breaking and clearing people's resistances, for eventual exploitation of natural resources by multinational corporations. During this operation, that has been on since October 2009, there has been complete blackout on the information of what is happening in these remote areas, with sometimes news leaking out of incidents of severe state repression in the hands of the joint state and central forces, threatening the life and livelihood of people in this region. Any attempts by civil liberties activists or independent journalists to access these areas have led to detentions and even arrests. In the last few months, several activists belonging to different kinds of resistances in these regions and also in urban areas have either been killed or imprisoned under draconian laws.

Foreseeing the disastrous impact that OGH would have on the common people in those regions, from the very beginning, different sections of the civil society have called for a dialog among the state and different facets of the resistance, including the CPI(Maoist) and different people's organizations involved in struggles in the adivasi regions. Several attempts to make any progress in these efforts have failed, with different politicians, bureaucrats and security officers continuously attempting to scuttle discussions on these possibilities. In recent days, a glimmer of any headway had risen due to the civil society initiative represented by Swami Agnivesh, with the Home Minister P. Chidambaram and Azad, as spokesperson of CPI(Maoist) responding to him via letters detailing the suitable conditions under which dialog can begin. It is reported that Azad was on his way to consult other members of CPI(Maoist) in order to decide future steps for going ahead with this current initiative, when he was allegedly abducted and killed by the SIB - thus throwing the possibility of talks into complete disarray. Such an act - the murder of a spokesperson of the political organization with which dialog is supposedly being planned - at this crucial juncture by

security agencies thus raises serious doubts regarding the sincerity of the state to the process of resolving the conflict through any dialog. Any confidence that the common people would have had in the process is completely shattered.

What happens now ? With sections of media commentators encouraging more pinpointed decapitation of the rebel leadership, and reports of strongly-worded rhetoric from CPI(Maoist) leaders, the possibility of an immediate resumption of the process leading to any dialog seems to be receding, with the spectre of Operation Green Hunt continuing to haunt the lives of people.

Meanwhile, the multitude of protests across the country, after the inception of Green Hunt, has certainly brought to the forefront the single-most important issue confronting us - a debate on the development paradigm to be followed which would lead to justice and prosperity for the vast majority of the people, currently reeling under neo-liberal economic policies of the governments. This is the burning question and this would inevitably be the central issue during any dialog if it was to occur - in which, people from all segments of the society, specially the marginalized, could significantly contribute. This fundamental debate the ruling class certainly does not desire and that is possibly why the state continuously dithers and tries to stall, by various mischievous means, any progress leading to any form of dialog, trying to scuttle, divert and divide people's movements on questions like violence/non-violence etc. Therefore, the burden of responsibility lies with the civil society to continue to remain focused and united in demanding an end to the military campaign of the state, while vigorously campaigning for a genuine national debate on questions related to development. We remain committed to this process.

July 07, 2010

Citizens' Statement On the Assassination of Azad

On 2nd July, from the electronic media and today from the press, we have come to know of the killing of Cherukuri Rajkumar aka Azad and Hemachandra Pandey in an exchange of fire with the police in Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh.

However, the press has reported sources (The Hindu, 3 July 2010) that have questioned the encounter theory. We have reasons to pay attention to this point of view since villagers around Sarkepalli (Adilabad district), the purported place of exchange of fire, are reported not to have heard any sound of firing between 10 pm on 1 July 2010 and 2 am on 2 July 2010 (The Times of India, 3 July 2010)

It will be pertinent to point out that the Mr P Chidambaram vide his letter that has been reported in the press had requested the help of Swami Agnivesh to reach out to the CPI(Maoist) and to persuade them to accept the Government's offer for talks. Swami Agnivesh's efforts received favourable response and in a letter reported in the press, Azad had written to the former that they look forward to positive results.

We believe that there are vested interests within the Government who want to escalate the armed conflict and scuttle the peace process and the killing of Azad is a deplorable act towards scuttling the talks.

We, the signatories to this statement, believe that peace is the only way out of the present conflict and the road to peace lies through a path of mutual negotiations. We appeal to the good sense of all the citizens of the country to join us in condemning encounter killings and to work towards an environment where cessation of armed hostilities and negotiations for peace are the only way forward.

Hiren Gohain, academic
Madhu Bhaduri , retired diplomat
Amit Bhaduri, academic
Sourin Bhattacharya , author
Tarun Sanyal, academic
Bibhash Chakrabarty, theatre
personality
Paresh Chattopadhyay, academic
Subhendu Dasgupta, academic
Sumanta Banerjee, author

Meher Engineer, academic
Nandini Sundar, academic
Rajinder Sachar, retired justice
Gautam Navlakha, journalist
Bernard D'mello, journalist
Amiya Dev, academic
Randhir Singh, academic
Kamal Mitra Chenoy, academic
Ujjwal Kumar, academic,
K G Kannabiran, Advocate,
Civil Liberties Activist

Sujato Bhadra, civil liberties
activist
Dipanjan Rai Chaudhuri,
academic
Timir Basu, journalist
G N Saibaba, academic
Anirban Kar, academic
Francis Adaikalam, academic
Partho Sarothi Ray, academic

16 July 2010

Sanhati statement on the killing of Azad, Spokesperson of CPI(Maoist)

July 07, 2010

We strongly condemn the heinous killing of Cherukuri Rajkumar aka Azad, spokesperson and Politbureau member of CPI(Maoist), and Hemchandra Pandey, a freelance journalist. Although the Andhra police claimed that they were killed in an alleged encounter in the hills of Adilabad in Andhra Pradesh, multiple reports strongly indicate that they were abducted by the Special Intelligence Branch (SIB) of Andhra Police from Nagpur, Maharashtra and then murdered, before their dead bodies were left in Adilabad. We join all democratic-minded people in demanding a thorough enquiry by an independent citizens' group into the incident which would provide a clear picture of the sequence of events that led to their illegal abduction and killing and which should lead to the prosecution of all personnel involved in the crime. Simultaneously, we demand the immediate disbanding of all such quasi-secret branches of the security establishment, whose sole aim seems to be silencing the voices of resistance.

These killings are occurring with the Operation Green Hunt in the background, in the name of battling the influence of CPI(Maoist) in the forest areas of East-Central India. But, in reality, the Green Hunt is a militarized project of the central and state governments for grabbing land, by breaking and clearing people's resistances, for eventual exploitation of natural resources by multinational corporations. During this operation, that has been on since October 2009, there has been complete blackout on the information of what is happening in these remote areas, with sometimes news leaking out of incidents of severe state repression in the hands of the joint state and central forces, threatening the life and livelihood of people in this region. Any attempts by civil liberties activists or independent journalists to access these areas have led to detentions and even arrests. In the last few months, several activists belonging to different kinds of resistances in these regions and also in urban areas have either been killed or imprisoned under draconian laws.

Foreseeing the disastrous impact that OGH would have on the common people in those regions, from the very beginning, different sections of the civil society have called for a dialog among the state and different facets of the resistance, including the CPI(Maoist) and different people's organizations involved in struggles in the adivasi regions. Several attempts to make any progress in these efforts have failed, with different politicians, bureaucrats and security officers continuously attempting to scuttle discussions on these possibilities. In recent days, a glimmer of any headway had risen due to the civil society initiative represented by Swami Agnivesh, with the Home Minister P. Chidambaram and Azad, as spokesperson of CPI(Maoist) responding to him via letters detailing the suitable conditions under which dialog can begin. It is reported that Azad was on his way to consult other members of CPI(Maoist) in order to decide future steps for going ahead with this current initiative, when he was allegedly abducted and killed by the SIB - thus throwing the possibility of talks into complete disarray. Such an act - the murder of a spokesperson of the political organization with which dialog is supposedly being planned - at this crucial juncture by security agencies thus raises serious doubts regarding the sincerity of the state to the process of resolving the conflict through any dialog. Any confidence that the common people would have had in the process is completely shattered.

What happens now? With sections of media commentators encouraging more pinpointed decapitation of the rebel leadership, and reports of strongly-worded rhetoric from CPI(Maoist) leaders, the possibility of an immediate resumption of the process leading to any dialog seems to be receding, with the spectre of Operation Green Hunt continuing to haunt the lives of people.

Meanwhile, the multitude of protests across the country, after the inception of Green Hunt, has certainly brought to the forefront the single-most important issue confronting us - a debate on the development paradigm to be followed which would lead to justice and prosperity for the vast majority of the people, currently reeling under neo-liberal economic policies of the governments. This is the burning question and this would inevitably be the central issue during any dialog if it was to occur - in which, people from all segments of the society, specially the marginalized, could significantly contribute. This fundamental debate the ruling class certainly does not desire and that is possibly why the state continuously dithers and tries to stall, by various mischievous means, any progress leading to any form of dialog, trying to scuttle, divert and divide people's movements on questions like violence/non-violence etc. Therefore, the burden of responsibility lies with the civil society to continue to remain focused and united in demanding an end to the military campaign of the state, while vigorously campaigning for a genuine national debate on questions related to development. We remain committed to this process.

Democratic Students Union

Condemn the cold blooded murder of Azad & a freelance journalist in fake encounter!

Expose the farcical commitment of the Indian state to 'dialogue'

The spokesperson of CPI(Maoist) Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad and a freelance journalist Hem Chandra Pandey, both unarmed, were brutally murdered at Adilabad district in Andhra Pradesh on the 1st of July 2010. While reporting this incident, the Andhra Police however claimed that Azad and one Sahadeva were killed in a 'four hour long encounter' involving 'fierce gun battle' near Sarkepalli village in Jogapur forests in Wankhidi mandal, Adilabad, while others of the armed troop of Maoists managed to escape in this lengthy exchange of fire. The corporate media of course blindly parroted these lies and never cared to pay heed to the section of the civil society and activists who were challenging the state's version and were most vociferously exposing another blatant incident of fake-encounter. According to media reports and activists, Azad, who was appointed to head the peace-talks with the Home Ministry, was on his way to meet his comrades to decide on the cease-fire process. Both Azad and Hem Chandra Pandey were picked up by the Andhra Pradesh police from Nagpur at 11 am on the 1st of July 2010 and brought to Adilabad and were shot dead in cold blood while both were unarmed. But the naked-fact of a fake-encounter killing was and is still being brushed aside by the corporate media and the state by remaining simply silent about the facts that have come into the fore.

The story of 'fierce gun battle' has already come under serious suspicion by the facts being reported even by some of the mainstream media, that villagers of adjoining areas denied having heard of any such exchange of gun-fire between 10pm and 2am, let alone a four hour long gun battle. Moreover, it is also difficult to believe that not a single policeman was injured in the supposed 'four hour long fierce encounter' with 25 heavily armed Maoists. Further, the fascist nature of Indian armed force and the state and their mastery over transforming a fake encounter into a 'bloody battle' got thoroughly exposed when it was identified that the person who was killed along with Azad was Hem Chandra Pandey a freelance journalist based in Delhi. He wrote for various Hindi dailies and worked for in the in-house magazine, Chetna in the communication department of DARCL Logistics Ltd for a monthly pay of Rs.15,865. His wife in a press conference informed the media that he had gone to Nagpur to do a story and was supposed to come back on the 2nd of July. This proves beyond doubt that Azad was indeed picked up from Nagpur even before he met his comrades and then he was killed in cold blood; and the journalist Hem was killed on the other hand just to suppress this truth and justify their fictitious version of a 'heroic police raid'. Journalists in more than 6 districts of Andhra Pradesh and Hyderabad have strongly protested the killing of Hem and it is only under immense pressure and fear of being exposed, that the AP Police in a vault-face had to identify him as a 'scribe' the very next day. The targeting of journalists by the state in various struggle areas, killing them, intimidating them, or booking them under fake charges in a desperate bid to stop them from reporting the other side of the story is a fascist assault on the fundamental ethos of the very profession of journalism. In recently concluded genocide in Tamil Elam, the bloody war waged by the fascist Sri Lankan state, against the Tamil population, also adopted the same tactics of silencing the media by deliberate targeting of journalists.

Azad was someone who was heading the on-going peace talk between the Home Ministry and the Maoists via Swami Agnivesh. There were several letters that had been exchanged between Chidambaram and Azad discussing the modalities and time period for the possible ceasefire. At this juncture, the deliberate elimination of the person who was leading the peace process on behalf of the Maoists exposes the farcical nature of the commitment to 'peace' that Chidambaram keeps boasting about. And the Home Ministry is therefore singularly responsible for derailing the so-called peace-process that it proposed to initiate. Evidences in this case most comprehensively indicate towards another incident of fake encounter just like the thousands of other such staged encounters going on over the years all over the country in the various liberation struggles and people's movements in Kashmir, NorthEast, West Bengal, Chattisgarh and so on. And like in every such occasion before, this time around as well the armed forces will be shielded in spite of overwhelming evidences to 'safeguard their morale'.

This fascist strategy makes complete mockery of the NHRC appointed Ranganath Mishra Committee's directive (1996) that all cases of encounters are 'cognizable offence' until the police version is verified by

an independent investigating agency and hence the police personnel must be booked under the charge of homicide in these sorts of killing. The historic Andhra High Court ruling on encounter killings clearly said that ‘the state is responsible to register an FIR against the encounter killing and the plea of self defense be proven before the court of law by the involved security personnel’. But the saga of such fake encounters continues unabated against all such legalities, norms and provisions of the UN, other international conventions and statutes of civil liberty. The adoption of this ‘US-Israel counter insurgency strategy’ of targeting and extra-judicial elimination of the leadership of a people’s movement brazenly exposes the fascist nature of the Indian state that flouts and undermines the very law of the land and the constitution that it claims to uphold. The ‘Mossad-trained’ covert operations of the security forces and the brutal killings of the leaders of people’s movements in fake encounters like that of Lalmohan Tudu, Sudhakar Reddy, Appa Rao, Kondal Reddy and others all point towards the same direction.

Immediately constitute independent enquiry into the killing of Azad & the freelance journalist Hem Pandey!

Home Ministry must clarify its position on the peace process it claims to initiate!

July 6, 2010

* * *

Heading Towards Another Emergency?

Mainstream Weekly Editorial

Last week the CPI (Maoist) spokesperson and one of the topmost leaders of the organisation, Cherukuri Rajkumar (popularly known as Azad) was killed in a dense forest in Andhra Pradesh’s Adilabad district. The official version was that Azad was having a meeting with some people in the jungle when the Andhra Pradesh Police, on a tip-off, swooped down on them. There ensued a gunbattle at the end of which two were killed—Azad and another person who was first thought to be Sahdev, a tribal young man connected with the Maoists in Dandakaranya. Later it came to be known that the other person killed was none other than Hem Chandra Pandey, a freelance journalist based in New Delhi who, according to some reports, was a Zonal Committee member of the Maoist party in Uttarakhand.

The official version has been strongly contested by not only the CPI (Maoist) but also others, including several human rights activists and members of the civil society. They assert that Azad was arrested in Nagpur on July 1 when he was on his way to Dandakaranya to meet the party leaders, his colleagues in the CPI (Maoist) Polit-Bureau and Central Committee, for discussing the modalities of a ceasefire as well as negotiations with the Union Government based on Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram’s letter to Swami Agnivesh and Azad’s own response to Chidambaram’s offer that the Maoist spokesperson conveyed to Agnivesh on May 31, 2010 (see page 4 of this issue). He was then taken to Adilabad from Nagpur and killed in cold blood in the forest there in the early hours of July 2. Hem Chandra Pandey was also killed in order to enable the authorities suppress the truth (since he was an eyewitness to the state’s perfidy).

Azad had, in an interview published in this journal last January, urged the media not to do anything that would result in truth being a casualty in the ongoing war in our tribal heartland. Excerpts of that interview are being carried in this issue as well as we remember Azad following his untimely death. [Little did we realise when we published the full interview six months ago that Azad’s statement on this score would become so prophetic in such a brief time-span.]

We are certain that the authorities would refute the facts brought out in the foregoing. But try as much as they can, they would not be able to shut out the truth for long and it will, like daylight, eventually break out in all its manifestations. To facilitate that process we demand an impartial and thorough inquiry into the entire incident.

From the sequence of events regarding this episode it is now transparent that the government in New Delhi, despite Chidambaram’s affirmations to the contrary, was not only non-serious on the issue of negotiations with the Maoists but actually opposed the whole concept of talks; or else Azad would not have met the fate that he did. He was a leading figure in an outlawed organisation; for that reason he could have been arrested. As for the specific charges against him, those could have been produced in a court of law as the rule of law warrants. But there was no reason to kill him; such killings happen only in the banana republics. The killing of Pandey also signifies a renewed assault on both freedom of speech and democracy and this is fraught with grave consequences.

Meanwhile the resounding success of the Bharat Bandh called by the entire Opposition on July 5 has

sent shivers down the spine of not just the government at the Centre but all those, like the bigwigs of the corporate sector, backing the Union Cabinet to the hilt on the petrol price hike as well as deregulation of the prices of such commodities. The bandh's success is a genuine barometer of the people's mood at present as the poorer sections of society, who comprise the bulk of the aam aadmi, are groaning under the impact of incessant price rise and runaway inflation even as the authorities and India Inc. cast a blind eye to their plight. Meanwhile convinced of the corporate lobby's total support to his policies, the PM has summarily dismissed the Opposition's call for a rollback of the government's decisions in this regard which, incidentally, is also the demand of some of the Congress' own allies in the UPA (like the Trinamul Congress).

At the same time the situation in the Kashmir Valley is turning from bad to worse with the security forces running amok-the CRPF killed four more persons (again mostly young people and teenagers) on July 6 taking the death toll over the last few days to 16-and the State authorities have been compelled to seek the help of the Army to restore law and order.

All these developments not only cause serious anxiety and concern but also raise the natural question: where are we heading? There are ominous forebodings of the country inexorably hurtling down towards yet another Internal Emergency. One sincerely hopes these fears are belied and good sense dawns on those at the helm of affairs before it is too late.

Mainstream, Vol XLVIII, No 29,

July 10, 2010

Delhi - Public Meeting to protest against the killing of Azad and Hem Pandey, August 3 Organized by - Concerned Citizens and Forum Against War

**Date - 2pm, 3 August 2010 (Tuesday) Venue - Rajendra Bhawan,
Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi**

Speakers: Agnivesh, Amit Bhaduri, Arundhati Roy, Ashish Gupta/PUDR, B D Sharma, G Haragopal, G N Saibaba, Jagmohan, Manoranjan Mohanty, Meher Engineer, Mrigank, PC Tiwari, Rajender Sachar/Pushkar Raj/PUCL, Rajkishore, RDF, SAR Geelani, Satnam Sujato Bhadro, Neelabh, Pankaj Bisht, Sumit Chakravarty, Varavara Rao & Others

Azad, the spokesperson of the Central Committee of CPI (Maoist) along with a freelance journalist, Hemant Pandey from Delhi was murdered in cold blood in the early hours of 2 July 2010. The circumstantial evidence clearly shows that both were caught in Nagpur by Central and Andhra Pradesh intelligence agencies in a joint operation and killed in custody. Later their bodies were thrown in the Sarkapalli forest in Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh by the police to cook up a story of an 'armed encounter'.

According to the CPI (Maoist) sources, Azad, their spokesperson was caught by the intelligence agencies in Nagpur around 10 am on 1 July 2010. As per the family members of Hem Chandra Pandey, he left for Nagpur in the evening of 30 June 2010 to meet with his professional responsibilities as a journalist and hence thereafter remained incommunicado since the morning of 1st July. On the morning of 2nd July, the Andhra Pradesh police cited the case of an armed encounter in the wee hours in the thick jungles of Adilabad district wherein two persons were killed. One of the deceased was identified as Azad alias Cherukuri Rajkumar while the other was declared unidentified.

It is not for the first time that a senior member of CPI (Maoist) was killed in this kind of a catch and kill operation by the intelligence agencies. What is strikingly shocking in this case is that Azad was approached by the Government of India through Swami Agnivesh towards facilitating the modalities of a ceasefire. It was, as evinced by the Government of India and the CPI (Maoist) party, the preliminary and crucial step towards initiating a dialogue with a view, at least, to suspend a major civil war situation in the history of post-1947 in the heartland of the country.

The killing of Azad angered those who have been wishing to see a genuine path towards a peace process to evolve in contrast to the military solution of the government to the resistance struggles of the adivasis in central and eastern parts of the country. This killing of a leader of a political party in captivity with impunity by the law enforcing agencies of the so-called largest democracy has attracted worldwide condemnation. Most people suspect that he was killed because the Government is not serious in its

proposal to establish a ceasefire and initiate dialogue with the people who are waging a steadfast resistance against the destruction of their lives and livelihoods. Thousands of intellectuals, journalists, writers, activists attended the funeral of Azad in Hyderabad and Hem Chandra Pandey in New Delhi unequivocally demanding an impartial judicial inquiry into the cold blooded murder of this messenger of peace and justice by the very Government who killed them.

Dumb struck by the killing of Azad, Swami Agnivesh—the interlocutor made by the Government of India with whom the former was communicating for a peace process—declared that Azad must have been traced down by the Government intelligence agencies through the very channels the latter was communicating sanctioned by the Home Ministry. His shock got consummated when Home Minister P. Chidambaram out rightly rejected the forthright demand of Swami Agnivesh for a judicial inquiry. The entire civil society was taken in by the criminal act of a government who had indulged in the worst crime of killing a leader and messenger with whom it was ostensibly working out a ceasefire which everyone believed and sincerely hoped will move towards a meaningful dialogue addressing the burning issues of the vast sections of the deprived of this country.

Azad as the spokesperson of the recently banned political formation in the country—CPI (Maoist)—has been known to one and all for more than a decade engaging in public debate on behalf of his party on many burning issues concerning the future of vast majority of the people through hundreds of press statements, articles and rejoinders.

In his letter dated 26 June to the Union Governments' interlocutor, Azad broadly agreed for the ceasefire followed by a possible dialogue responding to the letter of offer for ceasefire and dialogue by the Union Home Minister written on 11 May 2010 addressed to Swami Agnivesh asking him to approach the banned CPI (Maoist).

The public meeting on 3 August 2010 will discuss the crucial issue of the unfolding scenario in the wake of the brutal murder of a messenger who was categorical to agree for peace with the very Government that had committed in paper towards setting up the peace process. Eminent intellectuals from the civil society who engaged in the process—while categorically opposing the Government's policy of unbridled exploitation of natural resources in the tribal heartlands threatening their very extinction—will deliberate on this dangerous turn of events as the Government has once again failed before the people in fulfilling its commitment, as it claimed, as one who would leave no stone unturned for a lasting peace in the country. By its very act, the Government has once again proved before the peace loving people of this country that it hardly respects the burning concerns of the vast sections of toiling masses of this country who would want a life with justice, dignity and peace free from all forms of mistreatment, oppression and exploitation.

- *Institute judicial inquiry into the killing of Azad and Hem Chandra Pandey*
 - *Stop Operation Green Hunt*
 - *Withdraw Paramilitary Forces from Tribal and other regions*
- Make public all MoUs on minerals and other projects

Press Note circulated in the Press Conference held in Press Club, New Delhi on 7 August 2010

Concerned Citizens: Concerned Citizens:

- **Institute a Judicial Inquiry into the Killing of Azad, Polit Bureau Member of CPI (Maoist) and Freelance Journalist Hem Chandra Pandey!**
- **Stop War on People, Take up Peace Process Genuinely and Sincerely!**

The Government of India has not issued a statement or given a public clarification so far on the killing of Azad, spokesperson of CPI (Maoist), and Delhi-based journalist Hem Chandra Pandey on 2 July 2010. Subsequent to these incidents, Union Home Minister P Chidambaram who has been outspoken on his 'abjure violence for 72 hours' position, has been remarkably silent on these instances of state violence, and on his offer of ceasefire and dialogue with the Maoists. Nor has he responded to strong and widespread protests against these instances of the state's violence. This is especially consequential because Azad was

communicating with the Home Minister through Swami Agnivesh on his offer of ceasefire and dialogue.

Irina Bokova, Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the only United Nations agency with a mandate to defend freedom of expression and freedom of Press, asked the Government of India to investigate the circumstances under which freelance journalist Hem Chandra Pandey was killed. Asia-Pacific Director Jacqueline Park of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has said that “specialized in covering social issues, he (Hemant Pandey) had gone to Nagpur to interview a leader of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist), Cherukuri Rajkumar, alias Azad, who was said to be attempting to negotiate a truce with the authorities”. Further the basic principles of Article 21 of the Constitution and United Nations Declaration of Human Rights demand that there should be a judicial inquiry into this assassination. Hundreds of organizations throughout the world have condemned the killing of Azad and Hem Chandra Pandey and demanded an enquiry by a constitutionally mandated agency. Yet the Government of India continues to remain silent. Swami Agnivesh, the interlocutor of the Government has publicly expressed his anguish and declared that he fears that the system of communication opened to negotiate the peace process was used to trace and then kill Azad.

On 1 August 2010 another senior leader of CPI (Maoist) Srikant alias Sukant informed Varavara Rao that he was being closely followed and encircled by the Andhra Pradesh Intelligence Bureau (APSIB). [Varavara Rao is a revolutionary poet and was one of the emissaries of the erstwhile CPI (ML) (People’s War) during the talks between the former and the Andhra Pradesh government in 2002 and 2004]. Two days later on 3 August 2010 Srikant wrote an open letter to Swami Agnivesh informing him that he [Srikant] narrowly escaped the dragnet of the APSIB which is notorious for killings political dissidents with impunity. In his own words,

“The APSIB encircled me and for the time being I am out of it. In these circumstances it is difficult for me to send any reply to you through some channels or send your letter to our comrades. I request you to openly publish your letters in the papers. Any channel if you try to send through, it might end up in some loss. We can no more afford that”.

Swami Agnivesh has stated that, after being urged by the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh himself to continue with the Peace Process, he sent a fresh letter to the central leadership of the CPI (Maoist) dated 22 July 2010. It appears that now Srikant has taken responsibility for conveying messages for consideration of his Party’s Central leadership regarding the ceasefire and dialogue with the Government of India. Srikant’s testimony advises us that he was being followed by intelligence agencies, with the idea to encounter him. Fortunately he escaped. The Government has remained silent on these developments as well. From Srikant’s account, as well as from the killings of Azad and Pandey, it appears that the government is only interested in the peace process as a means to target and kill any of the CPI (Maoist) cadre that tries to respond and participate in this process.

The reported sequence of events clearly indicate that the Government of India is really not interested in establishing dialogue and ending the rigorous military offensive it has been waging in the tribal regions for almost a year now. The military offensive (codenamed Operation Green Hunt) that was initiated by the UPA-2 Government in September 2010 in the tribal regions continues unabated although civil society and democratic organisations have long been demanding a ceasefire and dialogue in the place of the military offensive.

The onus now is on the Government of India. It has to clarify whether it is still interested in initiating a ceasefire and dialogue or is only obsessed with warmongering and military offensives on resisting peoples and organisations like CPI (Maoist) who are in the forefront of such resistance.

It has become increasingly clear in the last one year to the people of this country that the UPA-2 government is only interested in a military solution to the urgent and appalling problems of lives and livelihoods of the vast majority of the toiling masses. It has also become clear that this extreme impatience and aggression are fuelled by the need to facilitate the unbridled and swift plunder of vast mineral resources. This is evidenced by the numerous MoUs that have been signed by the big corporate houses and various state governments. The present military offensive against the people in the states like Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Maharashtra is in fact aimed at emptying these regions of their people, so that these MOU-targeted lands may be handed over for exploitation and plunder. Such massive mining operations will completely devastate lives, habitats and ecologies.

In areas where there is little people’s resistance like Bayyaram iron ore mines in Khammam district of

Andhra Pradesh or the mines in the Bellary region in Karnataka, exploitative elements like the corrupt Reddy brothers and former AP Chief Minister's family in violation of every norm and law of the land, are plundering millions of tons of iron ore. This mining mafia is amassing mind-boggling quantities of wealth that may easily be used to control or destabilise (state) governments. They could also quite easily control the largest ruling conglomerations in the country like UPA or NDA and their 'High Commands'. The State's ferocity is being met by a vast and determined people's resistance to their exploitation, displacement and destruction by mining and corporate mafias that, shockingly enough, are being encouraged and propped up by governments that have been elected by the very people they are displacing and seeking to annihilate.

We demand a ceasefire and dialogue. Only that will ensure that people get the space to air, discuss and debate the urgent outstanding issues that are devastating their lives, livelihoods and habitats. Initiatives may be then taken to stop the unmindful, rapacious and utterly unethical destruction of lives and habitats for the super profit of mafias and multinational corporations.

The Government of India (GoI) must now make its position on the Peace Process absolutely clear.

In this context the GoI should come out clearly on whether or not it has any intention of carrying out a peace process leading to a ceasefire and dialogue. It cannot indulge in the duplicity of stepping up war preparations such as planning to deploy military and air force and simultaneously claim that they are also committed to peace process. GoI should explain why it is shadowing leaders of CPI (Maoist) who respond to its offer of peace process, with killer teams.

1. The Government of India should institute a judicial inquiry into the killing of Azad and Journalist Hem Chandra Pandey,
2. It should immediately stop Operation Green Hunt and all withdraw paramilitary forces
3. Repeal UAPA and bring the cases under this draconian legislation into the purview of ordinary CRPC
4. Make public all MoUs and their full texts. Review them through a public debate.
5. Restore full land and forest rights to adivasis.
6. Immediately return the lands already grabbed from the people.

Dr B D Sharma, Varvara Rao, Prof Manoranjan Mohanty,
Sumit Chakravartty, Madhu Bhadhuri, G N Saibaba

V.R. Krishna Iyer

An appeal to India's conscience

The sovereign Republic of India stands for socialism, egalitarianism, trans-religious secularism and national unity based on the principles of fraternity. Our independence was meant to "wipe every tear from every eye" — as Jawaharlal Nehru declared in his tryst-with- destiny address. There was a pledge in the Preamble to the Constitution that justice, social, economic and political, would be ensured for every Indian.

But three score and three years later, we as a nation have much to answer for and account to generations of the past and the future. The expectations at Independence darkened into deprivation, and depravation into dread, hunger, homelessness, have-not status and finally despair. This gradual, slow-process economic destitution and social estrangement led to the people losing their faith in the instrumentalities of the Constitution, namely, the executive, the legislature and the judiciary.

Inevitably, when the state failed the confidence of the people they took to the streets, to the jungle and to lawlessness. Terrorism was the next step, ubiquitously shaking up peace and the sense of safety and development. This is the genesis of Naxalism, Maoism and other forms of extremism. The government, instead of creating conditions to win back the confidence of the people, has resorted to guns and police weaponry.

Long ago, U.S. President Eisenhower warned: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies — in the final sense — a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat

of its labourers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.” The consequence was inevitable: more people became desperate. The masses got alienated and bullets did not and could not generate a milieu or haven of tranquillity when government policy aggravated militancy and spread demoralisation. Many parts of India ceased to be safe or peaceful. Today the situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the Maoists are able to fire upon the military. The state has virtually abandoned the peace process and resorted to short-cuts to law and order, hoping that soldiers are a more reliable force than processes of peace and justice. or civilian forces. Some move here and there to talk peace through dialogue and tranquillity, although some sensitive statesman have tried to transform social conditions. Swami Agnivesh, a great Indian patriot who stands for a casteless society, religious amity and non-violent conditions of life, responded to the challenge of Indian tumult and confrontation, hoping to initiate a fruitful process of dialogue as a measure of Gandhian non-violence, as distinct from Godse’s gun-politics. He struck a note that was the beginning of social justice, trying to initiate a dialogue with Azad alias Cherukuri Ra Kumar, a leader of the Maoists. Azad’s response was positive and radiated a ray of hope. But Azad was shot dead in Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh on July 1: it was the act of a government without a vision. It strangled the prospect of peaceful negotiations. What a gaffe and an egregious error, what a monstrous mistake! Agnivesh is bitter. So am I, and so are the thinking millions of Indians who do not want extremism but seek smiling moderation. We are all disappointed that the government’s negative and noxious policy of handling such situations through military methods amounts to jettisoning the Buddha-Gandhi heritage. Is the Home Minister’s dialogue strategy a travesty? May I appeal to the President and the Prime Minister, the wise Sonia Gandhi, and leaders of all political parties with sense and sensibility, to express their exasperation over the killing of Azad? May I also appeal to the extremists to unconditionally come forward for talks? Do not lose your head. Maoists and others of their ilk should be convinced that the state means peaceful streets and homes, not bullets or the AK- 47. India is yours as well. Build it sans violence. Let the masses and the classes rise for peace and human rights. Let us stand for the right to life in dignity and for egalite and economic justice, and not allow a mafia element in government where the rich, the rigid obscurantist and the obdurate become policy-makers, and the indigent underdogs are crushed.

Hope, not despair, should be the fundamental policy of great government. The grand green negotiated policy will win. It harvests contentment and contains extremism. The alternative is functional chaos, administrative anarchy and farewell to public welfare. The killers are culpable. A judicial enquiry is the nation’s desideratum. I make this appeal not out of pusillanimity but out of patriotism.

The Hindu, July 15, 2010

K.G. Kannabiran

Govt. guilty of crimes against humanity

I met Cherukuri Rajkumar (Azad) when he was 22 years old in connection with the Bhargava Commission. He was then an engineering student at the Warangal REC. At the Bhargava Commission, I was dealing with Giriapalli (Medak district) encounter. He would bring eye witnesses to the encounter before the Commission on a daily basis. He had been in the movement since then. And, I see no reason to doubt the version that he was arrested in Nagpur and brought to Adilabad only to be shot dead.

Whatever may be the combination of political parties, who for the government at the Centre, the method has been the same. The encounter business started by Vengala Rao granted full immunity to the Andhra Pradesh police and freedom to kill people with impunity though we are governed by the Constitution. It has now become an all India phenomenon. This kind of handling political problems by delegating powers to the police force and the Army is blatantly unconstitutional. Instead of finding a political solution to the problem posed by Maoists, earlier known as Naxalites, the government has violated not only the Constitution but also the International Criminal Law. It’s indulging in crimes against humanity. In fact, its actions tantamount to genocide as it is targeting a particular identifiable group.

As far as Rajkumar (Azad) was concerned, he had signed a two page letter which he wrote to Swami Agnivesh presenting his party’s view point and suggesting that they were prepared for negotiations. It is indeed callous on the part of the police to arrest and shoot him dead.

I think the government should learn the physical liquidation of dissent is not equivalent to elimination of dissent. Dissent will continue until it is resolved. I, therefore, demand that the Centre resolve the issue politically and desist from resorting to barbaric methods of the 60s of the last century.

The New Indian Express, July 3, 2010

Letter to Comrades and Friends of Indian Revolution

Dear Comrades and Friends of Indian Revolution,

On behalf of our Party, the CPI (Maoist), People's Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA), Revolutionary People's Committees (RPCs), revolutionary mass organizations and revolutionary people of India, firstly, we send our heartfelt Laal Salaam (Red Salutes) to all the parties, organizations, various forums and individuals from India and abroad, who had sent condolence messages to our CC and who had condemned the brutal murders of comrades Cherukuri Rajkumar (Azad) and Hemchand Pandey on July 1, 2010 by the fascist Indian ruling classes. As all of you have acknowledged, losing comrade Azad is one of the biggest blows our party and Indian revolution had suffered. Azad was one of the topmost leaders in our party. He has been leading the Indian revolution since a long time. In our country, People's War is intensifying with each passing day. With the aid and support of imperialists, particularly the American imperialists, the Indian reactionary ruling classes are trying to suppress the revolutionary movement and are carrying on ruthless atrocities in an unprecedented severe manner. In this war between the people and the ruling classes, the enemy had particularly schemed to murder our leaders and concentrated on comrades like Azad who are leading the revolution. It is as part of that conspiracy that comrade Azad was caught and killed in the most brutal and cowardly manner. Comrade Azad was leading the entire urban movement on behalf of our Central Committee and was also looking after political propaganda, party periodicals, party education and other such crucial responsibilities. He was a most experienced and popular mass leader. He maintained close relations with many comrades at various levels and with the revolutionary masses. In the midst of severe repression, he worked selflessly and unflinchingly in spite of the many risks involved. It is under such circumstances that the enemy came to know about his whereabouts somewhere and could catch him by laying in wait.

Your messages and condemnations released in the true internationalist spirit had given the necessary moral support to the oppressed peoples and the comrades who were grief-stricken with this shocking news. Due to the severe repressive conditions here, we could not receive all the messages and even the messages we received had reached us very late. Hence we feel very sorry for this delay in sending you a reply.

Comrade Azad was attracted to the revolutionary movement while he was studying in the Warangal Regional Engineering College in 1972. Azad who was exceptionally brilliant in his studies had played a dynamic role in the revolutionary movement too. He played a role in the formation of the Radical Students Union (RSU) in 1974. He was elected as the state president of RSU in 1978. He was one of the founders of the All India revolutionary student's movement and guided it from its inception in 1985. He played a key role in conducting a seminar on Nationality Question in the then Madras city in 1981. Later he took up the responsibility of building the revolutionary movement in Karnataka and build up the Maoist party in this State for the first time. He attracted many comrades like Saketh Rajan into the party. When opportunistic elements tried to split the party in 1985 and in 1991, comrade Azad had played a crucial role in defending party line and keeping it united and strong enough in defeating their opportunist politics. He worked tirelessly for twenty years as a CC member and Politburo member from 1990 till now. We cannot separate Azad's life from the history of revolutionary movement of the past forty years. Particularly, he played a key role in the ideological, political spheres, party education and running of periodicals. He fulfilled the responsibility of the party spokesperson since three years as 'Azad' in the most excellent and exemplary manner. He used his intellect and sharp pen outstandingly in fighting back the 'War on People' led by the Manmohan Singh-Sonia-Chidambaram gang. He stood as the powerful voice of the people against the rulers and exploiters. In the development of the party's political line, in the development of the party, people's army and mass organizations, in expanding the movement, in the emergence of new democratic power organs and in all the victories won, Azad's ideological, political work and practice played a key role. Unflinching commitment in face of any odds and during the ebb and flow of the movement, great sacrificing nature, selflessness, simple living, indefatigable work for the revolution and for the interests of the people, astounding

study, study of changing phenomena in the society from time to time, being with the people always are some of the great proletarian ideals established by Comrade Azad. Though he is no more, it is undeniable that he would serve as a revolutionary role model to every revolutionary and particularly to the youth, students and intellectuals.

Hemchand Pandey was a progressive free lance journalist from Uttarakhand who had used his pen to bring to light the plight of the poor oppressed people of our country. He was killed as he could bring out the truth behind Azad's murder. The brutal murder of this pro-people young budding intellectual is just another instance of the callousness of the fascists.

You have rightly condemned these ghastly murders by exposing the conspiracy of the Indian ruling classes in killing Azad, which is to crush the ever expanding revolutionary movement under the leadership of CPI (Maoist) and to render the people and party leaderless. Azad's murder is the latest one in a series of such murders of our leaders carried out in the name of 'encounters' for the past 40 years and especially since the successful completion of our Unity Congress-9th Congress in 2007. The government had declared CPI (Maoist) to be the biggest internal security threat and launched many suppression campaigns to crush the movement, the latest being Operation Green Hunt, launched in mid-2009. This is the biggest offensive launched on the revolutionary movement in India so far and it has resulted in unprecedented destruction of lives and property of the people. Extra-judicial killings of leaders and massacres of people are all part of this counterrevolutionary multi-pronged offensive.

All of you had condemned this war on Indian people, particularly on the adivasis, with right indignation and demanded that it be immediately stopped. The people of revolutionary movement areas warmly remember this international solidarity expressed by various parties, organizations, individuals and the proletariat of various countries as this is exactly the kind of support which must be extended to any genuine movement of the people when it faces such fascist onslaught. We very much appreciate this kind of support and solidarity and firmly assert that we will reciprocate the same towards other fighting masses in various parts of the globe. This kind of solidarity infuses great confidence and reassurance among the fighting people that there are not alone in their fight. It also points sharply one more time towards the common enemies we all are facing, namely imperialism and all kinds of reactionaries. It enhances the fighting spirit of the people and helps them to advance the movement firmly. Our party, PLGA, RPCs, Revolutionary Mass organizations, revolutionary people and all progressive and democratic forces of our country exactly wish for such unity and solidarity at the domestic and international scale. This is extremely important to defend the people's movement and to advance it.

We once again pledge before all of you that we would carry on the lofty aims of all great martyrs of the world proletarian revolution including Comrade Azad and announce that no amount of fascist repression can subdue the fighting spirit of our Party and the revolutionary people of India. We will march forward with renewed determination braving all kinds of odds and making sacrifices till the final victory. This is our promise to all the friends and well-wishers of Indian revolution.

* LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!

* LONG LIVE THE UNITY OF INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT, REVOLUTIONARY AND DEMOCRATIC FORCES AND THE OPPRESSED NATIONS AND PEOPLES ALL OVER THE WORLD!

With revolutionary greetings,

(Abhay)

Spokesperson, Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)

Independent probes expose the conspiracy behind the brutal killings of Azad and Hemchand

Faking An Encounter, Killing the Peace Process

Report of the All India Fact Finding Team on the Killing of Azad and H. C Pandey

CDRO put together a team of concerned citizens consisting of Prof. Emeritus Amit Bahaduri, J.N.U., Delhi, Senior Counsel of Supreme Court Mr. Prashant Bhushan, Kavita Srivatsava, Human Rights worker from Rajasthan, Gautam Navlakha writer & from PUDR, Delhi, Kranthi Chaitanya, Advocate and General Secretary of APCLC, D. Suresh Kumar, Advocate, APCLC, Ch. Sudhakar Rao, President of OPDR, D. Venkateswarlu, OPDR. The team visited Wankadi Mandal, Adilabad District on 20th & 21st of August, 2010 where the alleged encounter of Mr. Azad @ Cherukuri Rajkumar who was spokesperson of CPI Maoist Central Committee Member and Journalist Hemachandra Pandey took place on the intervening night of 1st and 2nd July, 2010. Three fact findings had earlier already carried out spot investigations. The team met the local villagers, local police, and local media personal and perused FIR, inquest and postmortem reports. The FIR No.(Crime) 40/2010 registered at the Wankadi P.S. of Adilabad District by the Station House Officer, Mr. Mansoor Ahmed at 9.30 am of 2nd July, 2010 in the English Language mentions the deceased as unidentified Maoists and gives the following account:-

“This is to inform you that on the Information provided by Special Intelligence Police that a squad of CPI (Maoist) terrorists numbering about 20-25 had crossed into the forest of Wankedi area of Adilabad District from the neighbouring Maharashtra and moving into the forest as per the information of the SP Adilabad. I along with Sub Inspector of (SI), Thandur PS, RSI (Reserve Sub Inspector) Mohan. Civil an AR (Armed Reserve) special party men came to the forest area located near Velgi and Sarkepally villages on 1-7-10 at about 9 pm. While we were conducting a search of the area on the hill at about 11 pm we noticed some commotion in the area close to us. Then we observed the place through night vision device and noticed a group of 20 persons in the forest. Immediately, we questioned their identity, they opened fire with Arms on us. Then we took Safety position and warned them to stop firing at us and to reveal their identity. However, they did not stop firing at us and we noticed them advancing towards us by firing indiscriminately with a view to kill us. Then with a view to save myself, I opened fire towards them in self defence.

Likewise, our party members also opened fire in self defence. The exchange of fire continued for 30 minutes. When the firing stopped from the other side, we advanced towards the hill top side and halted. Early in the morning we searched the area and found two persons dead with bullet injuries at the place of exchange of fire.”

This story raises several questions.

- a. How were the police able to pin-point the location of the Maoists in a forest several hundred square kms along with the border of A.P. and Maharashtra? This is all the more surprising, as the villagers repeatedly told us that there has been no Maoist activity in that region in recent years.
- b. Despite 30 minutes of firing from 11 pm to 11.30 pm, not a single police personal suffered any injury, whereas only Azad and Hemachandra Pandey were killed.
- c. If there were twenty Maoists as stated in the FIR, why did the police find only 2 kit bags and two weapons? In any escapade there would be more belongings left behind.
- d. If Azad was traveling with a dhalam of 20 Maoists then surely he too would have been in Olive Green dress rather than in civilian dress?
- e. If the police were unaware of the identities of the two deceased upto 9.30am at the time of filing the FIR, then how did the inquest report claim that at 6.00am on 2nd July Azad was the person who had been killed in the encounter. The inquest report says: “On 02-07-2010 at about 06-00 A.M at Sarkepally Village Forest area above the hills, the Azad dead body found with Bullet injuries mentioned in Column No.1(B) with witness No.1 and his Police Party Identified the deceased.”. Several electronic media channels had also announced his death. This shows clearly that the police knew who they had killed.

- f. Overwhelming doubt about the police version is raised by the postmortem reports of Azad and Hem Chandra Pandey. The Post Mortem report of Azad says that the fatal bullet entry wound from the chest “at the left 2nd intercostal space” had “darkening burnt edges”. The burnt mark at the entry wound are a clear indication of the flame from the gun which indicates that the bullet was fired from a very close range (no more than a foot). The corresponding exit wound is at the 9th & 10th inter vertebral space and depth is 9 inches. That means the bullet entered from upper chest and traveled downwards. This questions the police version that Maoist were on the top of the hill and they were below.
- g. The Post Mortem report of Hem Pandey shows that all the 3 bullet wounds had blackening present around the entry wounds, which is also a clear sign of shooting from very close range. The clear sharp round or oval shaped entry wounds in the cases of both Azad and Pandey, and the route of travel of the bullets indicates that the bullets were fired at almost 90 degrees to the body, indicating firing at close range.

It was widely known and reported that the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, through Swami Agnivesh was engaged in exploring the possibility of a dialogue with C.P.I. Maoist and the person with whom Swami Agnivesh was talking with CPI Maoists was Cherukuri Rajkumar @ Azad.

The alleged encounter in these circumstances and such a time raises several important questions.

- a) How could the Spl. Branch of A.P. Police dedicated to combating Maoists, murder Azad in this manner without the knowledge of the Union Home Minister as well as the State Government, particularly when the Union Home Ministry is said to be leading the joint offensive against the Maoists.
- b) Why has the Union Home Ministry not shown any interest in seeking an independent investigation/ enquiry into the encounter, despite so many demands for it from different quarters, the disruption it caused to the peace process initiated by the Home Minister himself?
- c) If the Union Government was sincere in seeking a peace dialogue, it would have been natural for the Home Minister Mr. Chidambaram to express concern about the execution of the key actor from the Maoist side with whom he was supposed to be exploring the peace dialogue. His explanation on the floor of the Parliament was that the enquiry is a State subject. This is untenable because the A.P. State Government is run by Congress Party and had the Union Home Minister requested an enquiry they could not have refused. And if they did, at least the position of the Home Minister would have been more understandable. This is particularly important because the Central Government is empowered in any case to constitute an enquiry under the Commission of Enquiries Act, 1952.

DEMANDS:

1. In the light of the significance of the assassination, which has scuttled the peace process, it is imperative that the Government institute a high level independent enquiry headed by a Sitting/ Retired Judge of the Supreme Court of India, nominated by the Chief Justice of India.
 2. Register an FIR against the police personnel who killed Mr. Azad and Hem Chandra Pandey and the case needs to be investigated independently in accordance with the NHRC guidelines.
1. Amit Bahaduri, Prof. Emeritus, JNU
 2. Mr. Prashant Bhushan, Advocate, Campaign for Judicial Accountability
 3. Kavita Srivatsava, General Secretary of PUCL Rajasthan
 4. Gautam Navlakha, writer & PUDR, Delhi
 5. Kranthi Chaitanya, Advocate, General Secretary of APCLC
 6. Ch. Sudhakar Rao, President of OPDR
 7. D. Venkateswarlu, OPDR
 8. D. Suresh Kumar, Advocate, APCLC

Death By An Inch... Lies By The Mile

Will Azad become Congress's Sohrabuddin? His post-mortem suggests he was killed in cold blood.

Saikat Datta

Dead men tell no tales. But when the deceased is Chemkuri Azad Rajkumar, the manner of death can speak volumes. The Maoist leader's post-mortem report, which *Outlook* has now accessed, categorically establishes that he died in a fake encounter. Read along with the FIR and inquest reports, it exposes the elaborate set of lies drawn by the Andhra Pradesh police to explain his death. The claimed encounter, a much-touted "gain" in the UPA government's war against India's "gravest internal security threat", was in fact a cold-blooded execution by the state. Azad, a key player in the planned negotiations with the government, was picked up and shot with a handgun from a distance barely more than the size of an outstretched palm. The official version, that the Maoists were atop a hill and fired at the police party and Azad died when the cops retaliated from down below, just doesn't add up.

The post-mortem on Azad's body, conducted by doctors at the Adilabad district hospital on July 3, two days after the killing, records a 1-cm oval-shaped wound just a few inches above the left nipple where the bullet entered, tore through his heart and exited from the back just between the ninth and the tenth vertebrae. The wound's entry point, the doctor conducting the post-mortem records, had "darkening (and) burned edge" at the "left second intercostal space (the space between two ribs)".

In forensic medicine, which also deals with decoding fatal bullet wounds, the words "darkening, blackening and burning" are revealing. Experts with hundreds of autopsies behind them all say that when there is "burning" associated with a "darkening or blackening" of an entry wound, it can only mean that the victim has been shot from a distance less than 7.5 cm or less—practically point-blank range.

Near-Shot. Close-Range. Fired From Less Than 7.5 cm.'

Outlook invited three experts to analyse Azad's post-mortem report, without revealing his identity. All three say Azad was shot from a distance equal to, or less than 7.5 cm



"If there is darkening, blackening and burning around a bullet entry wound, it is caused by the flame, smoke and gunpowder emerging from the firearm. The flame and the gunpowder, due to low mass, cannot travel very far. These residual marks, therefore, strongly suggest a near shot." —**Dr Sudhir Gupta**, Associate Professor of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology at AIIMS, New Delhi. Has conducted nearly 30 autopsies of police encounter deaths.



"While the report mentions burning, there is no tattooing. But if the deceased was wearing a shirt, then the tattooing could be on the shirt and only the burning is visible. The presence of burning in an entry wound accompanied by tattooing clearly indicates a shot fired from less than 7.5 cm." —**Dr B. Umadethan**, Former head of the department of forensic medicine, and police surgeon, Thiruvananthapuram Medical College. Author, *Principles and Practice of Forensic Medicine*.



The oval-shaped wound shows that the bullet was fired at an angle. It is almost certain that the bullet was fired at extremely close range. The weapon used was a handgun and not a rifle like AK-47. My guess is that the bullet that killed this person was fired from a .38" (9 mm) pistol." — **Retired Director of the Central Forensic Sciences Laboratory, Chandigarh**, an expert on wound ballistics and the author of several books on ballistics who requested anonymity. To get a better interpretation and assessment of the observations in the post-mortem report, *Outlook* gave a copy of it to three of the country's top forensic medicine and wound ballistic experts in three different cities. To ensure an unbiased and objective assessment, only the contents of the report were made available to them, the victim's name was not revealed. All three agreed that the probability of a close-range shot, perhaps even less than 7.5 cm, was very, very high.

Dr Sudhir Gupta, a gold medallist in medicine and currently an associate professor of forensic medicine and toxicology at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, is considered an authority in his field. He is also an expert on encounter deaths, having handled 30 such cases. After going through the Azad post-mortem, Gupta summarised that a very "near shot" had killed the victim.

“No way can firing from below go down a person’s chest and exit like that,” says Azad’s doctor brother.

He explains: “When there is darkening, blackening and burning around a firearm bullet entry wound, then it is caused by the flame and smoke of gunpowder emerging from the gun. These residual marks strongly suggest a near (close-range) shot. The burning is caused by a flame that has no mass. So, it travels a very short distance from the gun and therefore can only cause a burn if the shot is fired from close range. The gunpowder residue which hits the body at near range penetrates the skin and causes the darkening. Please note that the flame and the gunpowder, due to low mass, cannot travel very large distances.” However, exercising the customary caution of a professional, Gupta advocates “test-firing of the gun with the type of ammunition that was used in the original shooting for an accurate assessment of the range of fire”.

The second expert *Outlook* approached is a name students of forensic medicine are all too familiar with. Dr B. Umadethan is the former head of the department of forensic medicine and a police surgeon at the Medical College of Thiruvananthapuram. His book, *Principles and Practice of Forensic Medicine*, is a standard text for forensic students. A cautious man, Umadethan makes it very clear that it is difficult and even dangerous to form an opinion from the available data. But he finds the “darkening and burned edges” intriguing. “Usually, a very close-range shot, less than 7.5 cm, leaves behind three telltale marks: the entry wound is burnt; it has a halo tattoo from the unburned gunpowder and blackening created by the smoke. If the deceased is wearing a cotton shirt, then the gunpowder tattoo can be left behind on the cloth. But a burn along with these other indications definitely indicates a very close-range shot.”

“If they kill the very man sent to talk with the Maoist leadership, who do we talk with?” asks Swami Agnivesh.

A third expert who comes with formidable qualifications requested anonymity. A former director of the Central Forensic Sciences Laboratory in Chandigarh, he is an expert on wound ballistics and has authored several books on the subject. “The darkening of the wound’s edge could be due to dirt and deposit of power residues and contusion, but when accompanied by burnt edges, it’s almost certain that the bullet was fired at extremely close range and the weapon used was a handgun, not a rifle like the AK-47. It causes a wound of almost similar dimension but inflicts much more damage to the tissue. My guess is that the bullet was fired from a .38" (9 mm) pistol,” he says.

If the post-mortem report exposes the police claims, then the FIR, lodged on a complaint filed by Circle Inspector Raghunandan Rao on July 2, is an even greater exercise in self-contradiction. It states that the police received a tip-off from the state intelligence police about a 20-25-strong Maoist squad infiltrating into the Wankedi forests from the Maharashtra side. Rao’s team, equipped with night vision devices, found the squad in the midst of hundreds of acres of forests in the dead of the night on July 1. The police claim they challenged the squad, but came under intense fire. The cops too retaliated; the exchange of fire lasted 30 minutes. When the firing stopped, Rao led his team towards the hilltop to halt and rest for the night. Early next day, he resumed his search and stumbled upon two unidentified bodies, each with their individual kit bags, an AK-47 and a 9-mm pistol. One body was Azad’s; the other victim was a freelance journalist, Hemchandra Pandey.

TELL TALE SIGNS
The police version of Azad's death in exchange of gunfire is contrary to the fundamental principles of forensic medicine. The description of the wounds caused by the bullet/s entering and exiting his body in the post-mortem report directly contradicts police claims.

Depending on the range from which a bullet has been fired, the entry point wound will show the following

Range of Firing	Fire Effects
<7.5 cms	Tattooing (peppering) Blackening Burns Grease collar (dirt collar) Abrasion collar
>7.5 cms <15 cms	Tattooing Blackening Grease collar Abrasion collar
>15 cms <60-75 cms	Tattooing Grease collar Abrasion collar
>60-75cms	Grease collar Abrasion collar

Tattooing
A peppering effect around the entry wound caused by unburned gunpowder particles

Blackening
Caused by the smoke from the firing

Grease collar
A layer of grease and dirt deposited in the shape of a collar round the entry wound when the bullet passes through the barrel

Abrasion collar
Produced by the bullet grazing the skin

Dead Red Excerpts from Azad's post-mortem report

- Only the last two effects are produced if the bullet is fired at a range beyond 60-75 cm
- Tattooing, grease and abrasion collar are produced if the bullet is fired from a distance greater than 15 cm but less than 60-75 cm
- Only when a bullet is fired from a distance less than 7.5 cm does it leave burn signs
- Azad's post-mortem report records the entry wound thus: "Oval-shaped wound and darkening burned edge of wound and inverted edges, present at the left second intercostal space...."

Source: Principles and Practice of Forensic Medicine by Dr Umadethan

Not only do the first series of contradictions emerge here (see Holes in the Dark), the FIR and inquest report are unable to answer two more key questions:

- Even if they abandoned Azad’s body, why didn’t the Maoists carry the AK-47 and the 9-mm pistol back with them after the firing had stopped? To the Maoists, an AK-47 and a 9-mm pistol are precious and never left behind.

- If the police were firing

at long range, how did Azad die from a short-range 9-mm pistol bullet?

Swami Agnivesh, who had been asked by Union home minister P. Chidambaram to initiate talks with the Maoists in search for peace, is a perplexed man. “If they kill the very man who was carrying my message to the Maoist leadership in Dandakaranya to begin talks and offer a substantive gesture to show their sincerity, then who do we talk with? Are we keen to end this conflict or are we getting ready for a perpetual war in the heartland of India? When such disturbing facts emerge from the death of such a man, doesn’t it merit a decent inquiry?” For a nation at war with itself, the truth is the least it owes itself.

Else, Azad will become the Congress’s Sohrabuddin. Like their counterparts in Gujarat (who did not budge till the Supreme Court stepped in), the Centre and the state are in denial about Azad and attempting to bury uncomfortable facts. Like in the Sohrabuddin encounter, there is trickery involved in Azad’s death too. The Maoist ideologue, from all credible accounts, had been drawn out for peace talks. Only, instead of allowing him to speak, the government silenced him forever.

LAW - No Point-Blank Justice

Jurists say ‘encounters’ must be investigated by an independent agency. But no law makes this binding.

Anuradha Raman



“In the Azad case, the state and the Centre abdicated responsibility. What prevents the Centre from asking AP to hold an inquiry?”

—Justice Hosbet Suresh, Ex-judge, Bombay High Court



“I heard 110 cases of encounters in two years...the victims were all shot in the head or chest. The cops must be really great marksmen.”

—Justice A.P. Shah, Ex-CJ, Delhi High Court



“Encounter killings must be probed.... They mustn’t be the rule. And we can’t simply accept what the state says without question.”

—Justice J.S. Verma, Ex-CJI, ex-NHRC head



“The guidelines of the NHRC seem to be ineffective. Time and again we have asked for judicial inquiries into cases of police impunity.”

—K.G. Kannabiran, Advocate, rights activist



“In the Azad case, as in all others, an independent body must conduct the inquiry, not the same police that killed him.”

—Justice V.S. Malimath, Ex-CJ of Kerala, Karnataka



“P. Chidambaram, the home minister, should have been the first to order an inquiry into Azad’s killing. His silence indicates his guilt.”

—Prashant Bhushan, Advocate, Supreme Court

Just as the ghost of Sohrabuddin Sheikh has come to haunt the Gujarat government and claimed the state's home minister, will the ghost of Chemkuri Rajkumar Azad, the cpi (Maoist) second-in-command who was shot dead in an 'encounter' on July 1 in the Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh, come to haunt the upa government at the Centre? So it seems, at least from the post-mortem report.

It was always suspected that Azad was killed in cold blood, though neither the state authorities nor the police will admit it. The killing came when the Maoists were preparing for a dialogue with the Centre, which, on its part, is refusing to help find out how he died or was killed. Union home minister P. Chidambaram ducked demands for an inquiry with lofty excuses: that law and order is a state subject, and so the Centre, in the true spirit of federalism, does not interfere in such matters.

This isn't selling well. "It seems the state and the Centre have abdicated responsibility," says Justice Hosbet Suresh, a former judge of the Bombay High Court. "What prevents the Centre from asking the state to hold an inquiry? Such killings prima facie amount to murder and must be recorded as such. A judicial inquiry is an absolute necessity. It must be recognised that such killings violate fundamental human rights."

What is it about such encounters that the police wash their stained hands by saying they had to fire in self-defence and expect people to believe it? Here's the Azad encounter scenario according to the police, belied by the post-mortem report (see main story) which points to a point-blank killing: Azad and his comrades opened fire from a vantage point on a hill; the police team retaliated; Azad and some others were killed.

Former Delhi High Court chief justice A.P. Shah, who, during a stint as chief justice of Bombay High Court in the late 1990s, heard several encounter cases in which gangsters were eliminated, says, "We examined 110 cases over two years. Each time, the pattern was the same. The police said they acted in self-defence. But post-mortems always showed the gangsters had been shot either in the head of the left side of the chest. The cops, it would seem, were all exceptional marksmen." Azad, too, was shot in the chest, in the region of the heart.

Usually, nothing comes of encounter cases—even when an inquiry takes place. Justice Shah remembers heading a two-judge bench of the Bombay High Court that heard a pil filed by the PUCL on the encounter killings of two suspected terrorists. The bench had referred the matter to the principal judge of a civil court, who determined that the encounters were fake. But a new high court bench that took up the case overruled his finding. Some good did emerge, though. On sustained following up from PUCL, the bench also ordered Maharashtra to set up a state human rights commission, which was done in 1997.

Justice Shah says it is important that an independent inquiry be conducted: "In all encounters, including Azad's, only an independent inquiry—not one by the police—can bring out the truth." Former judges and rights activists are all agreed that the judiciary hasn't taken a proactive approach. In Andhra Pradesh alone, since the 1960s, some 2,000 people have been eliminated in encounters. And the courts have usually gone easy when security concerns are raised. It's rarely that they rein the police in. Last year, the Andhra Pradesh High Court made it mandatory for police to register an FIR after every encounter, with the names of the police personnel involved. It also mandated an independent inquiry and for the self-defence plea to be proved in a court of law. But the police went in appeal and the Supreme Court stayed the order. "It's no surprise," says Justice Suresh. "Every time the police or the state raises concerns of a threat to the country, courts usually grant a stay."

Justice J.S. Verma, a former chief justice of India who also headed the NHRC, says all encounter killings need to be thoroughly investigated. "We must find out whether the killings are an exception—they cannot be the rule," he says. "And one cannot simply accept the version of the state." In 1997, NHRC had drawn up guidelines, saying it wasn't as if being law-enforcers confers on the police the right to take a life, though the law considers killing in self-defence, if proved, a mitigating circumstance. Therefore, the guidelines say, such killings must be investigated properly to ascertain the cause. Like other former judges, Justice V.S. Malimath is firm that such an investigation cannot be by the same police that registers the complaint.

However, K.G. Kannabiran, a rights activist and lawyer, says the NHRC guidelines are ineffective. “We have asked time and again for judicial inquiries into police impunity, but in vain,” he says. “Should people be killed for their politics?”

Azad Encounter - Holes In The Dark

Even a cursory examination of the FIR, post-mortem and inquest reports of Azad’s death throw up disturbing questions

- Outlook

Question 1 : First information report (FIR) says, acting on a tip-off from the state intelligence police, Andhra police were searching the forests off Adilabad on the night of July 1 when the encounter took place, claiming Azad’s life.

But then... Azad’s mother had filed a petition with the AP human rights commission on March 20 saying her son was missing since March 12. (The Maoists later issued a statement clarifying that he had reached a safe spot.) Maoist sympathiser, poet Varavara Rao, alleges Andhra police had picked up Azad in Nagpur at 11 am on the day of the encounter. What is the veracity of the police claim, given these contradiction?

Question 2 : The FIR, filed at Wankedi police station on July 2, and the inquest report the same day, says the exchange of fire with a group of 20 Maoists lasted 30 minutes from 11 pm. “Early in the morning”, two bodies were discovered.

But then... The FIR, filed at 9.30 am, based on a complaint by circle inspector Ch Raghunandan Rao, does not mention the name or identity of the two deceased. But the inquest report, also filed on July 2, says witness no. 1 (Rao) and his police party identified the body as Azad’s at 6 am. How could police identify a bald Azad so quickly when the only photograph they have of him is a hirsute one of him from 35 years ago?

Question 3 : FIR says when the police team questioned the identity of the Maoist group, “they opened fire with arms on us”, and that they continued firing and “we noticed them advancing towards us, firing indiscriminately”.

But then... If the police fired in “self-defence”, were there no injuries/casualties on the police side despite a 30-minute encounter? Did Azad and co-deceased Hemchandra Pandey not use the AK-47 assault rifle or pistol that was allegedly recovered from them? Did all the associates of Azad flee from the scene of the “encounter” without attempting to save a senior leader like him or without firing a single bullet?

Question 4 : FIR says police were conducting a search of the “area on the hill” when they noticed the Maoists and were fired at. FIR also says after the firing stopped from the other side, “we advanced towards the hilltop side.”

But then... If the Maoists were indeed at a higher altitude than the police (according to some media reports, the “encounter” took place on a 500-metre-high hillock), which is why the police had to traverse upwards at the crack of dawn, how come the trajectory of the bullet that pierced Azad’s upper chest is downward, not upward?

Question 5 : FIR says Andhra police used their “night-vision devices” to spot the Maoists in the darkness of the night of the ‘encounter’ after they noticed some commotion “in the area close to us” during their search.

But then... If there were 20 Maoists at a distance, how did the police spot Azad with such pinpoint accuracy in the dark? How did the bullets leave an oval-shaped entry wound with dark burnt edges in his upper chest, signs of a close encounter? Why was journalist Hemchandra Pandey, who had gone to

interview Azad according to media reports, wearing sandals if he was crossing a forest in the monsoon at night?

Question 6 : FIR says, after halting for the night when firing stopped, “early in the morning, we searched the area and found two persons dead with bullet injuries at the place of exchange of fire”, one of which later turned out to be Azad.

But then... In recent encounters with the police, like in Dantewada, Maoists have been known to physically carry away their dead comrades, leaving no trace of the fallen. Why would a group of 20 Maoists leave behind the body of a high-ranking leader like Azad, and let it be picked up, especially given the six-hour time gap between the end of the alleged encounter (11.30 pm) and the discovery of their bodies by the police at 6 am?

Azad Encounter - Mountain Of Lies **Azad’s kin allege it was no ordinary encounter**

- Madhavi Tata

Cherukuri Rajkumar’s death in an ‘encounter’ in Adilabad district on July 1, 2010, never did fool his family or sympathisers in Andhra Pradesh who allege “it was not just a fake encounter, it was an assassination”.

“There was no chance that he would be present in Adilabad district for a meeting in the first place since there is no Naxal activity in the area any more,” says his brother Dr Anil Kumar, a practising gastroenterologist in Hyderabad. “He was obviously convinced by the central government that he was safe and then trapped and killed,” alleges older brother Colonel Ratna Kumar. Dr Anil asserts that a top leader of Azad’s cadre would not be left alone to face bullets from police personnel. “He would have been surrounded by a minimum of 40-50 squad members.” The doctor also goes on to wonder: “If he was on a hillock as the police claim, then random firing from the AK-47 which he was allegedly carrying would have killed several policemen. How come not a single cop was even injured? The police don’t even know how to concoct a story.”

Azad’s younger brother Ramana describes the sheer rage he felt on seeing Azad’s body at the mortuary. The entry and exit wounds of the single bullet in Azad’s body are a sure pointer to a close-range firing, say the brothers. “I am a doctor and I can tell you that there’s no way that firing taking place from down a hill can go down a person’s chest and exit from behind the ribcage in that manner,” says Dr Anil.

The anguish in Azad’s family is evident when they question “upstart TV anchors” for calling him a “Maoist terrorist”. “All the police personnel in the state put together would not equal 1/10th of the brains my brother had,” says older brother Col Ratna.

Meanwhile, the Andhra Pradesh government continues its hazy stance on the Azad encounter. It has transferred out sub-inspector Mansoor Ahmed, who was attached to the Wankedi police station, Adilabad, when the encounter took place. The FIR filed says he was not present at the spot. “I was woken up at 6 am on July 2 by calls from journalists and visited the spot along with them,” says Mansoor. “I just filed the paperwork and was not present during the encounter.”

Circle Inspector Raghunandan Rao, who was also part of the FIR recording process, denies identifying Azad’s body. Home minister P. Sabitha Indra Reddy refused to comment on whether an inquiry would be initiated into the encounter. “I have to study the issue and cannot give out a statement before doing so,” she told *Outlook*.

Wednesday, 14th July 2010

Writers and journalists unveil the fascist face of the Indian ruling classes in the background of the fake encounter of Azad and Hemchand

THE THIRD LETTER

The Maoist and the undelivered missive Azad's death is no man's peace

by TUSHA MITTAL

SOCIAL ACTIVIST Swami Agnivesh sits in his room at 7 Jantar Mantar, perplexed, battling a strange sense of guilt. For the past few months, he has been mediating a backroom dialogue between the Government of India and the CPI(Maoist). Since May 2010, Agnivesh had facilitated the exchange of two letters between the warring parties. On June 26, he dispatched a third letter to top Maoist leader Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad. “The peace process was at a critical juncture. A very positive response was expected,”

Agnivesh told TEHELKA. “I was to receive a date from which talks could begin.” Much to his horror, what he received instead was news that Azad — the recipient of his letter — had been killed in the forests of Andhra Pradesh. “It is possible that Azad let his guard down because of my last letter,” Agnivesh said. “It is a great loss for all of us, including the



government. Azad was a key person and most favourably disposed to the peace process. We must ensure that his death does not derail the possibility of peace.”

But the Home Ministry has a different view. “I don't think this is a setback to the peace process. We had not received any positive response from CPI(Maoist),” Home Secretary GK Pillai told TEHELKA.

For every conversation that leaps us forward, there are strings that pull us back. The rhetoric of Maoists killing 27 CRPF men two days before Azad's death is one such shackle. Reading that attack as an indication that the Maoists were not serious about peace would be misleading. The on-going backroom dialogue was aimed at deciding a date from which a mutual cessation of violence would begin. Until such a date was arrived at, it was understood the violence would continue from both sides. And it did. In the weeks leading up to Azad's death — five Maoists were killed in Lalgarh, several Maoist sympathisers were arrested, and adivasi women continued to be raped by the forces. The Maoists too continued to kill.

The reason why Azad's death must be seen outside this cycle of violence is because Azad was a key and unlikely salesman of truce, carrying Swami Agnivesh — and by default P Chidambaram's

message to comrades in Dandakaranya. “Azad was building consensus for a ceasefire within the party. He had our full mandate. Now the government has shown it was never interested in talks,” Usendi, Maoist spokesperson of the Dandakaranya Special Zone Committee, told TEHELKA.

While the first two letters have been made public, the third letter remains confidential. Sources have told TEHELKA of its contents — and it indicates how close both parties were to the possibility of dialogue. That is what makes Azad's death significant, almost poignant. For the hundreds of adivasis and soldiers



Prize kill The bodies of Maoist leader Azad (top) and Hem Chandra Pandey (bottom)



Mysterious end Wife Babita Pandey with body of Hem Chandra Pandey, flown to Delhi from Hyderabad

trapped in this war, it means a bleaker, bloodier future. Already the Maoists have vowed revenge when they could have been inching toward peace.

“This is a fascist State dreaming that peace will come back by liquidating people,” says G Haragopal, one of the mediators in the 2004 Andhra talks. “Such reactions show an insecure and unconfident State.” Azad’s killing in a gunbattle with the police in the remote forests of Andhra Pradesh, was hailed as one of the biggest catches since the government launched a joint-offensive against the Maoists in 2009. Azad was No 3 in the Maoist ranks, a politburo member, Central Committee spokesperson, and a close aide to Maoist chief Ganapathi.

The son of a hotel owner, Azad, 55, belonged to

an upper caste family from Krishna district in Andhra Pradesh. An engineering student in Warangal, Azad earned two MTech degrees and helped found the Revolutionary Students Union. Jailed during the Emergency, he went underground shortly after.

ON JULY 2, Adilabad Superintendent of Police P. Promod Kumar claimed the police received intelligence inputs about a group of 25 to 30 Maoists moving around in the Adilabad forest area, near the Maharashtra border. A police team encountered the rebels in the hilly terrain

near Sarkepally village. “Our team cautioned them to surrender, but they came under fire, forcing them to retaliate,” he said. According to the police, the encounter began around 11:30 pm on July 1 and lasted till 2 am on July 2. Later they recovered two bodies — Azad and an unidentified man.

Several details have emerged since, that counter the police version of events. Villagers in Sarkepally have said they did not hear gunshots on the night of July 1. The CPI (Maoist) has also released statements alleging the encounter was fake. “Azad was picked up from Nagpur. He had no reason to be in Adilabad. Azad was to meet our man at a cinema hall in the city on July 1. Our man waited but he never showed up,” Usendi said.

A brewing controversy surrounding the second body further strengthens the theory of a fake encounter. After photos of the bodies appeared in Andhra newspapers, a family from Uttarakhand claimed the second man wasn’t a Maoist but a freelance journalist called Hem Chandra Pandey. Hailing from Dewaltal town of Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand, Pandey had been based in Delhi since 2007. “My husband left Delhi on June 30. He had gone to Nagpur for an assignment and was expected back on July 2,” said his wife Babita Pandey. Pandey’s family claims he wrote for Hindi newspapers like Nai Dunia, Rastriya Sahara, Dainik Jagran. Editors of all these papers have denied this, but TEHELKA has clippings of his work published under the name Hemant Pandey.

Since early 2010, he had been working for an inhouse corporate magazine called Chetna, at Delhi Assam Railways Corporation Limited. Pandey’s colleagues at DARCL describe him as a quiet, helpful man who attended office regularly. Significantly, his colleagues say they saw Pandey last on July 1 — the same day the police claim he was killed in Adilabad. “He attended office for the first half on July 1 and then asked for leave,” office-in charge Abhishek Ranjan said. Another colleague who sits near Pandey said he saw him until lunch. TEHELKA has also learned that Pandey’s supervisor has a text message sent on July 1 saying he would be in for half the day.

However, Pandey’s family continues to believe he left Delhi on June 30 by train. Any proof that Pandey was in office on July 1 is crucial because it could blow holes in the police version. It would be extremely unlikely for someone to be waging guerilla warfare in the Andhra Pradesh jungles by night, if they were in Delhi until 2 pm the same day.

TO UNDERSTAND the significance of what happened on the night of July 1, one has rewind to Agnivesh,

“On the specified date, the CPI(Maoist) should stop all violent activities for 72 hours. It goes without saying that during the said period, the security forces will not conduct any operations against the CPI(Maoist)”

EXCERPT FROM UNION HOME MINISTER P. CHIDAMBARAM’S LETTER TO SWAMI AGNIVESH

‘I don’t think this is a setback to the peace process,’ says Home Secretary GK Pillai

to understand why he feels that sense of guilt.

On May 6-8, Agnivesh and several other activists marched through Raipur and Dantewada asking for an end to violence. On May 11, Chidambaram wrote to Agnivesh to clarify the government's

“Our party desires peace sincerely in the interests of the lakhs of Adivasis being cruelly crushed by the Indian State. If the government is serious, it should speak in terms of a mutual ceasefire, for a longer period of time.”

EXCERPT FROM MAOIST SPOKESPERSON AZAD'S LETTER TO SWAMI AGNIVESH

position. The key to talks lay in a specific date from the Maoists. “On the specified date (say, June 1), we would expect that the CPI(Maoist) will stop all violent activities,” Chidambaram wrote. “We would closely observe whether the CPI(Maoist) will maintain the position of “no violence” for 72 hours. It goes without saying that, during the said period of 72 hours, the security forces will not conduct any operations against the CPI(Maoist). It is our hope that talks will begin during [that] period.”

The letter was significant because it was the first time the government had shown its willingness for a mutual halt of violence, meeting a key demand of the Maoists. In a signed response dated May 31, Azad also indicated his party's willingness for talks. “Our Party desires peace sincerely in the interests of the lakhs of adivasis who are being cruelly crushed,” he said. He mocked Chidambaram's 72-hour figure as a joke. “If the government is serious it should speak in terms of mutual ceasefire, for a longer period of time, and spell out the government's stand on fulfilling the minimum requisites like release of leaders and lifting the ban on the CPI (Maoist).” Azad also asked the government to “stop its efforts to escalate the war, including the measure of calling back all the paramilitary forces deployed in war zones.”

Agnivesh relayed the letter to Chidambaram. On the basis of his discussion with the home minister, Agnivesh wrote a third letter to Azad on June 26 clarifying questions raised by the Maoists. The third letter

clarified that Chidambaram's insistence on 72 hours did not mean that ceasefire would only last for three days. Rather, Chidambaram wanted a specific date from which 72 hours of “mutual cessation of hostilities” would begin. During that period, he would invite the Maoists for talks and initiate a mutual ceasefire agreement.

“Azad was going to give a date for mutual ceasefire. He may have let his guard down because of my letter. I am in shock.”

SWAMI AGNIVESH

Agnivesh's third letter asked the Maoists for the most operative part of the process — a date from which the 72 hours of no violence would commence. Had Azad reached his destination, perhaps that date of peace would be on its way to New Delhi.

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Indian state murdered Maoist peace envoy

**By Kranti Kumara and Keith Jones
14 September 2010**

In their speeches to last month's Independence Day celebrations at Delhi's Red Fort, both India's president, Pratibha Patil, and prime minister, Manmohan Singh, offered talks to the Maoist Naxalite movement if it eschews “violence.” Not surprisingly, neither of them mentioned the Indian state's recent summary execution of a top Maoist leader and “peace” interlocutor, Cherukuri Azad Rajkumar.

Rajkumar, who was commonly known as Azad, and freelance journalist Hemachandra Pandey, were killed by the Andhra Pradesh state police on July 1.

Azad was reportedly an envoy of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) appointed to explore the possibility of “peace-talks” with the Indian government. It is within this context that his killing acquires a singular significance.

The Andhra Pradesh police have claimed that Azad was killed on the evening of July 1 when a police party ran into an armed-group of Maoist guerillas in a forested part of the Adilabad district of Andhra Pradesh. According to the police, a 30-minute gun battle ensued between them and the Maoists, who were up on a hill, and during this battle Azad and Pandey were killed. Although the police claim to have been in a firefight with heavily armed Maoists on higher ground, they did not suffer any injuries.

From the beginning the Maoists and Azad's family members, including a colonel in the Indian Army,

have challenged the police story, charging that the gun battle was a police fabrication and that Azad and Pandey, who was travelling with him, were summarily executed.

Azad's family have charged that he and Pandey were seized in Nagpur, a city in the neighbouring state of Maharashtra, transported to a forest area near Adilabad, Andhra Pradesh, then murdered in cold blood.

That the police's story is a lie and Azad the victim of a summary execution is demonstrated by an exposé published as the September 6, 2010 cover story of *Outlook India*, a prominent weekly news magazine. Titled "Death by an Inch ... Lies by the Mile," the *Outlook India* report is based on a postmortem analysis of Azad's corpse carried out by forensic experts.

While the police claim to have killed Azad at a distance in a shootout, the July 3 forensic report clearly establishes that the bullet that killed the Maoist leader was fired from a handgun held less than 7.5 cm from his body. Moreover the bullet did not enter Azad's body at an angle, although he was purportedly shot by police firing from further down a hill.

The *Outlook India* article begins as follows: "Dead men tell no tales. But when the deceased is Chemkuri Azad Rajkumar, the manner of death can speak volumes. The Maoist leader's post-mortem report, which *Outlook* has now accessed, categorically establishes that he died in a fake encounter. Read along with the FIR [First Investigation Report] and inquest reports, it exposes the elaborate set of lies drawn by the Andhra Pradesh police to explain his death. The claimed encounter, a much-touted 'gain' in the [United Progressive Alliance—UPA] government's war against India's 'gravest internal security threat', was in fact a cold-blooded execution by the state. Azad, a key player in the planned negotiations with the government, was picked up and shot with a handgun from a distance barely more than the size of an outstretched palm. The official version, that the Maoists were atop a hill and fired at the police party and Azad died when the cops retaliated from down below, just doesn't add up." (For the full report see [Death By An Inch... Lies By The Mile](#))

The UPA government, which is led by the Congress Party, has dismissed any suggestion that Azad was killed under suspicious circumstances or that the death of the Naxalite leader mandated to explore the possibility of talks with the government could in any way impact on relations between the Maoists and the state.

In an interview following the publication of the *Outlook India* exposé, Home Secretary G.K. Pillai declared, "We are with the report filed by the state [government] on the issue. If the court finds it all dissatisfying, then there will be an independent or magisterial inquiry as per the court directive. The home ministry will not initiate a separate inquiry."

In justifying this stance, the UPA government has advanced the novel argument that it legally cannot take any action since "law and order" is the responsibility of the states.

By this subterfuge, the UPA government is effectively condoning murder.

But the central government's involvement in Azad's summary execution may well extend far beyond this. Under conditions where the central Indian government and its security agencies are waging a massive, coordinated multi-state offensive against the Maoists—Operation Green Hunt—and there is evidence that Azad was seized in another state, there is little reason to believe the authorities' claims that the Andhra Police are alone responsible for the security-intelligence operation that culminated in his execution.

The Congress Party state government, meanwhile, is tenaciously sticking to the story concocted by the Andhra Pradesh police and has ruled out any judicial investigation of the circumstances surrounding Azad's death.

Successive governments in the state, under both Congress and Telugu Desam Party rule, have a long record of executing persons associated with the Maoist movement.

India's ruling elite claims to preside over the world's "largest democracy." But in practice it uses brutal and illegal methods—including torture, disappearances and summary executions—to suppress challenges to the state whether from nationalist-separatists in Kashmir and the northeast, Maoist insurgents, or Islamacist terrorists. Protests of ordinary workers and peasants, meanwhile, are frequently violently repressed.

UPA leaders claim to be interested in peace talks with the Maoists. But their support for the summary execution of the Maoist's peace interlocutor and insistence that any talks be conditional on the Maoists' not only agreeing to a truce but forsaking all violence, underlines that this is a smokescreen. India's Congress Party-led government is intent on widening the counter-insurgency war it has been waging since last fall across the eastern Indian states of Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, and West Bengal with tens of thousand of Indian Army-trained and -supported paramilitaries.

(From World Socialist Website –WSWS)

Azad's assassination: An insight into the Indian state's response to Peoples' Resistance

July 25, 2010

by Gautam Navlakha

The assassination of Cherukuri Raj Kumar a.k.a Azad on July 1-2, 2010 killed a senior leader of the CPI (Maoist) and scuttled a peace process thus virtually destroying the hopes of millions of Indians who wanted the government offensive against the Maoists to be halted. In this sense it was a double killing.

We were encouraged by the news reports that the Union Home Minister had written to Swami Agnivesh on May 11, 2010 to explore the possibility of a 72 hour ceasefire to pave the way for talks between the Maoists and the Indian State and the letter sent by Cherukuri Rajkumar a.k.a Azad, on 31st May, 2010 reiterated that Maoist party was serious about talks. In particular, unlike in the past, party's response was unambiguously positive. Azad wrote that "to ensure the establishment of peace there should be ceasefire or cessation of hostilities by both sides simultaneously instead of asking one side to abjure violence ... lift the ban on the party and mass organizations so as to facilitate them to take up open forms of struggle initiate measures to release Party leaders as a prelude to the release of political prisoners and stop all its efforts to escalate the war including the measures of calling back all the para military forces deployed in the war zones." Indeed even in his interview given to The Hindu (April 14,2010) he had stated in response to the question whether by engaging in talks the Maoists wanted "to buy time" or is it a "re-evaluation of political strategy" he had been candid. He had said that "it does not need much of a common sense to understand that both sides will utilize a situation of ceasefire to strengthen their respective sides." But he pointed out that "talks will give some respite to the people who are oppressed and suppressed under the fascist jackboots of the Indian state and state-sponsored terrorist organizations...". In the same interview he also reminded that it was the "imposition of the ban that had led the Party and the mass organizations to take up arms in the first place...What shook the rulers at that time (in 1978) and compelled them to declare Jagtiala and Sircila taluks in Karimnagar district of North Telengana as disturbed areas in 1978 was not the armed struggle of the Maoists (which had suffered a complete setback ... by 1972) but the powerful (movement against) anti-feudal order in the countryside..." In short the manner in which the party responded this time further inspired hopes in the possibility of ending the war.

Granted that hope generated about prospects of talk had weak foundation. No political party in government power has ever shown willingness to engage in sincere dialogue with the revolutionary left. This should caution us against raising our hope. The 2004-05 peace talks between the Maoists and the Andhra Pradesh government ended because fake encounters continued to be carried out by the AP police and so did Maoists retaliation. Thus even before substantive issues could be taken up talks got sabotaged and AP police crackdown ensued which dealt a severe setback to Maoists in AP. However, we also know that sooner or later both sides have to talk.

The assassination of Azad on July 1-2 has made the already difficult task bleak.

It is evident from facts available in the public domain that Cherukuri Raj Kumar a.k.a Azad and Hem Pande were unarmed when they travelled to Nagpur where Azad was to meet a courier between 11.30-1.30 pm of July 1, 2010. They left on June 30th from somewhere in north India and were disappeared most likely on the morning of 1st July either before the train reached Nagpur or on reaching Nagpur. It appears that he was on his way, among other reasons, to meet other senior leaders of CPI (Maoist) to decide on the date from which 72 hour ceasefire was to commence. Swami Agnivesh had communicated to him on June 26 that "Maoists should set a date for abjuring violence for 72 hours. In my letter I had suggested three dates: July 10, 15 and 20. Before he could respond, the police killed him." (The Sunday Times, 18 July, 2010).

It is alleged that Azad was killed because the Maoists did not cease their ambushes causing fatalities which demoralized security force personnel, such as the June 29 ambush in Narayanpur district of Bastar in which 29 CRPF jawans lost their lives. While ceasefire had not commenced and both sides were engaged in attacking each other it is one thing for such attacks and counter-attacks to continue. However, the greyhound which kidnapped Azad and then killed him were aware of his identity (but not of his companion) and therefore knew that he was engaged in talks with the government. They could have either allowed him to travel or else to arrest him and his companion. The fact that they chose to do neither meant that

they had sanction to liquidate him. And therefore, it is likely that the AP greyhound knew that by doing so they would be scuttling the incipient peace process.

After this it would be difficult for Maoists to heed the demand for cessation of hostilities if a leader engaged in these backchannel contacts can be eliminated. Because it sends a message that no one is safe at the hands of trigger happy security forces. On the other hand it imperils the efforts of all those who wanted to end this war from escalating. From circumstantial evidence it is clear that warmongers have won this round. The July 14th 2010 meeting of the chief ministers of Naxalite-affected states makes it clear that the Indian government post-Azad assassination is going ahead with escalating its war efforts. For instance it was announced at the meeting that 36 battallions of India Reserve force will be added to the 105 already raised along with 16,000 more Special police officers (SPOs – civilians trained and armed by the government to combat Maoists) bringing their strength to 30,000. However, this falls short of the numbers touted by no less than Union Home Secretary who told Economic Times (April 19th, 2010) that “our (armed) police requirement today is roughly three and half lakhs short...we want to reach the UN average and to get to it I need another five lakh policemen. So we need to recruit eight lakh over next five years...” or 175,000 jawans annually.

Also in order to prepare the way for army deployment four unified commands are being setup headed by the chief secretary and with a retired major general as an advisor. Indeed the army chief, two days after the meeting of the CMs, told his senior officers to be “mentally prepared to step into the fight against Naxalism...It might be in six months or in a year or two but if we have to maintain our relevance as a tool of the state, we will have to undertake things that the nation wants us to.” (Indian Express 17 July 2010).

This may persuade some to question the political strategy of the Maoists and blame them for widening the war. This would be a grossly erroneous exercise. To essentialise the issue of Maoist violence is the way in which class society dehumanizes struggles and movements. If the bottomline is that reproduction of social inequality is unacceptable then those who believe in step-by-step process, and others in leap or qualitative jump, from one stage to another, must accept that there will remain a divide and yet both are also symbiotically linked to each other. Those who decry armed struggle claim that popular movements can make existing institutions responsive to people’s needs.

The point is such efforts were being made even when Maoists had not emerged as the biggest threat to the Indian ruling classes and have not ceased because of Maoist rebellion. Except such efforts have actually gained more leverage thanks to the Maoist movement emerging strong. This becomes even more remarkable because in 2004-05 when Maoists were dealt a blow in Andhra Pradesh and more or less wiped out with mere presence in a single district followed by Salwa Judum type repression in Chattisgarh. No one believed that they would emerge stronger this time around. Well they did. So much so that almost all the contemporary social welfare legislations, be it NREGA, Forest Act, enforcement of PESA, proposal to make joint forest management committees managed by the gram sabha... and the Planning Commission’s “Special Problems of Tribal Development” have all been inspired or advocated by referring to the need to wean away the poorest among the poor from the Maoists/ Naxalites? Consider that the Prime Minister had drawn attention to the need to withdraw lakhs of cases filed against the tribals for petty crimes, since 1980, lest such persecution of tribals drive them to join Maoists/Naxalites. The union law minister had opined that “(t)here is a feeling among the common citizens, especially the poor, women, the elderly and the weaker sections, that the legal and judicial process is far removed from them.” He added that common man’s disenchantment was manifesting itself in “new form of violence and strife – civil unrest, armed peasant and tribal movement, Naxalite and Maoist rebellion.” (HT 25/10/2009). One can go on and on....

Thus even peaceful or non-violent movements owe their credibility or their relative effectiveness to the Maoists armed resistance. Then why should anyone decry Maoists for their armed resistance or want them to stop the war when resistance itself derives succor from this? It is important, I believe, to keep exploring possibilities of peace which can enable the Maoists to work openly and launch mass struggles because they have captured the imagination of the poorest among the poor.

Moreover, while violence will continue to play a role, as long as State pursues militaristic approach, violence also has its limits. These limits are set by politics. It is one thing to resist but another to promote alternative politics. While displacement, land grab by and for mining and mineral based conglomerates, forest rights, welfare needs have received spotlight, alternative to the present order of things is somehow missing. Why is it that ten thousand suicides by farmers evokes less revulsion than a criminal act committed by the Maoists? Consider that received wisdom which regards prospects of agriculture playing a role in the growth process to be negligible, particularly, from the viewpoint of employment generation and as

driver of economic growth. What does the revolutionary left, in particular the Maoists, have to offer to reverse the decline of agriculture, which accounts for livelihood needs of 60% of the rural workforce? Do we not need the alternative and not just a critique of this received wisdom. Will land reform/distribution invigorate production and generate employment? On the other hand if manufacturing is the key sector to bring about equitable development is it to be an unbridled growth or be planned? Wherein should investments go? What should be the mineral policy? Should we, for instance, halt mining of bauxite? Why must it be the case? Do we need poverty reduction so that state can play benevolent role? Or is there an alternate vision for removal of poverty and empowering the people? How is it that decade long military suppression in NE and J&K does not encourage us to ponder the nature of our State which can year in and year out crush movements which demand right of self-determination, an eminently democratic and peaceful approach? Is the Indian state anti-Muslim, pro-Hindu, racist... or a repressive state which presents itself as one or the other depending on which section of people it is engaged in crushing and therefore demonizing. The point is that for left to be credible it must go beyond surface manifestation of wrong and address the underlying causes and processes which account for skewed and unequal and stunted growth. Regrettably, parliamentary left despite 58 years of open politics and despite holding government power at provincial level, has not offered an alternate vision. Yes they have some achievement but these are hardly of the kind which inspires anyone to claim that they present a different vision of politics. While their failure does not cancel out open politics what it does is reminds us of where we fail and what we lack.

Now Indian State propagates that Naxalites are irredeemably bent upon waging a war against the Indian State and short of suppressing them there is no other option. Of course Maoists want to seize power. That is a perfectly legitimate objective. In the last four decades several Naxalite parties gave up this path to pursue non-violent parliamentary or extra parliamentary struggle. Their experience hardly inspires confidence that the Indian state has become amenable to people's concerns now that some of these left wing rebels gave up arms. Appeal and prospect of non-violence has been undermined, by the state itself. Lest we forget be it NREGA, the forest bill or the decision to enforce Panchayat Extension to Schedule Areas, which was passed in 1996 but not implemented and so many other such issues figure on the agenda thanks to the fear that were this not done the poorest among the poor will continue to turn to Maoists.

The point is that so long as State monopolises means of violence they will remain enabled to subject people to a life of indignity and enslavement. Freedoms and liberties would remain prerogative of the middle classes to enjoy. Working people are vulnerable; no sooner they appear to have succeeded in mobilizing people and begin to question the inequalities and inadequacies of the system they become target of State's oppressive ways. Therefore, it would be a recipe for disaster to surrender the right to offer armed resistance until such time that the State outlaws war against the people. Indeed unless people get armed one cannot neutralize the great advantage the ruling classes enjoy over means of violence, which is primarily employed against the masses.

India, for all its verbosity about non-violence, is one of the most heavily armed state both in terms of accumulation of destructive power of its arsenal as well as size of its military force, which gets force multiplied by draconian laws, and thus enables the ruling classes to practice 'slow genocide'. Consider that 45% of children below 6 years suffer from malnutrition, malnourishment and stunted growth, or that by playing around with calorie intake, bringing it down from 2400 to 1800 or even less to 1500, one can statistically reduce the number of people living below poverty line and thus reduce Food Security entitlement for hundreds of millions of Indians! This exposes our own people to a slow death. To then argue that violence has no role to play is quite wrong. It is as good telling people to wait patiently for the fruit to fall into their lap. This may be touching display of fortitude and of religious faith, but for the fact those at the receiving end may be getting desperate after 63 years of practicing it. Ironically, whereas India dropped to 134th position in global human development index we moved up the ladder, to occupy ninth position, in military spending and 12th largest economy! Take another example whereas 126,700 High Networth Individuals (billionaires and multi-millionaires) in India own one third of gross national income of the country, 645 million Indians suffer pangs of poverty and deprivation!

Despite being weak and with patchy urban presence it is clear that Maoists enjoy legitimacy in the eyes of the poorest of the poor. Thus were the ban on the party removed they could emerge as a fulcrum around which resistance could become vigorous. Indian rulers do not want this to happen. By assassinating Azad security apparatus has thus killed a senior leader of the Maoist party, scuttled peace process and throttled the possibility of Maoists coming overground anytime in near future.

AZAD KILLING

- SHOMA CHOUDHARY, *Managing Editor*

Are we living in a State that mouths peace but shoots its messengers?

FAKERY HAS always been a key instrument of power. But last week, as the President and Prime Minister of India made their Independence Day speeches, cocooned symbolically in towers of glass, the scale of that fakery shot skyward. Both leaders augustly urged the Maoists, yet again, to “abjure violence” and come for talks. Few among the millions of Indians who heard them would have caught the cynicism.

Swami Agnivesh certainly would have. It’s just over a month since the State shot down a man called Azad. There’s been some fitful noise over it. Civil society has protested valiantly; Mamta Banerjee has asked for a judicial inquiry. But for the most part, Indians have gone about their business, registering little and understanding even less. (I tried sharing some of its indignant shock with a public icon from Mumbai. He replied: “So what if they shot one guy?” The chasm was so wide, I subsided into silence.)

But the hard truth is the killing of Azad is a desperate new low in Indian public life. Azad was not just a key leader of the CPI(Maoist) — a man whose death would be a face-saving notch on the carbines of competitive violence, one big fish to even the score for 76 jawans. He was a man mid-stream in a peace process initiated by the government itself. How could the State just ignore his death, then stand coldly on the ramparts of the Red Fort urging a new round of talks? Where are the certitudes that make the foundation of a civilised society?

Much of the events leading up to Azad’s death has been reported earlier in TEHELKA (The Maoist and the Undelivered Missive, 17 July, 2010), but it bears a quick retelling. Some months ago, as pressure mounted on him to defuse the civil war in the heartland, Home Minister P Chidambaram called Swami Agnivesh and asked him to bear a letter for the Maoists, urging them to come for talks. Agnivesh acted in good faith and sent the word out. It was a hopeful time. Significantly, Chidambaram’s letter did not merely make flamboyant demands asking the Maoists to give him “72 hours” to set the world right.

Instead, it asked them to announce a date for talks so the government could plan its response. It also promised that if the Maoists would lay down arms, “it goes without saying” the security forces would also suspend operations for the duration of the talks. The Maoists — mandating Azad to be their point person — responded positively. A mutual cessation of hostilities suddenly seemed possible. Apparently, a fixed date was imminent.

Then on 2 July, shockingly, Azad was shot dead. The Andhra Police claimed there was a pitched battle with 20-30 Maoists in the jungles near Adilabad in Andhra Pradesh. But, inexplicably, no security forces were hurt, the villagers claim there was no firing, and only two hand-picked people lay dead: Azad and a journalist called Hem Chandra Pandey. Pandey’s colleagues claim they saw him in Delhi on the morning of 1 July, far from the jungles of Adilabad. And the Maoists claim Azad was nowhere near Adilabad at all and was actually picked up from Nagpur and killed in cold blood, while on his way to Dandakaranya to build consensus for the talks.

So was Azad deliberately bumped off by the State?

It is incredibly self-defeating to dismiss those asking for an inquiry into this as “anti-national” or “Maoist sympathisers”. Or, in Mamta Banerjee’s case, to question why she isn’t falling in with the UPA’s line. Before the propriety of electoral alliances, there is the principle of natural justice. Don’t Indian citizens have a right to know what really happened? To know if we are living in a State that mouths peace but shoots its messengers?

The story of what happened after Azad’s death strikes an even deeper chill. A mortified Swami Agnivesh went to Chidambaram and asked him for an explanation: How could he compromise him as an interlocutor? How could his forces kill his own emissary? Reportedly, Chidambaram said he knew nothing about the killing and was not concerned about it. Either way, his response is disturbing. Here is a man who is helming a “coordinated strategy” against the Maoists, and the police killed a key person involved in his peace channel without his knowledge? What kind of “coordinated strategy” is that? And if that killing has set back his peace process, why is he not concerned about it, if not downright enraged? There is only the darker alternative to confront: He knew. And was unconcerned. Azad’s death was part of the strategy.

But Chidambaram is not the only door Swami Agnivesh knocked on after Azad’s death. He went to LK Advani, Arun Jaitley, Rajnath Singh, Sharad Yadav, D Raja, AB Bardhan, Jaipal Reddy and a host of other

politicians. Each of them promised to ask for an inquiry. Agnivesh even met jailed Maoist leaders Kobad Ghandy and Narayan Sanyal to keep the dialogue alive. And wrote letters to Sonia Gandhi. Finally, on 20 July, Agnivesh met the Prime Minister. The mild doctor promised to heal the wound and requested him to take the peace process forward. Acting on his word, Agnivesh sent another letter to the Maoists on 22 July. But barely a week later, Sukant — another Maoist bearing Agnivesh’s letter — apparently found himself surrounded by the police. Somehow managing to escape, he sent an email to Agnivesh urging him not to send any more letters. Agnivesh was being used as a pawn by the government, the mail said. His letters were sniffer dogs for the security agencies. The call for peace was just a sham.

And there the move for “talks” now stands. Agnivesh sends a daily message to the PM’s office, but has had no reply. Sonia Gandhi has declined to meet him, directing him to Chidambaram instead. And the Left and the BJP have segued into each other. “What was it about,” says Swami Agnivesh quietly. “Was it just an empty PR exercise? How can the President and Prime Minister read out these written speeches spouting old platitudes like ‘abjure violence’ and ‘come for talks’, as if nothing has happened in between? This is absolute hypocrisy.”

But Agnivesh is just a symptom. If the State fails to act in good faith — by either laying to rest ugly suspicions or by redressing its own wrongdoing — how can anyone dare to engage constructively with either party?

OVER THE last year, the Maoist threat has been used by media and State to outlaw many crucial pieces of a democracy. Anyone who criticises the excesses — or the absences — of the State is immediately branded a Maoist. Being pro-poor is seen as potential insurrection. In just the last three years — astoundingly — a 100 people have been arrested in Maharashtra alone for the ‘heinous’ crime of reading Bhagat Singh and BR Ambedkar. Public figures like Mahasweta Devi, Arundhati Roy, Prashant Bhushan, Medha Patkar, Binayak Sen — to name just a few — have been brushed aside as “Maoist sympathisers”. And dozens of pro-livelihood activists have been arrested.

As TEHELKA’s own critique of the government’s stand on tribal issues has grown louder, sources say the home minister has begun to dismiss it as a Maoist publication. Where does this paranoia end? Contrary to perception, in June this year, TEHELKA had, in fact, sent a 10-page questionnaire to Azad, asking combative questions about Maoist ideology, intention, vision, reliance on guns, summary killings, and the efficacy of class war in a post-ideology world. Ironically, his reply reached us a day after his death. It said, “Thank you for your questions. I am on a journey and I apologise for the delay but will send you my answers by the end of July.”

If Azad’s death has set back his peace process, why is the Home Minister not concerned about it, if not downright enraged?

As I folded the letter, there was a call from Usendi, a Maoist commander. Urgently, I asked him the same questions. “You’re raising such important issues of social justice,” I said. “But because of your ambition of capturing State power and establishing Communist rule, the Indian State is able to sidestep the focus on justice. Isn’t there a way of mobilising people without a gun?”

“Communist rule is a very distant ambition,” he replied in Hindi. “Just now we are fighting for democracy. We are fighting for the Constitution. Houses are being burnt in the jungles. Women are being raped. Hundreds of Adivasis have petitioned the district collector peacefully asking for food. But nothing happens. No media covers all this. What are we to do? Should we just abandon these people and go back to our homes?”

For the moment I have no answers. A spectacle of images rises before me: men like A Raja and the Reddy brothers walking free, destituting the country, secure in the armour of electoral politics. The bloody picture of an old, unarmed farmer in Hyderabad shot for protesting the takeover of his land. A 13-year-old boy shot in UP for being part of another demonstration over land. The vacant faces of tribals in Dantewada staring at the ashes of homes burnt for the tenth time. The fact that in 64 years, not one Governor has used the provisions of the Fifth Schedule to intervene on behalf of indigenous people.

As this story goes to press, Maoist leader Kishenji has sent a fresh offer for peace, contingent on two things: a mutual ceasefire for three months and a judicial inquiry into Azad’s death.

Is the offer sincere, is it not? Only events will tell. But the inquiry should indeed be non-negotiable. The State might think that makes me a Maoist. I think it makes me a concerned Indian citizen.

From Tehelka Magazine, Vol 7, Issue 34, Dated August 28, 2010

State on the Hunt

by PRAFUL BIDWAI

The Centre's approach to the Maoist problem, based on indiscriminate force and non-judicial executions, is damaging democracy and the country's security.

THE Central and Andhra Pradesh governments have a lot of explaining to do about the killing of Maoist leader Cherukuri Rajkumar Azad. Azad was killed on July 1 in Adilabad district just when his party was about to open negotiations with the Centre through the mediation of the social activist Swami Agnivesh. The official account, which described the “encounter killing” as a 30-minute exchange of fire between a group of 20 Maoists and the police, always sounded like a cock-and-bull story. It is hard to believe that Azad would go on his own to Adilabad, where there is little naxal activity, and that he would have fewer than 40-50 guerillas protecting him. The police also claimed that “Maoist” Hemachandra Pandey was killed with Azad. But by all accounts, Pandey was a freelance journalist, not a hard-core Maoist cadre.

At any rate, it is highly unlikely that the surviving Maoists would have left behind the body of a senior leader like Azad: they are known to carry away their dead. Above all, it made no political sense for them to attack the police when they were about to open talks in response to Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram's offer.

Now, the worst suspicions stand confirmed with Outlook magazine accessing Azad's post-mortem report and getting it analysed by forensic experts. The report's findings contradict the official account, which claims the police fired in “self-defence” at the Maoist squad which was at a higher elevation than them. Analysis suggests that the bullet that killed Azad was fired from an extremely close range, less than 7.5 centimetres (3 inches). It left a characteristic burn mark, with a blackening of the entry wound. This distinguishes it from shots fired from longer ranges such as 15 or 60 cm. (These leave patterns like collars and tattoos, but not burns and blackening caused by smoke.)

In addition to the angle of the bullet's entry and exit, and the fact that no policemen were injured, this creates a formidable prima facie case that Azad was premeditatedly murdered. Only a full, impartial inquiry will establish the truth and the motives. But it seems logical to suppose that Azad was deceived into believing that he would be secure, and then trapped (according to The Hindu, July 5, in Nagpur) and abducted to Andhra Pradesh and killed in cold blood. It seems equally logical that the operation could only have been carried out by the Andhra Pradesh police with the Centre's concurrence and probably foreknowledge. That is the way anti-Maoist operations have been conducted in the recent past, particularly since Chidambaram took charge of Home.

MANY QUESTIONS

This hypothesis raises many questions. Who authorised Azad's killing? How, and through what chain of command, was the decision transmitted to the Adilabad police? Which leaders gave the requisite clearance? Was the motive to tell the Communist Party of India (Maoist)'s top leaders that they remain vulnerable to the state, which reigns supreme, and can resort to the lowest form of deception in eliminating them? Was Pandey killed because he had witnessed Azad's murder?

It is absolutely imperative that these questions are answered through a truthful, credible and thorough inquiry. Azad was a key player in the move to hold talks with the government. His killing marks a turning point in the evolution of the official Green Hunt counter-insurgency strategy and the likely Maoist response.

In many ways, the killing repeated in a compressed form the sordid drama played out in Andhra Pradesh in 2004-05. Then, Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy invited the naxalites to “good-faith” talks on the understanding that neither side could use them to gain unfair advantage – for instance, through surveillance of Maoist hideouts. Reddy violated that understanding; his police tracked down and spied on important hideouts. After the talks broke down, they surrounded a meeting of top leaders at a hideout and gunned them down. Thus the success of the gallant Greyhounds.

The public must know if this is the way India's democratic state behaves and intends to behave and where it draws the line on deception. Has it reached such a point of desperation that it must resort to

dishonourable forms of trickery and duplicity? Has it no other less violent, less Machiavellian, and at least infinitesimally wiser, ways of addressing the naxalite problem?

Questions have already been raised about Azad's killing not just by Agnivesh – who says it was the greatest political shock of his life – but within the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) too. Even Union Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee has implicitly endorsed Railway Minister and Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee's demand for an inquiry into Azad's death. She may have demanded this for narrow political reasons, but Mukherjee is too shrewd not to know that that alone cannot be a ground for dismissing it.

The killing should impel the Indian state into some serious, honest soul-searching on its anti-naxalite strategy and the policy of promoting unlimited force to deal with “internal security”. How it tackles the naxalite/Maoist question will significantly determine the form of the state and the nature of governance in the coming years. Indeed, it is one of the central axes around which governance is already being reshaped and the balance between coercion and consensus reworked.

The Green Hunt strategy only pays lip service to the carrot-and-stick or “two-pronged” approach of “development” and “law and order”, or a combination of redressing popular grievances and forcing naxalites into submission. In practice, it overwhelmingly relies on brute force and military means without recognising – except in the abstract – that the current phase of the Maoist insurgency feeds on the systemic violence inherent in this society. Its severity has greatly increased recently in the central minerals- and forest-rich tribal belt where rapacious exploitation of natural resources has been intensified by neoliberal policies. Maoism appeals to sections of the underprivileged who suffer dispossession, disenfranchisement and brutalisation.

The Maoists are the most extreme segment of a wide spectrum of popular movements resisting neoliberal industrialisation. These are rooted in the systematic denial of social justice and life with dignity to millions of people, whose fundamental rights are being ruthlessly crushed. The spectrum includes everything from the incontrovertibly peaceful Narmada Bachao Andolan; agitations in Orissa against mining and metallurgical projects; campaigns in numerous States against special economic zones, polluting industries, nuclear plants and destructive hydroelectric dams; to movements for the right of access to land, water and forests.

UNDENIABLE INJUSTICE

One must not romanticise the Maoists. Their obsession with violence and armed struggle to overthrow the state, their rejection of mass organisation, their internal regimentation, and their substitution of class politics with militarism are deplorable. But the injustices which they articulate are undeniable. These will not go away even if they are eliminated – at an exorbitant cost to legality and human rights.

Maoism's recent rapid spread is attributable to the growing failure of the state and the collapse of its integrity, especially in respect of public service provision. A dysfunctional state becomes irremediably corrupt and predatory upon the people. It acquires a major stake in deepening and perpetuating their deprivation. It forfeits its claim to hegemony in the Gramscian sense. Its reliance on force or domination triggers a cycle of violence and counter-violence.

As the Expert Group of the Planning Commission on “Development Challenges in Extremist-Affected Areas” (2008) points out: “The methods chosen by the government to deal with the Maoist phenomenon [have] increased the people's distrust of the police and consequent unrest. Protest against police harassment is itself a major instance of unrest frequently leading to further violence by the police.... The response of the Maoists has been to target the police, which in effect triggers a second round of the spiral.”

In many parts of India, the state has been captured by the rich and powerful. Notes the Expert Group: “One of the attractions of the naxalite movement is that it does provide protection to the weak against the powerful and takes the security of, and justice for, the weak and socially marginal seriously.”

The government has paid no attention to these observations and conclusions. Instead, it has hugely stepped up allocations to anti-naxalite operations, with plans to buy the latest high-tech weapons, establishing 400 new police stations, raising 34 new India Reserve battalions, inducting 20-22 helicopters, and involving a Major General-level officer in the so-called Unified Command (à la Kashmir) in each State (Maharashtra, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh refused to join this).

MISTAKEN PROPOSITION

The strategy of maximum force is rooted in the proposition that Maoism is India's "greatest internal security threat". This itself derives from the colonial police view of all communists as a "security threat". The proposition is mistaken. The naxalites are not about to capture power or destroy India's unity or integrity. They present a law and order problem, which should be tackled by normal police methods – good intelligence gathering, crime control, painstaking collection of evidence and lawful prosecution of those instigating or practising violence.

Maoists do not threaten India's security or social cohesion seriously. In fact, social cohesion is far more gravely threatened by the communal Right, including the Bharatiya Janata Party and its more extreme associates, some of whom have embraced terrorist means.

The cornerstone of the official strategy should have followed the counsel of E.N. Rammohan – a former Border Security Force chief and highly regarded policeman who was asked to inquire into the April killings of 76 Central Reserve Police Force troops in Chhattisgarh. This holds that a counter-insurgency operation must be "scrupulously legal". This is a precondition not only for its popular acceptance but also for the legitimacy of the state.

Nothing can undermine legitimacy more effectively than the state's adoption of illegal means. Pitting one form of illegality against another might at best yield short-term gains. But this is the surest long-term guarantee that the state's minimally credible, essential function as a relatively impartial institution that abides by the Constitution and its own laws will be destroyed. And that is a recipe for greater violence and chaos.

No exception should be allowed to this cardinal principle. Once you justify illegality, and even torture and non-judicial killings in "rare" cases, you are on a slippery slope. The exception destroys the rule, nullifying inclusive governance and making the state illegitimate in the eyes of the people.

The Union Home Ministry has not learnt this lesson. It continues to defend or condone the patently illegal actions of the State governments, including the harassment of innocent citizens like Binayak Sen, Himanshu Kumar and Lingaram Kodopi, and the murder on August 4 of Kunjami Joga in Dantewada. Joga was falsely accused of being a Maoist and shot down by the "Koya Commandos", a fierce militia within the police, the official counterpart of Salwa Judum, another dangerous state creation.

Worse, the Home Ministry is seen as having actively instigated the States to give an explicitly militarist dimension to Green Hunt with limitless and indiscriminate force that makes no distinction between hardcore Maoist guerillas, their peaceful sympathisers, and ordinary civilians. Irresponsible talk of military-style "combat" operations, the possible use of helicopter gunships, the clearing of forests to create "safe corridors" for troop movement, and a strategy of encircling and besieging naxalite-dominated villages has created fear and insecurity.

This will push India down the slippery slope to state terrorism. The Home Ministry under Chidambaram is abandoning the role of policy planning and guidance within the framework of its constitutional duty to protect all citizens, in particular vulnerable strata. Instead, it is micromanaging counter-insurgency operations and acting like the head of the constabulary.

The rot is beginning to infect the Indian Army. The gory civilian killings at Pathribal in 2001, the "ketchup colonel" episode of 2003, and this year's murder in Kupwara of three men – all to claim rewards – are instances of illegal executions. Yet another scandal seems to be breaking out. Veena Kohli, the mother of Shaurya Chakra winner Captain Sumit Kohli who died under mysterious circumstances four years ago, has accused Army officers of plotting his murder to cover up the killing of four porters in Lolab in the Kashmir Valley in 2006. Kohli knew who was guilty. He was found dead with a gunshot wound. The Army claimed this was suicide. The Defence Ministry is reportedly considering an inquiry into this.

The conclusion is inescapable that the proliferating culture of "encounter killings", execution of suspected criminals without trial, hounding of non-combatant citizens, and the terrible examples set by Green Hunt are undermining the legitimacy of the state and the rule of law and weakening the integrity of the armed forces. Nothing could be worse for India's democracy and her security.

A course correction, urgently, radically and sincerely, is needed. This means pursuing the agenda not just of "development" – building roads, schools and hospitals, and so on – but of social justice and

people's rights. It is only when the downtrodden are convinced that the state is willing to give them real rights over land, forests and natural resources and practise inclusion that the naxalite "problem" will be resolved.

"The death of journalist Hem Chandra Pandey has set a bad precedent for journalists who are already reeling under government pressure when it comes to reporting from Naxal-affected areas. Pandey was killed along with Maoist leader Azad in what activists say looks more like a staged encounter than a real one. "He was killed so that there is no evidence of the staged encounter," according to Maoist leader Gudsa Usendi.

There was some confusion regarding Pandey's identity, at first. A press release after his death from the north regional bureau of the CPI (Maoist) said he was a zonal committee member. But immediately afterwards, top Maoist leaders, including Kishenji, issued statements that he was not a party member, but a journalist who was supposed to meet Azad. His wife Babita produced a number of articles written by her husband which had appeared in various Hindi newspapers. On 2 July, the very day he was killed, one of his articles was published in Rashtriya Sahara, a Hindi daily.

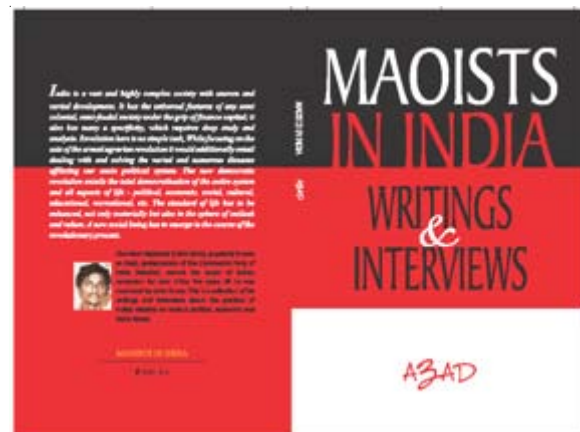
On 7 July, before Pandey's body was cremated, activists and journalists paid tributes to him and expressed grave misgivings about the Government's disposition. Incidentally, some journalists who have been covering his death have received anonymous SMSes saying that Pandey was not a journalist and that the media fraternity should stop 'owning him'. Already, journalists are facing enormous difficulties in states like Chhattisgarh, where media is not allowed to enter many areas by the police; even hotels there have been asked not to rent rooms to journalists. The truth is, mediapersons are within their lawful rights when they meet sources—like Maoist leaders—and should never be pressured into revealing where they get their information from. Alas, when journalists are killed, like Pandey was, the law means very little."

- Rahul Pandita in OPEN magazine, 10 July 2010

Books Published by Friends of Azad

Maoists in India - by Azad

Writings and Interviews of Azad



Shining Red Star

Azad remains forever

- Friends of Azad



Azad's Writings

Letter from Azad, Spokesperson of CPI (Maoist), to Swami Agnivesh

May 31, 2010

Regarding the proposal for talks made by Mr. P. Chidambaram in his letter to Swami Agnivesh

Dear Swami Agniveshji,

We heard that you and other democratic intellectuals had gone on a peace march in Dantewada in the first week of May 2010 braving the disruption organized by the goons of the BJP and Congress. You might have realized how the state government and the Centre are determined to sabotage any attempt to bring peace to the region and to prevent anyone from making efforts in that direction. We appreciate the efforts of well-meaning intellectuals and social activists like you to bring peace to the region. We also appreciate the efforts made by you to convince the Union Government to come forward for a cease-fire and dialogue with our Party which had prompted the Union Home Minister to state the Government's position on the issue.

We had gone through the letter written to you by the Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram dated May 11, 2010 which mentions the Government's position on the peace process and its offer for talks with the CPI(Maoist). The essence of his letter is that "the CPI(Maoist) should announce they will abjure violence" and specify a date from which they will not indulge in violent activities; should "stop all violent activities" from that date for 72 hours, and that the security forces will not conduct any operations against the CPI(Maoist); that "talks" would begin "sometime during the period of 72 hours when there is no violence"; and that the CPI(Maoist) should "continue to maintain its position of no violence until the talks are concluded."

We had already stated publicly our Party's position on cease-fire and talks with the government several times in the past. We wish to reiterate our Party's position once again in light of the proposals made by Mr. Chidambaram in his letter sent to you.

Firstly we hold the opinion that the cease-fire should be mutual. You are well aware of the continuous persecution of ordinary innocent people by the security forces in all the regions where the latter are deployed as part of the Operation Green Hunt. Not a day passes without an incident of murder, rape, abduction, torture of the adivasis and destruction of their property or stealing their belongings by these so-called security forces. How can the people or the Party and its various wings get confidence that the Government is serious in its intent for peace when it allows its forces to indulge in heinous atrocities on innocent unarmed people, when the government itself allows the suspension of all basic democratic rights of the citizens and consigns their own Constitution to the dust-bin? In such a situation it is necessary on the part of the government to prove its seriousness regarding the peace process by first halting its operations against innocent unarmed people and unequivocally stating that it is ready to observe cease-fire simultaneously with the CPI(Maoist) starting with a specified date. The practical measure to really ensure peace is the declaration of mutual cease-fire for a definite period, say, 2 or 3 months, to start with. Insisting that the CPI(Maoist) should declare that it will abjure violence is an unsound and unreasonable proposal. It implies that the Maoists are indulging in violence while the Government and its security forces have been fighting for peace. The facts actually are vice versa.

It is the paramilitary, police, private vigilante gangs sponsored by the government that are unleashing violence on the people on an hourly basis and the people are compelled to retaliate for their own survival. The Party and the PLGA too are compelled to undertake counter-offensive operations in their self-defence and in defence of the people. Hence it is the Government that has to instill confidence among the people and the Party cadres about its seriousness by first halting its offensive operations and attacks on the people instead of asking the Maoists to unilaterally declare that they will abjure violence.

Even more amusing is the time period of 72 hours which means just nothing. Such a short period cannot prove the seriousness on either side. Even a minor incident on either side can be picked up to prove the violation by the other side. A relatively longer period is necessary if we wish to really bring peace. It is only after a period of peace and the creation of a conducive atmosphere that talks can be held. Our Party is very serious about bringing about peace especially at the present juncture when lakhs of adivasis had fled, and are fleeing, their homes; when lakhs of adivasis are facing chronic conditions of hunger and famine due to their ouster from their lands and forcible closure of the weekly bazaars by the police and administration; when the adivasis are haunted by the threat of death any day by the most savage paramilitary, police, SPOs and private vigilante gangs. One should not be swayed by victories and defeats at this critical juncture in the life of the adivasi community in our country but try to create conditions whereby their survival is ensured.

You are also aware of the difficulties involved for an underground party that is proscribed by the government to proceed for talks. Hence we had proposed the release of political prisoners from the jails. At the outset the Government can take the initiative to release at least some of our Party leaders so as to facilitate talks with them. Without referring to any of these proposals made by our Party, Mr. Chidambaram proposes that “talks will begin sometime during the period of 72 hours when there is no violence.” He also says that he expects that the CPI(Maoist) will “continue to maintain its position of ‘no violence’ until the talks are concluded.”

The above-mentioned proposal by Mr. Chidambaram, though it might appear apparently as genuine, actually lacks seriousness and is intended only to satisfy people like you who have been insisting on peace. His insistence on a 72-hour-period of peace on the part of the CPI (Maoist) and to hold talks during this period is like a joke. It only shows how Mr. Chidambaram lacks seriousness on the issue and wants to somehow complete the formality of talks, if at all they materialize, in order to satisfy the civil society. If the government is serious it should speak in terms of mutual cease-fire, for a longer period of time, and spell out the government’s stand on fulfilling the minimum requisites like release of leaders and lifting the ban on the CPI(Maoist) and the mass organisations. Its duplicity is also seen in its hectic preparations for stepping up its brutal armed offensive even as it speaks the language of peace and talks. Do you really believe that Mr. Chidambaram is earnest in proposing for talks when there are reports of how the central government is equipping its forces with several more choppers and preparing the Indian Army too for the war on people?

To sum up, our Party desires peace sincerely in the interests of the lakhs of adivasis who are being cruelly crushed under the jack-boots of the forces sent by the Indian State and the people of our country at large. However, to ensure the establishment of peace there should be cease-fire or cessation of hostilities by both sides simultaneously instead of asking one side to abjure violence. If the government is really serious about reducing levels of violence then it should immediately lift the ban on the party and mass organisations so as to facilitate them to take up open forms of struggle. If the government is serious about holding talks it should initiate measures to release Party leaders as a prelude to the release of political prisoners and most importantly, it should stop all its efforts to escalate the war including the measure of calling back all the paramilitary forces deployed in the war zones.

Once again we appreciate the efforts made by you and many others who earnestly desire to bring peace.

We hope that you will pursue your mission of bringing peace taking into consideration the suggestions mentioned by us in this letter. We look forward to positive results for your well-meaning efforts.

With regards,
Azad,
Spokesperson,
Central Committee, CPI (Maoist)

Maoists in India

A Rejoinder

- Azad

The special issue (July 22, 2006) devoted to the Maoists in India reflects recognition of the growing importance that the Maoist-led movement plays in the polity and the economy of the country. However, what was disconcerting was that an issue devoted to the Maoists did not have a single article by the Maoists themselves. The majority of the essays appeared preoccupied with the question of violence and not with the horrifying conditions of the masses and finding a way out for them. Though the EPW has chosen a wide spectrum of views, it would have been more constructive if the articles were linked more to the question of the alleviation of the horrifying conditions of the masses, particularly in this period of globalisation when the situation has worsened. The issue of violence should have been seen in this context. In this reply, we will first very briefly present our understanding of the Indian social order, then discuss our own goals as the framework from which to view the points made by the writers, and subsequently take up some of the main issues on which we differ. We shall assign importance to those arguments that are really disturbing the well-wishers of the movement.

Semi-Colonial, Semi-Feudal Order

Our beloved country, so rich in natural wealth, human power and ingenuity, has been reduced to a condition that is, in some respects, worse than most of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. In these nearly 60 years of so-called independence the situation has not significantly improved compared to what prevailed in the last years of the British Raj - at least for the general masses. In the Nehruvian period, the model of development relied on the "trickle down effect"; now, in the present phase of globalisation, there is no pretence of even that. The one lakh figure (official) of suicide deaths in rural India in the past 10 years is only the tip of the iceberg of misery that none of the writers refer to. Poverty and deprivation of the masses have continued apace, more so in the present phase of globalisation. And, if the masses (not just Naxalites) dare to even raise their voice for justice, they face the lathis and guns of the state machinery with increasing intolerance.

This was evident not only in the workers' struggle in Gurgaon, the tribal people's struggle of Kalinga Nagar, the slum dwellers' resistance in Mumbai and Delhi, the struggles of displaced people of the Narmada, peasant struggles in Rajasthan, the electricity employees' struggles in UP and Punjab, and the struggle of the state government employees in Tamil Nadu, but even in the protests against the recent demolitions in the middle class localities of Delhi. In all these struggles the people were ruthlessly trampled upon, as they did not have the strength to withstand the state onslaught. As a result, their conditions have gone from bad to worse. What answers do the writers (in the EPW special issue on the Maoist movement in India) have to put an end to such endemic state violence on different sections of struggling people? How should these people organise to improve their lives? How should they fight back? To negate the Maoist method, which has at least achieved some degree of success, at least in those areas where the Maoists have adopted the path of armed struggle, without providing an alternative, in effect, is to push people into deeper and deeper despair (and poverty), even as the moneybags strut around flaunting their wealth.

The increasing state violence on the masses and the growing impoverishment are not just an accident or some isolated instances, but endemic to the existing system, which we Maoists broadly characterise as semi-colonial and semi-feudal. Semi-colonial because the Indian ruling classes (big business, top bureaucrats, and leading politicians running the centre and the states) are tied to imperialist interests. Semi-feudal, as the old feudal relations have not been smashed, only a certain amount of capitalist growth has been superimposed on them. So also, the Parliament is no democratic institution (as in countries that have been through a democratic revolution - a bourgeois democracy) but has been instituted on the existing highly autocratic state and semi-feudal structures as a ruse to dupe the masses.

The contemporary Indian economy is unduly influenced by the activities of carpetbaggers, a ruthless mafia, rapacious mining interests and giant speculators, all linked to the politics of criminality. The degeneration is so deep, the rot so acute that these same moneybags are floating thousands of non-government organisations (NGOs) in order to trivialise the ills of the system so that people are diverted from seeing that these are endemic to the very system itself and not due to just some bad individuals or policies. The semi-colonial, semi-feudal order reproduces social polarisation - a growing rich and their vast

number of hangers-on, and an increasing mass of the impoverished. A small section of the middle class is moving into the first category, partaking of some crumbs from the opulent dining table; the bulk of the people are being pushed into squalor, unemployment, agrarian crisis, business bankruptcy and financial ruin. Even the local bourgeoisie (small) and small traders are being squeezed out in increasing numbers with the entry of giant companies in all spheres of the economy.

With these extremes of wealth and poverty, in order to protect the enclaves of the rich and powerful, the state will be driven to resort to more and more repression of the people and their organisations. It is only within this framework that one can understand why the home ministry designates the Maoists as the number one threat to “internal security”. We Maoists seek a just and equitable order. In this endeavour, the key question is how does one confront the repressive Indian state that brutally tramples upon the people, even as it defends and pampers the wealthy. But before that let us get to what we stand for.

Maoist Model of Development

We Maoists stand for a people-oriented, self-reliant model of development. In this model, people play the central role; their initiative is released to the fullest extent possible. We are of the opinion that all wealth generated within the country should stay here and not be allowed to be drained off abroad. India is a very rich country with tremendous human power and ingenuity, together with a vast natural resource base. The vast wealth, illegally and immorally appropriated by the imperialists, feudal elements and compradors, should be seized and turned to use in developing the economy, first and foremost in agriculture and in rural areas, where the bulk of our people live.

Our model of development is oriented to vastly enhancing the purchasing power of the masses. This will create a huge home market in the country itself, which will act as the main engine for growth. The starting point for this is overhauling the rural economy, where 70 per cent of our people live. This will be initiated through land reforms, by the redistribution of land on the basis of “land-to-the-tiller”. In his article, Tilak D Gupta says that this is not viable any longer as there is not enough surplus land. But has he fixed a viable ceiling to determine how much land will be available for redistribution? Has he determined how much land is with the government/panchayats; how much land is with religious institutions and mutts; how much land is with absentee landowners (even most bureaucrats/army officials maintain land, and many, in fact, purchase more); and how much land is with the private corporate sector and with luxury resorts, golf clubs, etc?

The land reforms, coupled with large investments in agriculture (to also regenerate the soil destroyed by the green revolution), forestry and allied activities (poultry, goat farming, fishery, etc), will enormously expand the rural populace’s purchasing power. This in turn will create a market for the basic necessities of life and will help generate local industry, resulting in employment generation. With this employment generation the purchasing power will increase further, leading to more industry, and it is this spiral that will result in continuous growth. In this development model, growth (and extension of the home market) will be linked to people’s welfare and will in fact be dependent on it.

In the urban areas too, industrial production will be people-oriented. The opulent expenditure of the super rich will cease (as their surplus and ill-begotten wealth will be confiscated) and the vast slums will be rehabilitated. Job security will be ensured with a living wage and there will be no necessity to cling to ancestral land as a source of security to fall back upon. This will release a further amount of land for the impoverished rural populace.

Cultural, sports and recreational activities will involve the masses, while education will be made available to all. All forms of caste and patriarchal oppression/ discrimination will be fought against and prohibited. Untouchability will be abolished and severely punished. All degenerate and feudal ideas will be fought against long after the revolution through cultural revolutions. Healthcare will be freely available, and more focus will be on preventive care and hygiene.

In a nutshell, this is the model of development that we Maoists stand for. It is stated in the party programme and political resolutions issued from time to time. On this, there is no ambiguity. In Bastar, before the massive state onslaught in the present Salwa Judum campaign, extensive development projects along the above lines were taken up and have been documented in the booklet *New People’s Power in Dandakaranya* (2000). In Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Bihar, it was the just struggles of the peasantry under Maoist leadership that led to the seizure of lands from the big landlords and distribution among the landless and poor peasants.

What we propose is a model of new democracy built around the axis of land reforms and a self-reliant

economy. It is also this new democratic model that we seek to implement (on seizing power) in its rudimentary form in the guerrilla bases and later in the base areas. That is why in Dandakaranya the Maoists not only implemented people-oriented projects (when the military operations were not as intense) but also called for the stopping of our rich iron ore being taken away by Japan at the Bailadilla mines and supported the 400-odd indigenous small-scale rolling mills facing closure due to government policies.

Is this model violent? Is it undemocratic? It is in fact the most humane and peace-loving model of growth. But when we try and implement it, the state comes down heavily on us and on the masses that support us. It is not we who seek violence. In fact, for over a decade we were able to build extensive developmental projects in Dandakaranya and Jharkhand when the government's military actions were at a lower scale. We seek to implement the model of development just outlined; if this can be done peacefully, so much the better. But history has shown us that the moneybags and their political representatives are unable to accept even the thought of such a transformation.

The Question of Violence

The question of violence is the single most important thread passing through all the articles. No real communist is for violence per se. Communists are for a peaceful social system built around equality and justice. But when they seek to work for such a system they are attacked most brutally. This has been the case ever since the birth of the communist movement. They have been massacred and exterminated right from the days of the Paris Commune. It would be naive to think that the Indian ruling classes, who have a lengthy record of violence unleashed on the oppressed masses, are any better. Besides, it is not just state violence that people face; in a class society, as in India, violence is endemic to the very system and the oppressed masses are exposed to it in the course of their daily lives - by the feudal authority and by factory managements, and also as a result of untouchability, patriarchy, etc.

Human society, ever since the origin of private property and classes, has moved forward only through a process of prolonged and tortuous struggles, and by countering the violence of the ruling classes. To expect that the ruling classes will today accommodate those demanding a new and more advanced social system is to deny the lessons learnt from history. For instance, K Balagopal has speculated regarding an alternative response that could have been pursued by the Maoists even after the encounter killings began in Andhra Pradesh. Would the government, as speculated by Balagopal, have allowed the Maoists to concentrate on exposing the anti-poor bias of the present development model and extend their mass activity to a point that would have given their aspiration for state power a solid mass base? If that possibility existed, why in the first place did the ruling classes attack the legal movement in Karimnagar and Adilabad? There was then no armed activity when the Disturbed Areas Act was put in place by the Chenna Reddy government in 1978. And, how does one confront the attacks by the landlords and the police? Balagopal also asserts that a positive response from the state would have de-legitimised the argument for revolutionary violence. Such speculation only displays the illusions of our intellectuals with regard to the nature of the state. What is needed is a realistic appraisal of the situation.

To put so much emphasis on the violence of the Maoists appears to divert the issue, where, in the present system the masses have to face violence everyday of their lives. Hundreds die each day of hunger, starvation and easily curable illnesses. Semi-feudal authority in the villages has only force as its major instrument of control. Workers in all but the big industries (some time even there) have to regularly face the hoodlums maintained by the management and even the police. The women of our country have to face daily patriarchal violence and there are many so-called dowry deaths each year. Dalits have to face humiliation and abuse on a daily basis. And, over and above all this is the violence of the state, the Hindutva fascists, the mafia linked to the mainstream political parties, big business, and so on.

The violence of the Maoists, which is preceded and provoked by the violence of the oppressors, is not really the main issue; justice is. If Naxalite violence is to be discussed, it should be in the context of violence pervading every aspect of our system. If not seen in this framework, one falls prey to the abstract bourgeois concept that "violence breeds violence", without understanding the structural causes of violence.

One important aspect of today's counterinsurgency operations is the massive use of an informer/espionage network to decimate the movements, not only externally, but also from within. Today, this is one of the major weapons in counter-insurgency strategies in the world, including India. Counter-insurgency operates right from the village level, the mass organisation level, to covert operations within the party itself. Massive funds are being secretly allocated for this purpose. Most of these informers pose as "civilians", and many can be from the poorer classes. But, their existence has led to the death of thousands of the best of revolutionaries throughout the world. This has been accompanied by brutal

torture to extract information. Earlier, accounts of brutal torture became public; now, the ruling classes make sure that this does not happen by killing the tortured victim and by legitimising torture as a necessary component of the “war against terror”.

What the world sees is only the overt violence of the state, not these covert operations. The only long-term method of countering these operations is through deepening the mass base of the party (not mere mass support) and raising its political level. It is also necessary to deal with the problem in the immediate; otherwise the best of our cadre get killed. If all persons in every village are tightly organised (into mass organisations, militia, and party units) it is very difficult for an informer to survive without getting noticed. But such intensive organisation takes time and is not so easy in the bigger villages and the urban bastis. In between, the informers are recruited. Most of the elements recruited by the state may come from ordinary backgrounds, but they are mostly lumpen or degenerate elements. They are recruits in the covert operations of the police and the army. Any leniency towards them can mean (and has meant) the death of the best of our comrades. Actions against these elements cannot be construed as violence on civilians, but on recruits to the police/ paramilitary forces, and should be seen as such. This is important to understand, in the light of modern-day counter-insurgency in the form of Low Intensity Conflict, originally devised by the MI5 (of Britain) and the CIA (of the US), and used throughout the world.

Major Misconception

There is yet another major misconception that “innocent” people are being caught in the crossfire between the Naxalites and the police. First, this is not a fact. Secondly, the “people” are not a homogeneous mass; the ruling elite and their hangers-on are with the state, while the masses of the oppressed are with the Naxalites. The former support state terror (as in the Salwa Judum), while the latter act together with the Maoists to resist such terror. The misconception of a homogeneous populace is linked to post-modernist thinking of a so-called “civil society”, which conceals class divisions within society. All the same, in conflicts involving state terror and the people’s resistance to it, there will be some sections not allied to either side, but the majority are polarised into two camps - a minority allied with the state, on the one hand, and the masses backing the Naxalites, on the other.

The above-mentioned fallacy of conceptualising the people as a homogeneous mass runs through all the articles, including that of Sumanta Banerjee when he writes: “... the Maoist guerrillas often betray an immature mindset by intimidating them, instead of patiently politicising them”. In our view, at the village level, the masses are divided into three sections: the diehard reactionaries, the intermediary sections who may vacillate between the two contending forces, and the masses won over by the Maoists. Banerjee’s statement would apply to the intermediary sections. The reality however is that the bulk of the actions taken by the Maoists have been against the diehard reactionaries. There may have been errors, as also different conceptions of who belongs to the first or second category. While these can be discussed, the three sections have to be clearly demarcated, for this is fundamental to understanding the class struggle at the ground level, which is a struggle for power. The diehard reactionaries have to be suppressed, while the rest have to be patiently politicised. There are, of course, problems of class analysis and consequently, incorrect handling of contradictions among the people due to inexperience of some cadres. Although this is an exception rather than the rule, the state has used these aberrations by magnifying them and many intellectuals who refuse to see the reality have become a prey to such intrigue of the state, often joining the chorus against revolutionary violence.

Further in the same vein Sumanta Banerjee adds: “Of the two (i.e., state and communist revolutionaries), the communist revolutionaries who claim to look after the welfare of the poor and the oppressed, are expected to be more humane in their choice of tactics and genuinely democratic in getting popular consent for them - particularly when such tactics affect the vast masses of uninvolved citizens. If in their drive for retaliation they stoop to the level of the police or security forces and indulge in indiscriminate attacks on soft targets...” Now, real humanity entails unconditionally standing by the oppressed. But there is no all-encompassing humanity. In a class society, where the ruling classes fiercely crush the oppressed at every step, real humanity entails fierce hatred for their oppressors. There can be no love without hate; there is no all-encompassing love. The Maoists may err in certain actions, from which we will learn certain lessons, but “to be more humane” cannot be associated with the question of civil behaviour vis-a-vis the enemy and their agents in our tactics. Having said this, quite rightly, there should not be any attack on soft targets, but targets have to be assessed within the framework of the politico-military aims of the movement - both immediate and long-term. For Sumanta Banerjee, a school building housing the paramilitary, or, communication towers, may be soft targets, but for the Maoists it would be part of their long-term aims

to counter the enemy forces.

Sumanta Banerjee's clubbing of Maoist violence with that of the Islamic fundamentalists is unfair, as nowhere have the Maoists consciously attacked civilians. The so-called civilians of the Salwa Judum are basically the SPOs and "lumpen" elements mobilised by the state as a vigilante force to kill, burn, loot and destroy tribal life in countering the Maoists. Though unnecessary losses should be avoided, like the two children in the Errabore camp, no people's war can be so clinical, as to have no civilian causality. The point is whether the maximum care has been taken not to affect civilians. The police/paramilitary have been utilising this principled stand of the Maoists in their tactics to counter them. For instance, they travel in public transport buses along with civilians and use the masses as human shields while entering areas that are Maoist strongholds. They know well the Maoists will not attack if civilian lives are involved. They also employ unarmed policemen and home guards to collect information about the Maoists from villages in Naxalite strongholds, and even use women as informers as the Maoists do not easily target such people. Three thousand home guards were recruited recently in AP along with 1,500 SPOs, as admitted by the chief minister at the chief ministers' meeting on terrorism and left extremism on September 5 this year. The home minister and DGP of AP admitted that they had deliberately not given rifles in about 500 or so police stations in the state as they were sure Maoists would not attack unarmed policemen.

So, to sum up, violence is endemic in this brutal system. One cannot appreciate the need for revolutionary violence unless one understands the fascist nature of the state, the cruelty of the state's forces, tortures and fake encounters, bans on peaceful meetings, and state violations of the democratic rights of the people. The fascist nature of the state is exposed when confronted by powerful people's movements, as we witness in all those areas of activity of the Maoist movement. In fact, Maoist violence is only to put an end to all the violence in this rotten system and to bring peace to our country and people. There is no other recourse in such a brutal and ruthless system. We sincerely ask the writers to please suggest how to end the violence of oppressors and the state that acts on their behalf? How can the oppressed masses gain justice?

Finally, we wish to state that in the course of the revolutionary movement we do make mistakes on this account; but wherever we have done so, we have never sought to hide it, but have issued a public apology. While we will always try and learn from our shortcomings, it must also be realised that no class war can be conducted with clinical precision. It is very tortuous and painful; just as the daily life of the bulk of our population is no less agonising.

We will now take up some other major arguments and leave the rest for a future discussion.

Comparisons with Nepal Maoists

There is a tendency to compare the Maoists movements of Nepal and India, pitting the Nepal Maoists' present tactics as a supposed peaceful alternative to the Indian Maoists' violent methods. One should not forget that the present victories of the anti-monarchy movement are primarily a result of the success of the politico-military battles by the People's Liberation Army and their ability to beat back the attacks of the king's army. Their victories are built on the backbone of a 30,000 strong PLA and one lakh militia, and the loss of 12,000 lives. This fact is brought out in a recent interview with the Hindi magazine Philal where comrade Prachanda, the chairman of the CPN (Maoist), said: "When we talk with the leaders of these political parties we say that had we not been armed, there would have been no 12-point understanding. Had we not been armed, Deuba would never have been able to come out of prison. Had we not been armed, many of you would have been killed because of the feudal monarchy, which murdered its blood relations inside the Palace... We also told them that our weapons only made the revival of your parliament possible, you are not credited with it; the credit goes to the PLA...". Besides, change of tactics depends on the situation in the respective countries and the strength of the contending forces. Sitaram Yechury has particularly sought to pit the Nepal Maoists against the Indian Maoists. While the CPI (M) brutally suppresses the Maoists in West Bengal, it is hypocritically speaking in praise of the Nepal Maoists. Instead of pitting one revolution against the other, it would be far more constructive to take the positive experiences of other revolutions and see how best these could concretely be applied to the Indian revolution to take it forward. This brings us to debates about the revolutionary path.

On the Revolutionary Path

Among the writers, the most forthright in questioning the very path of the revolution was Tilak D Gupta who said: "...the case for revising the ideological-political line and the strategy and tactics of the CPI (Maoist) is quite potent by itself because of the changed international situation and above all due to

the major worldwide setback to socialism”. Earlier in the article, he also raised doubts on the change to Maoism. He questions some of the very basics of the CPI (Maoist). Sagar too, after raising questions on a large number of tactical issues - idealising elections, pitting mass action against armed struggle, opposing democratisation of tribal culture, negating its successes and only focusing on its supposed lack of presence everywhere (as though all over the world Marxists are making sweeping gains) - he goes to the extent of clubbing the entire “left”, including the parliamentary CPI and CPI(M) with the CPI (Maoist) in a single category by calling for a “genuine confederation of the various Left organisations”. Sagar goes so far as to equate the parliamentarians with those leading the armed struggle by saying: “In the broad context of Indian politics it would appear to him/her that the Left in all its diversity is actually part of one ‘parivar’ with one component doing nothing but parliamentary work and the other focusing on armed struggles and the middle consisting of many combinations of these two extremes”. Mohanty, while even erring on facts (claiming that all the ML groups have equal strength, which not even the enemies of the movement say), equates the CPI (Maoist) with the revisionist Liberation and Kanu Sanyal groups. Some of the writers have highlighted certain lacunae within the movement to negate the entire path, others negate it in the name of the “changed situation”, and yet others negate it by obfuscating the lines of demarcation between Marxism and revisionism.

Let us take some of these arguments. As Tilak says, it is true that there have been some changes in the international situation, though the basic essence of imperialism has not changed. But the changes, linked with the economic crisis, and the increasing ferocity of imperialism, particularly US imperialism, would warrant more extensive and deeper armed resistance than what we have today. Witness what happened in Iraq, or the arrogance displayed by Israel in Lebanon and Palestine; or the massacres of communists and even liberal opposition in Latin America; the butchery of hundreds of mass leaders in the Philippines, etc. The much talked of “space” for the revolutionaries and democrats is shrinking, not because of the armed activities of the Maoists, but because of the increasing fascist character that imperialism and its agents throughout the globe are acquiring. This is evident in India where the governments at the centre and the states are enhancing their armed might on a scale never seen before. They realise that with the aggressive implementation of the policies of LPG, mass revolts will have to be dealt with. So, it is not clear in which direction does Tilak pose the case for revising the ideological-political line and the strategy and tactics of the CPI (Maoist). There is need for much greater depth of analysis before making such far-reaching statements.

Today if the movement is weak in many parts of the country, the need is to strengthen it there, not change the path to some vague “genuine confederation of the various Left organisations”. What is needed is not such an amorphous conglomeration, but a genuine United Front (UF) of the four classes of the workers, peasants, middle classes and the national bourgeoisie. An effective UF is the only way to rally all the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal forces and not a confederation of the various Left organisations, which blurs the basic distinction between the different class forces. The history of all revolutions, particularly that of Russia and China, has clearly shown that victory was only possible by fighting an uncompromising ideological-political battle with all forms of revisionism. Where the path of compromise was adopted, the socialist goal was lost, though there may have been military victories, as in Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea, etc.

Tribal and Caste Questions

There is a tendency to focus on identity politics, as in K Balagopal’s article, and idealise backward tribal societies, as in Sagar’s and Nandini Sunder’s articles, both of whose approach is linked to a post-modernist perspective actively promoted by the NGOs.

K Balagopal not only talks of identity politics but also believes that as a result of the revolutionary struggle the biggest sufferers are the oppressed themselves - what he calls the “decimation of the organic leaders”. It is true that our movement has generated hundreds of intellectuals from the most oppressed; yet Balagopal negates the revolutionary process when he ends his piece by saying that “the daily losses of such persons is a sacrifice the oppressed cannot be called upon to put up with indefinitely”. This is an ambiguous end and could have many implications - it seems to imply that the oppressed should give up, what to him seems a futile path. If there are excessive losses, the causes have to be found and corrections made, but to expect revolution without sacrifice is illusory.

As far as “identity politics” is concerned, it divides the masses; what is required is a class approach that unites the masses, including the oppressed. A class approach to the caste question demands an end to upper-caste oppression, brahminical ideology and abolition of the pernicious caste system, including

‘untouchability’. But, “identity politics” only emphasises caste and acts to ossify caste divisions further.

As far as preserving tribal culture NGO-style is concerned, it would be good if Sagar and Nandini Sunder talk to the women of Bastar who would recount what that culture also gave them - forced marriages, witchcraft, superstition, forced drudgery, etc. Though not as bad as the Hindu patriarchal system, tribal culture is far from idyllic. The Maoists have indeed sought to learn from the adivasi masses and have taken all that is positive in tribal culture, while doing away with the dross. So, we have not only sought to preserve the Gondi, Santhali and other languages, but have also developed them; we have preserved and adopted the folklore of the tribal peoples and their dance forms, infusing them with social content. We have encouraged and further enhanced the elements of community and collective living, which were a natural part of their culture. We are preserving the forests and taking up reforestation campaigns. In addition, we have taken education to the tribal peoples and modern knowledge, which cannot be expected to continue to be the sole preserve of the established intellectual elite.

Conclusion

India is a vast and highly complex society with uneven and varied development. It has the universal features of any semi-colonial, semi-feudal society under the grip of finance capital; it also has many a specificity, which requires deep study and analysis. Revolution here is no simple task. While focusing on the axis of the armed agrarian revolution it would additionally entail dealing with and solving the varied and numerous diseases afflicting our sociopolitical system. The new democratic revolution entails the total democratisation of the entire system and all aspects of life political, economic, social, cultural, educational, recreational, etc. The standard of life has to be enhanced, not only materially but also in the sphere of outlook and values. A new social being has to emerge in the course of the revolutionary process. As communists we are always ready to rectify our mistakes and listen to others, as we have the interests of the people at heart. But the criticisms would help if they were concrete; those that we agree with we will willingly accept and try and improve our practice; where we disagree we can freely and openly debate the issue.

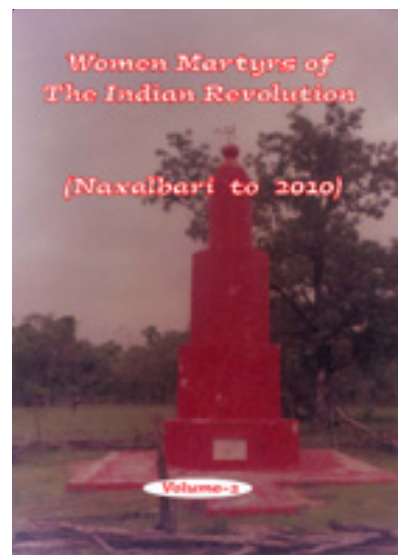
[The author is the official spokesperson of the CPI (Maoist). This is an edited and abridged version of the original manuscript.]

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Volume-1



Volume-2

Women Martyrs of Indian Revolution
(Naxalbari to 2010)

Excerpts from Newspapers on Azad and Hemchandra Pandey 'Villagers heard no gunshots at night'

Jul 3, 2010

SARKEPALLI (ADILABAD): The encounter site amid tall bamboo plants and covered with boulders and stones at Sarkepalli village in Jogapur forests in Wankhidi mandal hardly resembled a place where an alleged exchange of fire took place for three hours in the late hours of Thursday. Curiously enough, none in the surrounding villages heard any gunshots being fired in the still of the night.

"We did not hear any sound of firing between 10 pm and 2 am," a villager said. Though the district police chief claimed there were 20-25 persons on each side exchanging fire, not a single policeman was injured. Local people said SIB personnel entered the village around 8 pm. Raising doubts, surrendered woman naxal Kavita said a top leader like Azad is always surrounded by a security ring of 60-70 Maoist cadre.

Insiders allege Azad was picked up from Nagpur on Thursday morning and later taken to an undisclosed destination where he was interrogated.

"Initially, he was to be taken to Karimnagar. But because of heavy rain, SIB sleuths changed plans and moved towards Adilabad Jogapur forests," sources said. The travel time from Nagpur to Jogapur village is around 5 hours, it is learnt.

"Azad was bumped off in cold blood. He was unarmed," Gudsu Usendi, spokesman of Dandakaranya SZC, said. He said the Maoist party would regroup soon.

"The void cannot be filled easily. Though it is a huge loss for us, Union home minister P Chidambaram cannot destroy us with these fake encounters," he said on phone. He said they lost contact with Azad around 10.30 am on Thursday. Azad was to meet a courier in Nagpur and then head towards Dandakaranya when he was allegedly picked up by SIB sleuths.

Man killed with Azad is journalist: wife

NEW DELHI: A person killed alongside CPI (Maoist) leader and spokesman Azad is not Sahadev as claimed by the Andhra Pradesh police, but Hemchandra Pandey, a freelance journalist based in New Delhi, claims his wife.

Vineetha Uprethi, who identified herself as Pandey's wife, told journalists here that she was shocked to see her husband's picture in the media as the person killed along with Azad.

Suspecting that his killing was a case of mistaken identity, Ms. Uprethi demanded a probe into the encounter. She asserted that he was not a member of the CPI (Maoist) and that she had last talked to him on June 30, when he called her from Nagpur. "He told me he would be back on July 2, the same day the police said they killed him."

Civil liberties activists, who accompanied her, said Pandey was a freelance journalist whose stories had appeared in publications such as Dainik Jagran and Nai Duniya.

Hailing from Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand, Pandey was active in the Left movement during his studies. He was on a reporting assignment when he was killed with Azad, the activists said.

B.D. Sharma of the Bharat Jan Andolan and Banwari Lal Sharma of the Azadi Bachao Andolan, who also spoke at the press conference, said they had learnt that Azad was trying to respond to the offer of peace talks from the Central government when he was killed. "We can understand how serious the State is about peace, when the person who could have initiated it on the Maoist side has been killed," Dr. Sharma said.

Hem Pandey's Encounter Death and Published Writings

July 12, 2010

Note from Concerned Citizens

Hem Chandra Pandey, a freelance journalist from Delhi was killed on 2 July 2010 along with Azad, spokesperson of CPI(Maoist). He comes from Dewaltal town of Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.

His wife Babita Pandey identified him when she saw a photograph of his dead body published in Enadu on 3 July 2010 and informed the press in a press conference held in Press Club Delhi on the same day.

Rajiv Lochan Saha a renowned intellectual from Uttarakhand and the Chief Editor of Nainital Samachar introduced her to the press and told the press he knows Hem Chandra Pandey and Babita as journalists for a long time.

She told the press that her husband was a freelance journalist and regularly wrote to Hindi newspapers like Nai Dunia, Rastriya Sarara, Dainik Jagaran and papers. As it was not enough for the family to run with the meagre amount of money that he earns through freelancing, he also works for a paper called Chetana on corporate communications run by a company called DARCL Logistics LTD on regular basis. He was one of the sub-editors for this magazine called Chetana at the time of his death.

She also informed all those who were present there that Hem Chandra Pandey had an MA in Economics from Kumaon University, Nainital. He also had a Diploma in Translation from Bharatiya Vidhya Bhawan in Delhi. He also did a Diploma course in Journalism. He was pursuing his Ph D course from Almora Campus of Kumaon University.

Babita showed some of his certificates and also the salary certificates of the company where he was a regular employee at the time of his killing on 2 July 2010. He took leave from his magazine office for two days when he went to Nagapur.

After the press conference on 3 July, some police officers challenged her version and maintained that her husband was not a journalist.

Surprisingly, by the end of the Press Conference, in a flash of the moment, Nai Dunia, Dainik Jagaran and Rastriya Sahara issued statements separately that Hem Pandey was never a contributor to their papers. But his articles exist on the internet sites of these papers.

Hem Chandra Pandey wrote all his contributions to different newspapers with the name Hemant Pandey as a freelance journalist. However he never hid his identity. He made legal certificate, affidavit that both names are his. Copies of this affidavit are available.

Copies of some of his articles are attached here with full citations made available from internet. His wife informed that he wrote frequently and all clippings are available in his house. When she returns to Delhi along with Hem's dead body she can provide all clippings.

Please also see below a clarification from CPI (Maoist) that Hem is not their member as claimed earlier.

All the documentary evidence that exists in black and white clear establishes that he was a freelance journalist based in Delhi and a regular employee of a magazine.

Maoist's mother allowed to see body

HYDERABAD: Justice B. Seshasayana Reddy of the High Court on Friday directed the police to permit the mother of slain Maoist leader, Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad, to have a look at her son's body before the post-mortem to be conducted at Manchiryal.

He was dealing with a writ petition filed by Karuna and Varavara Rao, revolutionary writers. The government pleader said the second person killed in the encounter was not yet identified.

'Book police'

V. Raghunath, counsel for the petitioner, confined to Karuna's plea seeking a direction for registering a case of culpable homicide and prosecution of police responsible for the encounter. She contended that Azad was captured near Nagpur and killed in the Manchiryal forest. She feared that the post-mortem would not be done properly as the body was lying in a remote forest.

Ms Aruna said she wanted the post-mortem be done at Hyderabad, supervised by forensic experts, as she could not move out due to ill-health. The government pleader said the bodies were being shifted to Manchiryal and that the NHRC guidelines would be followed.

The court passed interim orders to this effect while ordering notices before admitting the petition.

She waited 30 years to see her son

05 Jul 2010

HYDERABAD: For 30 long years, Cherukuri Karuna, mother of slain Maoist leader Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad, waited to see her son.

But when the wait was over, all the septuagenarian was able to see was his lifeless body. She sat beside it for hours together receiving sympathisers, former Naxalites, writers, poets and journalists.

Azad was cremated this afternoon at the Punjagutta cremation grounds as the air was rent with slogans proclaiming that none could kill the man's ideology.

The martyr's brother and well known gastroenterologist Dr C Anil Kumar conducted the last rites and lit the pyre.

"Intellectuals do not sit and watch atrocities but fight back. Azad did all he could for the downtrodden. His passing has left a big vacuum," said balladeer Gadar. The people should carry the struggle forward and rise against the atrocities of the State and capital, he said.

Gadar held Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Union Home Minister P Chidambaram, Chief Minister K Rosaiah, Home Minister P Sabitha Indra Reddy, Director General of Police RR Girish Kumar, the Intelligence Bureau and the Special Intelligence Bureau departments responsible for the Azad's murder.

Progressive Organisation for Women president V Sandhya decried the police brutality and noted that the death of journalist Hemachandra Pandey proved Azad was killed in a fake encounter.

Earlier, Azad's body was kept at his brother's house in Madhapur for visitors. It was then taken in a convoy to Road No 2 Banjara Hills and from there in procession to the Punjagutta cremation ground where friends, colleagues and Maoist sympathisers gathered and shared reminiscences of the martyr.

Though a meeting was planned to be held at Madhapur, the police were insistent that the body be conveyed to the cremation ground before noon as President Pratibha Patil was scheduled to visit the city.

Lamented a family member: "The police are rushing us even in our grief and despair." Recalling his association with Azad, Revolutionary Writers' Forum president P Varavara Rao said both had spent time together in prison and Azad was active in student movements since his college days. "He (Azad) came up with wonderful poetry within minutes and was influenced by the writings of balladeer Gadar," he recalled, and read out the message from the Central Committee of CPI (Maoist) which called the encounter story a fabrication of the police who had got addicted to human blood.

The statement said Azad was killed in cold-blood and the police would have to pay the price. The Maoist Central Committee called for a Protest Week from July 8 to 14 and also Bharath Bandh on July 13 and 14 protesting the brutal encounter. Former Praja Rajyam Party leader Dr Mitra, film artiste R Narayanamurthy, social activist Manda Krishna Madiga and many other sympathisers attended the funeral.

Post-mortem done on Azad

MANCHERIAL (ADILABAD DT.): The body of Maoist Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad was handed over to his mother Karuna Devi and relatives on Saturday afternoon after doctors performed the post-mortem at the Government Area Hospital here.

The exercise, however, was marred by protests by human rights activists like revolutionary poet Varavara Rao, balladeer Gadar, president of Progressive Organisation of Women (POW) Sandhya and journalists for not being allowed to see the body before the post-mortem.

The bodies of Azad and the person accompanying him, supposed to be that of Hemchandra Pandey, 32, a freelance journalist from Pithoragarh district in Uttaranchal State were shifted to the hospital on Friday night. While Gadar arrived at Mancherial on Friday night, Sandhya and Varavara Rao arrived on Saturday morning wanting to be present at the hospital.

Police barred entry of human rights activists and journalists into the hospital on the plea that the AP High Court had ordered permission only for Karuna Devi, mother of Azad to see the dead body. This sparked off protests from journalists who staged a sit-in. Soon they were joined by Gadar, Sandhya and the revolutionary poet who demanded they be allowed to pay their last respect to the departed.

They got their chance only when the body came out after a two-hour post-mortem. While Varavara Rao and Sandhya raised revolutionary slogans, Gadar broke into a song in his customary style. The body,

handed over to Rajkumar's mother, was taken to Hyderabad in a vehicle.

A surprising fact that came to light during the day was presence of a large number of relatives of Rajkumar who hail from Adilabad district. These relations from Muthyampeta and Tanimadugu villages of Dandepally mandal are settlers from Krishna and other districts of Andhra region.

Meanwhile, the body of Pandey who was killed in Friday's encounter is being preserved at the Mancherial hospital for identification.

Maoist leader cremated

Hundreds of sympathisers pay tribute to Azad

HYDERABAD: The body of top Maoist leader Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad, who was killed in an encounter with police a few days ago, was cremated at the Punjagutta crematorium on Sunday afternoon in the presence of family members and sympathisers.

Hundreds of sympathisers, including revolutionary poets Varavara Rao and Kalyan Rao, balladeer Gadar, surrendered naxalite Sambasivudu, former Janashakti leader Amar, actor R. Narayanamurthy and others paid tributes to the slain Maoist. Azad, a senior member of CPI (Maoist) Central Committee, was killed along with another person on July 2 in an encounter in Adilabad district.

The body of the banned outfit's spokesman was earlier brought to the city after conducting an autopsy at the government hospital at Mancherial in Adilabad district and preserved at a corporate hospital on Minister's Road in Secunderabad. On Sunday morning, the body was shifted to Azad's relatives' house at Doctors Colony in Madhapur.

Funeral procession

A funeral procession was taken out from Doctors Colony to Punjagutta crematorium where the body was cremated. Mr. Gadar said a murder case should be registered against those responsible for the incident. He wanted to know on whose account Rs.12 lakh reward announced on Azad's name was deposited. Mr. Varavara Rao criticised the UPA government for "killing those fighting for the welfare of people".

Revolutionary songs, slogans mark Maoist leader Azad's last rites



Jul 4th, 2010

Hyderabad, July 4 – The last rites of top Maoist leader Cherukuri Rajkumar alias Azad were performed here Sunday amid revolutionary songs, slogans and red salutes by sympathisers, former extremists and civil liberties activists.

Azad's brother Anil Kumar aided by revolutionary writer Varavara Rao and others lit the funeral pyre around 2 p.m. as the slogans of 'Lal salam, lal salam' (red salute) and 'Comrade Azad amar rahe' rent the air.

For over two hours, the mourners from various groups held a meeting at Panjagutta cremation ground, paying tributes to Azad and accusing the central and state governments of killing him in a stage-managed gunfight.

Speakers, including revolutionary writers, poets, singers, intellectuals and rights activists, described

Azad as a 'hero' and vowed to continue the fight to fulfill his dreams.

The body of Azad, who was killed by the police in an alleged exchange of fire in the forests of Adilabad district Friday, was brought to his brother's house in Madhapur Sunday morning from a hospital where it was kept Saturday night.

Dozens of Azad's relatives, friends and supporters paid homage to him before the body was taken to the cremation ground. Intellectuals, artists and leaders of leftist groups also paid homage to Azad, spokesperson of Communist Party of India (Maoist).

His mother Cherukuri Karuna, brothers Cherukuri Suresh, Cherukuri Anil Kumar and other relatives were in tears so also Maoist sympathisers and Varavara Rao, revolutionary writer Kalyan Rao and revolutionary balladeer Gaddar.

Several others, including women, joined in paying their last respects at the cremation ground. The artistes, including Gaddar, sung revolutionary songs, hailing him as 'people's true leader who sacrificed his life for the cause of poor and downtrodden'.

Amar, a former leader of the CPI (ML) Janashakti, leaders of other CPI-ML groups, leader of Madiga community Manda Krishna Madiga and Progressive Organisation of Women leader Sandhya were among those who paid their last respects.

Gaddar, Varavara Rao and Kalyan Rao, who acted as mediators in the peace talks between Maoists and the Andhra Pradesh government in 2005, and others addressed the gathering.

Varavara Rao alleged that Andhra police arrested Azad along with a journalist in Nagpur, brought them to Adilabad district and tortured them before opening fire on him from point blank range.

'Azad was carrying a message from Swami Agnivesh for peace and was working on the proposal for peace talks. By killing the same man in fake encounter, the government has proved that it is not interested in peace,' he said.

Recalling his close association with Azad, the writer said he gave up a promising career to fight for the cause of poor. 'He was the voice of the suppressed people, a great intellectual who had good command over both English and Telugu,' he said.

Gaddar said by killing Azad in fake encounter, the government can't suppress the people's movement. 'This is an unconstitutional government because it kills people in the name of constitution and democracy. I am warning the murderers that if they continue such killings they will face a massive people's movement,' he said.

Azad was working towards ceasefire, say Maoists

Raipur: In May this year, social worker Swami Agnivesh served as the medium for an unlikely exchange of letters between Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram and CPI (Maoist) spokesperson Azad regarding the possibility of a ceasefire.

The letters, now available online, suggest that Azad's death came at a time when the Central government and the CPI (Maoist) were contemplating the broad contours of a possible ceasefire.

In his letter dated May 11, 2010, Mr. Chidambaram asked that the CPI (Maoist) "say that they will not indulge in any violent activity beginning a specific date, say, June 1, 2010." In return, the Home Minister promised that the Central government would come up with a response that included an invitation for talks. To quote from the letter, the government "would closely observe whether the CPI-Maoist will maintain the position of 'no violence' for 72 hours ... during the said period ... the security forces will not conduct any operation against the CPI-Maoist" after which talks would begin.

On May 31, 2010, the Maoists replied at length. In a letter signed by Azad, the CPI (Maoist) indicated its willingness to consider talks if there was "ceasefire or cessation of hostilities by both sides simultaneously instead of asking one side to abjure violence." Azad also asked the government to "initiate measures to release party leaders as a prelude to the release of political prisoners and ... stop all its efforts to escalate the war, including the measure of calling back all the paramilitary forces deployed in the war zones."

In an indication of the advanced nature of the process, on June 18 Swami Agnivesh sent out an email inviting the media to a press conference "to announce the peace process that has been initiated by me between the Government of India and the CPI (Maoist)." However, the press conference was called off at

the last minute without any explanation.

“Swami Agnivesh was going to unveil a concrete proposal and a firm date regarding a possible ceasefire,” said Guksa Usendi, spokesperson for the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee of the CPI (Maoist). “But the press conference was called off under pressure from the government.”

Asked for their response to this charge, North Block sources denied applying any such pressure.

They also played down the importance of Swami Agnivesh’s aborted press conference and dismissed a possible link between the proposed ceasefire and Azad’s death. “Why would the Government of India want to scuttle someone’s initiative for peace,” asked a senior official. “It is to be encouraged.”

On July 2, Azad was shot in an encounter in Adilabad, leaving the possibility of a ceasefire in tatters. “For us [CPI-Maoist], comrade Azad was the central figure involved in the possibility of a peace process,” Usendi said, adding that the Central Committee was yet to decide on the future course of action regarding a ceasefire.

No encounter, says sympathiser

HYDERABAD: Revolutionary poet P. Varavara Rao, a known Maoist sympathiser and defender, on Friday rubbished the official version of the killing of naxalite leader Azad in an encounter, and said he was actually picked up by the Andhra Pradesh police at the Sitabardi market place in Nagpur at 11 a.m. on Thursday, along with another person. “They were brought to Adilabad and shot dead in cold blood.”

Mr. Rao said Azad was to go to Dandakarayna (in the Bastar forests in Chhattisgarh) to take study classes for Maoist rebels. “We do not know what happened, but that was the last appointment Azad had.”

High Court’s direction

Meanwhile, on a petition filed by Azad’s mother, the Andhra Pradesh High Court directed the police to conduct the post-mortem at the government hospital at Mancherial in Adilabad district and to show her the body.

Azad had responded positively to Swami Agnivesh’s efforts to organise talks, but insisted on the precondition that the Centre should lift the ban on Maoists and release political prisoners. Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram had responded by writing to Swami Agnivesh. Analysts said that with Azad’s death, the efforts initiated by civilian groups to bring Maoists and the Central government to the negotiating table are likely to come to naught.

The Hindu had published a detailed interview with Azad in the issue of April 14, 2010. “A ceasefire will create a conducive atmosphere for talks,” he had said in one of the written answers he had provided to the newspaper.

Agnivesh for judicial probe into Azad encounter

Bhopal: Noted social activist Swami Agnivesh on Tuesday reiterated his demand for a judicial probe into the recent encounter of Maoist spokesperson Cherukuri Rajkumar a.k.a. Azad.

The Swami, who is mediating between the Centre and the Maoists for a mutual ceasefire and the opening up of a dialogue, said that the killing of journalist Hemchandra Pandey and Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram’s rejection of the demand for a judicial probe, suggested that not everything might be right about the encounter.

“I feel guilty about Azad’s and Pandey’s deaths, since it was during my mediation that the incident occurred,” he told The Hindu.

“There is no proof that the encounter was staged and I am not saying it was. But there are questions which only a judicial probe can answer. Why was Pandey killed? To destroy evidence that the encounter, which the police claimed lasted for three hours, in which Azad was wielding an AK-47 and yet no policeman was injured, was staged?” asked Agnivesh.

He said that Mr. Chidambaram rejected his demand for a probe and asked him instead to go talk to Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Sabita Reddy.

Earlier, speaking at “Response to violence: Strengthening Non-violent Action” — a national conference organised by the Gandhian organisation Ekta Parishad here, he appealed to the Communist Party of India (Maoist) - “We understand that your friend, leader and spokesperson has been killed and you must be angry over it, but please exercise restraint and let us all work together for the opening up of a dialogue.”

He also said that by not ensuring the proper implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act and the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, the government was letting the Maoist problem worsen.

Azad death: Judicial probe sought

Jul 8, 2010

KOLKATA: When Swami Agnivesh meets home minister P Chidambaram on Thursday, the killing of top Maoist leader Azad will be foremost on his mind and lips. The swami, acting on behalf of the Centre to bring the rebels to the talks table, wants a judicial inquiry into the killing. Agnivesh believes that Azad would have given the dates for the ceasefire, which the Centre had set as a precondition for dialogue, if only he had lived.

Agnivesh was in Kolkata on Wednesday after his return from abroad. "I will meet Chidambaram on Thursday and demand an independent judicial inquiry into the death of Azad," he said, flanked by activist Medha Patkar. "The faster the government announces this, the better. Any delay will increase suspicion. We will have to wait till the inquiry results. Whether the atmosphere is conducive for talks will be clear in the coming days," he added.

The government-appointed interlocutor didn't appear to be convinced with the government's claim on the encounter. "The government claims there was an encounter. From others, I have gathered that the two had been picked up from outside Nagpur railway station, taken to the Adilabad forests and shot. I can't say whether the encounter was genuine or fake. But I feel a personal guilt, a moral responsibility," he said.

Was Azad planning to discuss truce dates?

Jul 5, 2010

NEW DELHI: A statement issued on June 3 warned of reprisals and clearly indicated that Maoists were no longer weighing the option of talks with the government: "Will Chidambaram expect CPI (Maoist) to sit for talks with blood on his hands, of Com Azad and Com Hem Pandey?"

It added, "CPI (Maoist) stands for truth and accountability to the people, and always states facts. There was no such programme of Azad going to Sarkepally forest of Adilabad (where he was killed).

"Azad was going to discuss with our comrades, concrete proposals of well-meaning people like Swami Agnivesh about particular dates for the mutual ceasefire."

The party described Azad, born in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, as hailing from a well-to-do family who went to Sainik School at Korukonda, and was one its "brightest shining stars".

Student leader Surapuneni Janardhan had brought Azad into RSU in 1974.

Azad was the second president of Andhra Pradesh Radical Students Union till 1984 and the "catalyst" behind many Andhra-wide student agitations and people's movements in that period.

He became district committee member of Vizag unit of CPI (ML)(PW). He moved to Karnataka in 1982 and was a founder member of the party in the state.

He was taken into the CC after the central plenum in 1990, elected member of the politburo again in 1995 and since then he served in CC and politburo. He continued in those posts after formation of CPI (Maoist) in 2004.

Government uninterested in peace: Arundhati Roy

13 Jul 2010

HYDERABAD: The recent killing of top Maoist leader Azad was an indication that the Government did not want peace, said renowned writer and activist Arundhati Roy here today.

"Azad was a crucial link to the Government through Swami Agnivesh. Before killing him, the police must have got the clearance from the higher authorities in government," she said, delivering the lecture on "Globalisation and Human Rights" at the University of Hyderabad. Roy felt that the government was no more being run by political parties but by corporate capital. "In Chhattisgarh, the government is under the influence of the Tatas, Jindal, Essar, etc., and rides roughshod over the tribals. The situation there is such that if tribal folk do not join the Salwa Judum, they are branded Maoists. Even farmers are not spared..." On Operation Green Hunt, she said: "The government wants to drive away the Adivasis and give away their lands to big corporates. The bauxite found on tribal lands is worth more than \$ 4 trillion. With so much money at stake, anyone can be bought." Globalisation, said Roy, had been the cause of frequent violation of human rights across the country.

As for Kashmir, she noted it was "one of the most militarised zones in the world." Though so much was happening there, the intellectuals and media had kept silent. "Such an approach," she said, "is seen only when it comes to Kashmir." On the future of the country's polity, she remarked: "One can never expect benevolence from any State or government. We, the citizens, have to fight for our rights."

Widespread protests during Bandh calls against the fake encounters of Comrade Azad and journalist Hemchandra Pandey

On July 1, 2010, the APSIB and the central intelligence agencies have brutally murdered Comrade Azad and Hemchandra Pandey in Adilabad forests and concocted an 'encounter' story. Countrywide protests rocked the country against this fake encounter. Democrats, patriots, intellectuals, writers, artistes, students and journalists expressed their severe indignation and protests. The revolutionary masses participated on a huge scale in protest activities.

The Communist Party of India (Maoist) has declared a two-day bandh to be observed in six states, starting July 7, followed by an additional five days of protests, demonstrations and public rallies in Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The Party requested the public, intellectuals and all democratic forces to support this bandh.

The Centre has issued an alert ahead of the bandh called by Maoists. The Home Ministry has asked the States to be on maximum vigil and take steps to foil any attempt at violence, including hostage-like situations. The Railways have issued a red alert directing zonal railways to ensure the safety of passengers and safe running of trains. With the zonal railways being given all powers to decide on running of trains, the East Central Railway, Hajipur, cancelled at least four pairs of trains, diverted 10 trains and regulated five others for three days.

The party statement issued by South Regional Committee in DK promised not to target medical stores and essential services but stated that they would specifically target goods trains in the Bastar region. They demanded that trains carrying iron from Kirandul [in Dantewada] to Vishakapatnam [in Andhra Pradesh] be stopped for this period, else they shall be forced to target them. Earlier this year, CPI(Maoist) cadres destroyed a pipeline designed to carry iron ore from the NMDC mines in Kirandul to a processing plant owned by the Essar Company in Andhra Pradesh. In an interview in May, senior officials at NMDC identified the transportation of ore as one of the biggest problems affecting their mines.

From July 7 to July 14, 2010, the PLGA and people's militia forces responded to the bandh call given by the party in five states and conducted resistance actions on a large scale. As part of it, the people's militia forces and PLGA secondary forces mobilized together and fired upon Kunta, Bejji, Darbha, Gorkha, Polempalli, Chintagupha, Kankerlanka, Pamed, Basaguda and other police stations/camps and on the CISF camp in NMDC which fall under the South Region in DK and harassed the police the whole night. The Jorunala culvert near Tongpal on the National Highway which connects the Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh states was blasted with powerful bombs and the whole traffic between the two states came to a standstill. Property belonging to NMDC was destroyed in Kirandul and Bachel towns and rail services came to a standstill due to blasting of railway tracks. All big and small towns in the South Region gave their support to the bandh call and all the main highways there were blocked. Due to this all business establishments closed down.

Maoists blasted the police station at Kunderi in South Orissa's Nabarangpur district bordering Chhattisgarh. No policemen were injured in the incident. Nor there was any loot of arms and ammunition. Posters left at the spot stated that it was a retaliatory action of the Maoists to avenge the killing of their leader Azad alias Cherukuri Rajkumar in Andhra Pradesh. According to Nabarangpur Superintendent of Police Prafulla Barik, the police station in remote area of Raighar block was located at a distance of around 3 km from Chhattisgarh border. The Mainpur Divisional Committee of Maoists in Chhattisgarh claimed their hand in the incident through posters left at the spot of the blast. More than 30 armed Maoists, including women, were involved in the attack. The police station was almost deserted when the attack occurred. Only a sentry and a village guard were present. They escaped when they sensed the naxal attack. Maoists snapped the electricity supply and telephone communication before the attack. They planted explosives inside the police station building and blasted. Before escaping they raised anti-government slogans.

In Bihar-Jharkhand, West Bengal, AOB and Odisha railway stations, railway tracks and government offices were targeted. Dozens of roads were blocked by digging trenches in them and by felling trees.

On August 4, 2010, a bandh was conducted in five states demanding judicial probe into Azad's murder. On the second day of the bandh a culvert was blasted in Giridih district in Jharkhand and five anti-people elements traveling in a car were eliminated. A railway line was blasted in Jharkhand and a culvert between Purnanagar and Gande was blasted in Giridih.

On September 13, 2010 a call was given for bandh demanding judicial probe into Azad's murder. The bandh was called in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh, besides Gadchiroli, Bhandara and Chadrapur districts of Maharashtra and Balaghat district of Madhya Pradesh. The impact of the bandh was felt in Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, DK, Odisha and AOB.

There was near shutdown in Vizag Agency in response to the bandh call to protest the 'fake' encounter of top leader Cherukuri Raj Kumar alias Azad. Tribals did not venture out of their homes during the bandh. While government offices, schools, business establishments and shops were closed in most areas, even RTC buses did not ply. The bandh was observed in Chintapally, G K Veedhi, G Madugula, Pedabayalu, Munchingput, Hukumpeta and parts of Vizianagaram and Srikakulam Agency areas also. Apprehending violence following Saturday's torching of an RTC bus at Munchingput in Paderu area, police beefed up security in all the tribal-populated mandals. Even private vehicles, which cater to transportation of tribals, did not ply.

Annihilations of anti-people elements that were harming the revolutionary movement also took place during the bandh period. At Nachupatina village in West Midnapore district of West Bengal, Maoists shot dead five CPI (M) supporters. In Jharkhand's Garhwa district, Maoists shot dead chowkidar Rajeshar Paswan at Panchadumar. A note found near the body claimed that Paswan was a police informant. Maoists attacked the Bheji police station in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh and shot dead two policemen when they were coming out of the PS.

Maoists blew up a stretch of rail track near the Karmavad railway station in Giridih district of the State in the early hours of Monday. The blast damaged the wheels of a goods train. Railway tracks in Parasnath area were blasted. Maoists burnt an earth-cutting machine at Sahapur in Hazaribagh district.

Condemn the attempt to abduct and murder Comrade Sukant by the APSIB

After murdering Comrades Azad and Hemchandra Pandey in cold-blood on July 1, 2010, the APSIB tried to abduct Comrade Sukant, a central committee member of CPI (Maoist) on August 1, 2010. He escaped from their dragnet and wrote an open letter to Swami Agnivesh on August 3, 2010. Swami Agnivesh, revolutionary poet Varavara Rao and Secretary of APCLC Kranthi Chiatanya gave statements expressing grave concern about the safety of Com. Sukant and the threat to his life. They expressed the genuine fear that he might also be killed in a fake encounter just like Azad and many other leaders before him. In fact, Comrade Sukant has been under the vigilance of the APSIB since many days and his life has been in great danger. The chasing and the attempt of the APSIB to abduct Sukant is part of the whole conspiracy of the ruling classes to annihilate the top leadership of the CPI (Maoist) and make the fighting people leaderless. CPI (Maoist) is the main opponent and hurdle to the indiscriminate loot of our natural resources by the MNCs facilitated by the comprador rulers of our country. The ruling classes launched the Operation Green Hunt as the biggest multi-pronged offensive till date on the Maoists and are particularly targeting the top leadership of the party. Have no doubt, this offensive is overtly directly against the Maoists but in actuality is directed against all kinds of resistances to the pro-imperialist policies. At the same time one should realize that the most organized and formidable of all these resistances and the real threat to the feudal, comprador rulers and the imperialists is the CPI (Maoist). That is why the most brutal forms of suppression are directed against the party and the people in the movement areas. Nobody is spared right from the CC members to the ordinary villager in a Maoist dominated area. Billions of rupees are spent on the intelligence network, security forces, and misinformation campaign. The attempt to abduct Comrade Sukant should be seen as part of this whole offensive. MIB calls upon all the democrats to condemn such blatant repressive measures of the state and stand in support of the fighting people of our country.

Voices Against War on People

INTERNATIONAL CALL: Support People's War in India!

Posted by Ajadhind on July 28, 2010

In India an impetuous people's war against the Indian bourgeoisie and the imperialism is developing and spreading more and more in nearly one third of the districts of the country. It is not simply a guerilla waged by few thousands of fighters, coming from the castes and tribal areas of the country. It is a real people's war, led by the Party of the proletariat of India, the Communist Party of India (Maoist), in which are involved – or is supported by – millions of poor peasants, women, “untouchables,” fighting to free themselves and it has already took big areas throughout a dozen of states of the Indian Federation.

The people's war began where the root of the riot, the poverty, the tribal and capitalistic exploitation, the caste oppression, the plundering of the natural resources were deeper and therefore the contradictions brought by the Indian capitalism ruled by the imperialism were sharper. Today this people's war is winning masses of young people, students, democratic and revolutionary intellectuals also in the cities and gains attention and support over the world.

Against the people's war, the Indian State, supported by the imperialists, launched a giant repressive offensive called “Green Hunt,” a real manhunt that hits the poor masses in India as animals to exterminate. The Indian State launched an internal military offensive against the people, waged by hi-tech-armed troops, police units and paramilitary militias, in order to spread terror and genocide in the villages, with raids, crop destroying, massive rapes and killings, selective murders, mass detentions and disappearing – like the recent genocide offensive occurred in Sri Lanka against the Tamil people and liberation movement.

All this with the illusion to drown in blood the struggle of the people for their liberation, with the silent/consent of the imperialist governments of US, Europe, Russia, and their mass-media. The crimes of the Indian State found the internal opposition of a wide front of intellectuals – including the prominent representative of the world anti-globalization movement, the writer Arundhati Roy. And in all countries of the world political activists denounced those crimes and mobilized to stop “Green Hunt.”

A world campaign of information and solidarity has been launched by ICAWPI (International Campaign Against War on the People in India). But we need more than the condemnation of the crimes of the counter-revolution in India. The masses led by the Communist Party of India (Maoist) are writing a historical chapter of the class clash in the world between, on one side, the imperialism and the reactionary bourgeoisies and, on the other side, the proletariat and the people of the world. The development of the people's war in India is a new proof that the revolution is the main tendency in the world today.

It shows again that Maoism, the Marxism-Leninism of our era, is the command and guide of the world revolution against the imperialism in crisis.

The vanguard proletarians must understand that the advance of the people's war in India seriously questions the strength balance, not only in the South-Asian region but also on a world scale. That is why we, Maoist and revolutionary parties and organizations, launch a big campaign of support and call to form an International Committee of Support to organize conferences, meetings, demonstrations in various countries, particularly in the heart of the imperialist beast.

With people's war in India towards the victory!

Maoist Communist Party – France

Maoist Communist Party – Italy

Maoist Communist Party – Turkey/North Kurdistan

Revolutionary Communist Party – Canada

Communist Party of India (ML) Naxalbari

A Report of Anti-OGH protest in New York on August 13, 2010



Sanhati (www.sanhati.com), a forum for solidarity with peoples' struggles in India, successfully organized a protest demonstration in front of the Indian Consulate in NYC on August 13 against Operation Green Hunt to coincide with India's independence day on 15th August. The protest demonstration was endorsed by the Alliance for a Secular and Democratic South Asia and was attended by individuals from Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington DC, representing diverse South Asian and international organizations like SASI (South Asia Solidarity Initiative), ILPS (International League of Peoples Struggles), ISO (International Socialist Organisation), RCP (Revolutionary Communist Party) USA, FRSO (Freedom Road Socialist Organization), WWP (Workers World Party) and others. A legal observer from the National Lawyers Guild (NLG) was also present during the protest.

The demonstration continued from 11 am to 1pm and was marked by chanting of slogans, distributing pamphlets to passers-by, making speeches in support of peoples' struggles in India, singing songs of resistance and finally submitting a signed petition registering a strong protest against the government's military offensive in the regions populated by the indigeneous (adivasi) people. The text of the petition is appended below for reference.

To,

Consul General

Consulate General of India

3 East 64th Street

New York, NY 10065

(Subject: Petition against Operation Green Hunt in India)

Dear Sir/Madam,

We, the undersigned, would like to register our strong protest against the Operation Green Hunt, the Government of India's (GOI) deliberate move to escalate military intervention against the indigenous people in the forested regions of East-Central India. Such a military campaign already will endanger the lives and livelihoods of millions of the poorest people living in those areas, resulting in massive displacement, destitution and human rights violation of ordinary citizens, especially the indigenous people.

We are acutely aware of the fact that the geographical terrain where the GOI's military offensive is taking place, is very rich in natural resources like minerals, forest wealth and water, and has been the target of large scale appropriation by several Indian and foreign corporations. The desperate resistance of the local indigenous people against their displacement and dispossession has in many cases prevented the government-backed corporations from making inroads into these areas and has thankfully impeded the setting-up of ecologically disastrous industries. We fear that the government's on-going military offensive is an attempt to crush such popular resistances in order to facilitate the entry and operation of these corporations and to pave the way for unbridled exploitation of the natural resources and the

people of these regions.

We feel that it would deliver a crippling blow to Indian democracy if the government tries to subjugate its own people militarily without addressing their grievances. As has been witnessed in the case of numerous peoples' struggle around the world, such military campaigns end up in enormous misery for the common people.

Therefore, we demand -

- 1) An immediate end to the Operation Green Hunt and withdrawal of all armed forces from these regions
- 2) The GOI should engage with the civil society mediated initiatives for negotiations with representatives of peoples' movements in order to address the grievances of the common people.
- 3) All Memoranda of Understanding (MoU-s) signed with different corporations, for the extraction of natural resources from the vast areas of East-Central India, must be revealed and immediately cancelled.
- 4) All draconian laws like Unlawful Activity (Prevention) Act, Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act, Armed Forces Special Powers Act should be immediately repealed. Ban on political organizations should be withdrawn and all political prisoners should be released.
- 5) All state-assisted vigilante groups like the Salwa Judum in Chhattisgarh and Harnad Bahini in West Bengal should be immediately disbanded and the concerned criminals associated with these organizations, including government officials, should be brought to book.

Oppose Operation Green Hunt!

Revolution #200, May 1, 2010

In November 2009, the Indian government launched "Operation Green Hunt." This massive military assault targets millions of adivasis (ethnic and tribal groups who were among the original inhabitants of the subcontinent). The adivasis have a long history of rebellion and militant uprisings.

The forests where adivasis live have abundant mineral wealth (iron, coal, bauxite, manganese, corundum, gold, diamonds and uranium). Over the last years foreign and Indian corporations, with the protection of the Indian state, have been exploiting and violently suppressing the people.

Two sides are shaping up in this struggle. On one side are the adivasis and the Communist Party of India (Maoist), whose members have lived and fought side by side with the adivasis since the 1970s. On the other side, with its military and police force, is the central Indian state—the representative and protector of the ruling classes that live off and suck the life out of the Indian masses. The Indian state urgently wants to clear the obstacles for a new wave of foreign investment and capitalist development aimed at taking advantage of the region's resources. And the rulers of India are concerned by the deep ties the Maoists have made with the region's people.

A statement last year from prominent intellectuals opposing "Operation Green Hunt" said, "Such a military campaign will endanger the lives and livelihoods of millions of the poorest people living in those areas, resulting in massive displacement, destitution and human rights violation of ordinary citizens."

The U.S. and India have a deep strategic relationship. In 2007, the U.S. moved to bolster India's nuclear capacity, and India and the U.S. regularly conduct military exercises together. In the spirit of proletarian internationalism—and as part of standing up against the crimes of "our" government and oppressors aligned with it—"Operation Green Hunt" must be protested and opposed by all who hate injustice and oppression.



Stop the Mass Crimes in India!

The Communist Party of Greece (marxist-leninist) condemns the ongoing murderous crusade of the Indian repressive forces, both official and paramilitary, against millions of peasants and Adivasi (tribal people) in central India. The so-called “operation Green Hunt” that was jointly launched by the Central Government in Delhi governments of Indian states like Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh etc, have turned into a bloodbath with killings, mass arrests, tortures and displacements, moving populations and whole villages is nothing short of a genocide. It aims to eliminate the armed revolutionary movement and to serve the plans of the multinational conglomerates.

Meanwhile with this escalation of the political violence and terrorism against the cadres and the members of the revolutionary movement of the country as well as the harassment and intimidation of every progressive person that attempts to denounce these mass crimes continue to extend the reign of fascist terror across the country. The last and characteristic incident was the extrajudicial cold-blooded murder, of two cadres of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), following their arrest and torture by the Intelligence Service of Andhra Pradesh.

The CPG(m-l) conveys its revolutionary greetings to the militant communists in India and expresses its rage to the Indian government for the murder of com. Azad. We call on all revolutionary and democratic forces in Greece to support the struggle of the popular masses in India and to take part in the mobilization organised for today to condemn these crimes and atrocities against the people of India, outside the Indian Embassy in Athens.

Communist Party of Greece (marxist-leninist)

Athens, 06/07/2010

Stop the Massacre in West Bengal !

The Communist Party of Greece (marxist-leninist) strongly denounces the mass murderous assault conducted by the security forces and the paramilitary gangs ordered by the West Bengal government against the fighting peasants and adivasis in Lalgah, West Midnapor. The administration in Kolkata, in collaboration with the federal state and police forces have surrounded villages and rural areas, exercising brutal violence and have launched a huge tide of state terror, arrests, detentions and killings, aiming to wear down the resistance of poor peasants and adivasis in order to implement the land-grabbing policy of their lands by the multinational corporations. They have the impertinence to characterize as terrorists the revolutionaries, who under the leadership of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), fight in the forefront of this just struggle against the pro-imperialist policies of the Kolkata and New Delhi governments. The Communist Party of Greece (marxist-leninist) calls all the progressive people across the world to express their solidarity to the struggle of the poor peasants and adivasis in West Bengal and demand to stop the military assault that has been launched in the most brutal way.

Communist Party of Greece (marxist-leninist)

International Bureau Athens 19/6/2009

India's War on the Poor

India is at war. The government calls it ‘Operation Green Hunt’, and has sent tens of thousands of armed police and paramilitary troops to the vast forest region of Dandakaranya.

12 midday Thursday 29 April

High Commission of India, 180 Molesworth Street, Wellington

“Free, free Kobad Ghandy”

April 29, 2010

One of India's leading Maoists Kobad Ghandy is facing charges under India's repressive laws which have been denounced by human rights activists. Kobad is a campaigner for liberation against Indian state terror. Join the demo to free Kobad Ghandy and protest against Operation Green Hunt,

Demonstrators gathered at the Indian High Commission in Wellington to protest against Operation Green Hunt and the detention of Kobad Ghandy.

Kobad is a Maoist political leader, imprisoned since October 2009. His arrest is part of the Indian state's attempt to crush all opposition.

Operation Green Hunt is a counter-insurgency strategy where tens of thousands of armed forces are trying to wipe out the Maoist movement that has support though a third of India. Read more here.

The protesters rallied outside the Indian embassy then marched to parliament. Chanting “free, free Kobad Ghandy”, and “stop the war on the poor” they handed out leaflets to the public and marched on into the city centre speaking about the lack of genuine democracy in India and the growing state repression.

Independent People's Tribunal On Operation Greenhunt In Jharkhand

Organised by : Jharkhand Alternative Development Forum with the support of Operation Green Hunt Virodhi Nagrik Manch, Jharkhand Indigenous People's Forum, Jharkhand Initiatives Desk, Jharkhand Jungle Bachao Andolan, Jharkhand Mines Area Coordination Committee and many other groups.

Observations of the Jury

The jury heard the testimonies of a number of social Activists working the Tribals in Jharkhand as well as a number of Tribals themselves who have been directly affected by Operation Greenhunt over the two days. The picture which emerges from these testimonies presents a dismal and indeed alarming picture of Human Rights violations of the adivasis population of the State which has driven them to unprecedented levels of desperation where their very survival is being threatened.

Over the last 60 years, more than 20 lakh acres of land has been acquired directly by the State in the name of various “development” projects displacing more than 15 lakh Adivasis from their homelands. This drive for acquisition of their land has become particularly acute during the last decade when 102 MOUs have been signed with a number of large private corporations, some of which are for thousands of acres of land involving the displacement of thousands of tribals in each case. Most of these MOUs are for mining or for setting up other polluting industries. These have however met with enormous resistance from the adivasis who have organized themselves and have so far successfully resisted the accusations of their land as a result of which virtually none of these MOUs have so far been operationalised.

All this land acquisition of Adivasi land has however been done without the consent or even consultation with the Adivasis. The MOUs were in fact signed in great haste and secrecy with no information at all to the people who were to be affected. All this is in complete violation of the PESA Act which provides that all development in the Scheduled areas would be in consultation (which should mean consent) of the Gram Sabhas. This has led to a widespread feeling among the Adivasis that not only is their right of self-rule being flagrantly violated, but their very identity and existence is being threatened. Many of them consequently taken up the Gun and joined the Maoists who have organized them to fight the state.

The government's response to this has been Operation Greenhunt which uses large sections of Paramilitary forces what they perceive as the single security threat to the State. Interestingly, Operation Greenhunt is largely concentrated in the areas where the MOUs have been signed. The testimonies before us revealed that this Operation has led to and is causing enormous violations of Human Rights of the Adivasis in terms of all kinds of excesses by the security forces. A large number of testimonies before the Tribunal provided a sampling of the kinds of Human Rights abuses taking place: Arbitrary picking up of Adivasis and their torture; Arbitrary arrests of Adivasis as well as of those who to highlight the abuses by the security forces on false and trumped up charges; people even being killed in fake encounters or in custody. These abuses are only serving drive more Adivasis to pick up Guns and join the Maoists.

The Jury noted that the security forces involved in the abuses are hardly ever brought to justice and enjoy almost complete impunity. Unfortunately Jharkhand has not set up a State Human Rights Commissions or even Police Complaints Authority as directed by the Supreme Court in their judgment on Police Reforms. The Courts too which are supposed to examine allegations of torture, fake encounters and malafide arrests on false charges, have abdicated their responsibility with the result that innocents

continue to rot in jails for years altogether and the guilty police officers are not punished, even when it is found that they have tortured people, killed them in fake encounters or arrested them on fabricated evidence. The Supreme Court's judgement on Arrests, torture and the NHRC's guidelines on encounter killings are being wantonly flouted and no one is being held accountable.

The Jury therefore recommends that:

1. The Government must address the underlying causes of Tribal alienation by ensuring that PESA Act is strictly complied with and that there is no involuntary acquisition of Tribal land without the consent of the Gram sabhas. The Adivasis must be given the effective right to decide the kind of development which should take place in their areas.
2. All MOUs entered into by the government which involve the acquisition of Tribal land must immediately be made public and put on hold.
3. Operation Greenhunt be withdrawn in a phase but rapid withdrawal of Para Military forces from Jharkhand.
4. The government must make a full and complete disclosure of those killed by the security forces in Operation Greenhunt and those who have killed detained and arrested under the UAPA.
5. The police and the Security forces must be made effectively accountable for their human rights abuses by:
 - a) Setting up a State Human Rights Commission in a transparent and credible manner which should be armed with adequate powers;
 - b) Setting up Police Complaints authorities as directed by the Supreme Court;
 - c) The NHRCs guidelines regarding encounters, especially an investigation by an independent police agency and a Magisterial Enquiry must be strictly followed and the District SSP and DGP of the State be made jointly liable for non compliance;
 - d) The courts get each complaint of torture and arrest on false and fabricated charges seriously examined.
6. The SC & ST (Prevention of atrocities) Act 1989 be diligently applied against security officers committing such abuses on Tribals. The State Human Rights Commission be charged with monitoring it.
7. A High Level Commission be set up to investigate some of the most egregious cases of Encounter killings, torture and killing in police custody and also of arrests on false and fabricated charges.
8. Government of India should ratify UN convention on Torture and enact a law in tune with the spirit of convention
9. UN code of conduct for law Enforcement Officials, including prosecutors, Lawyers and Judges should be compulsorily observed.
10. UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms should be adopted and enforced.
11. UN Standards and Norms in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice should be adopted and enforced.
12. The international convention on Civil and Political Rights ratified by Government of India includes prohibition of torture, and obligates the state to hold detainees in officially recognized places of detention with names in registers accessible to all concerned
13. Government of India should issue a standing invitation to Precial Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, including:
 - a) Working group on Arbitrary Detention
 - b) Working group on Enforced & Involuntary Disappearances
 - c) Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executers
 - d) Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
 - e) Most importantly special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples.
14. Compensation and other things for killing or torture or illegal arrest must be paid as committed by the Govt.
15. The Government should come with a white paper as to the expenditure made in police vis-à-vis result thereof.

Signed by:

1. **Justice Vikramaditya Prasad (Retd. Judge, Jharkhand High Court)**
2. **Mr. K.S. Subramanian (IPS and former DGP, Tripura)**
3. **Mr. C.S. Jha (former CMD, ECIL)**
4. **Mr. Prashant Bhushan (Lawyer and Convenor, Campaign for Judicial Accountability)**

Note: The tribunal was held on 25 and 26 Sept 2010, at Ranchi, in India

CPI (Maoist) Statements

Press Release

March 8, 2010

Sri Krishna Committee investigation is a sham ! Boycott the Sri Krishna Committee !! Uncompromising struggle is the only solution for the Telangana issue !!!

The Central government constituted the Sri Krishna Committee on February 3, 2010 with the alleged purpose of finding a solution for the Telangana issue when the movement was raging furiously and the duties and regulations of this committee were announced after nine days. When we look at the duties and regulations of the committee, it becomes clear that the government is not at all keen that a solution should be found for this issue. There is no provision for such a thing in the duties and regulations of the committee. Continuing the tense conditions in the state as it is and eternal postponement of the solution permanently are what the committee's study would achieve. The committee was formed because a movement on Telangana issue is raging in the state. The committee is supposed to find a solution for this. But in its duties and regulations it was nowhere written clearly on what it should recommend to the centre and for which problem a solution should be found and presented. Anybody would understand that formulating such regulations which would go nowhere and giving it a time of ten and half months is not for finding a solution to the problem but to postpone the problem as long as possible. There is no guarantee that this time would not be extended further. The regulations indicate the same. The Congress government wants to keep this issue on the back burner as a whole after the present agitation subsides.

Clearly, this is what the Congress is doing about Telangana issue since fifty years. Initially, Chenna Reddy betrayed the Telangana movement. Later, during the previous assembly elections in 2004, the Congress went into an alliance with the TRS and after winning in the elections blatantly betrayed the promise one more time. It went on postponing the solution by forming all kinds of committees like second SRC, Pranab Mukherji committee, Rosaiah committee etc. Now after the movement for separate Telangana raged furiously it brought Sri Krishna committee to the fore.

The central home minister had announced clearly on December 9 that they were launching the process of formation of Telangana and that the resolution in state assembly is being passed as part of that process. Now, with the formation of Sri Krishna committee the government has changed this into an issue which has to be investigated still. After making a clear statement, the government did not take steps towards formation of the state and is postponing the issue in the name of committee; this is nothing but delay tactics. In fact, the Sri Krishna committee is not even responsible to the parliament. This is not a committee which has been formed after a resolution was passed in the parliament. This is a committee which has been formed by the Congress high command and the state Congress ministers. The Parliament is not responsible for the report submitted by this committee. This doesn't have the legality of the parliament. In such a context, this committee is nothing but a sham. The investigation by this committee is nothing but a drama. The people of our country are well familiar with the farce enacted by such committees and commissions and the investigations conducted by them. The recent report submitted by the Liberhan commission after a delay of 18 years on the destruction of Babri Masjid is the best example for this. We all know the results of forming investigation committees on Bofors scam, shares scam, stamps scam, on the massacre of Sikhs in 1984, on the Gujarat pogrom on Muslims etc. It is nothing but an insult to the Telangana people to form this committee with the alleged purpose of investigating into the Telangana issue and showing a solution by the Central government while the entire Telangana people are demanding with one voice a separate Telangana state. Except the persons agitating for United Andhra Pradesh and the leaders of Rayalseema and Andhra and some leaders who are closer to the Congress high command, nobody else is welcoming this committee. All sections of people are opposing this committee. Protests, agitations and bandhs are being observed increasingly opposing this committee. While MLAs of various parties who are demanding Telangana have resigned, the Telangana

Congress MLAs bowed to the threats of the high command. They withdrew from the JAC and have resorted to betrayal one more time. They are saying that they would help the Sri Krishna committee in its investigations.

The Telangana JAC and the JAC of student organizations boycotted this committee with the slogan 'Go Back Sri Krishna committee'. TRS leader Chandrasekhar Rao has announced that they would submit a report to the committee. The people and mass organizations who are agitating for Telangana should oppose with one voice the hypocrisy of KCR and teach him a lesson. They should expose the Telangana Congress leaders who are welcoming the committee and teach them a fitting lesson. The Telangana people should display their organized force to the leaders demanding United Andhra and the capitalists of Rayalseema and Andhra regions and boycott the Sri Krishna committee. Each and every person in Telangana is demanding separate Telangana state. The Telangana people should agitate with the slogan 'Go Back Sri Krishna Committee' opposing the central government's policy of fizzling out the movement in the name of investigation committees. Problems will not be solved with such committees. Uncompromising struggles are the only solution for achieving Telangana. This is a fact proven in history. For this, the entire Telangana masses including workers, peasants, students, employees, intellectuals and democrats should fight in a united manner. The entire Telangana people who are agitating under the leadership of Telangana JAC and the student JAC should unite and achieve Telangana through militant struggles.

(Pratap)
Spokesperson,
Central Regional Bureau,
CPI (Maoist)

Press Release

July 20, 2010

**Make success the Martyrs Memorial Week from
July 28 to August 3, 2010!**

**Hold meetings and rallies widely paying rich homage to all the great
martyrs who had laid down their lives for the masses including the
leaders of Indian revolution Comrades Azad (Rajkumar), Sakhamuri
Appa Rao, Jeevan (Suryam) !**

**Vow to carry on the lofty aims of the Martyrs!
Lal Salaam to the founders of our party and great teachers
Comrades Charu Mazumdar and Kanhai Chatterji !**

The CPI (Maoist) Central Committee is giving a call to the entire revolutionary masses, party/PLGA ranks to observe widely all over the country the Martyrs Memorial Week from July 28 to August 3, 2010. On this occasion, firstly it is paying homage to the founder leaders of the party and great teacher Comrades Charu Mazumdar and Kanhai Chatterji. It is once again vowing that it would not rest until the lofty aims of the martyrs are fulfilled and a new India where there is no exploitation and oppression comes into existence.

Since the previous July 28 till now many beloved daughters and sons of the oppressed masses had laid down their precious lives for the success of the Indian New Democratic Revolution. Many among them have been caught and killed by the police in fake encounters. Some comrades have been martyred while fighting the enemy face to face. Many more ordinary people have been killed in indiscriminate massacres, firings and tortures perpetrated by the police/paramilitary forces as part of 'Operation Green Hunt'. A few comrades died due to ill-health and other accidents. In this manner, more than 250 revolutionary leaders,

cadres, ordinary members and people have lost their lives since July 28, 2009. These martyrs include party Politburo member and official spokesperson Comrade Azad (Cherukuri Rajkumar), the central Military Intelligence Director and senior state level Comrade Sakhamuri Appa Rao, PLGA Central Regional Company-2 political commissar and State level Comrade Jeevan (Suryam) and many more party leaders at various levels, PLGA commanders and members of party and mass organizations. Many women fighters are also among these martyrs including senior party activists like comrades Saradakka (Ramakka), Narmada and Swarna. On March 12, senior technical field Comrade Kondal Reddy was caught in Pune (Maharashtra) and was killed in Warangal forests. Hemchandra Pandey who was traveling along with Comrade Azad was also killed along with him. In North Telangana, Comrades Daya, Ramesh, Bhaskar, Punnam and Suresh had died in enemy attacks.

In Dandakaranya, Gadchiroli divisional committee member Comrade Mangesh (Sainath) was martyred in the valiant attack on the enemy commandos at Laheri on October 8, 2009. In the historical attack at Tadimetla on April 6, 2010, young comrades Rukmati, Wagal, Vijjal, Ingal, Raju, Ramaal and Ratan were martyred while bravely fighting the enemy. On June 29, in another valiant attack at Kongera in Narayanpur district company party committee members and platoon commanders comrades Bandu, Sankar and platoon party committee member Comrade Ramesh were martyred displaying exemplary courage and bravery. In the brave attack on Silda camp in West Bengal on February 15, 2010, five comrades laid down their lives. In June, eight comrades were martyred in an enemy attack in the encounter which took place in Jangal Mahal area (WB). On June 16, 2010, when two thousand police/paramilitary/cobra forces with the support of three air force helicopters attacked a camp as part of the conspiracy to annihilate top leadership of the party in the Saranda area of Jharkhand, section commander Comrade David laid down his life while protecting the leadership and attacking the enemy forces. Our Central Committee humbly pays homage to all these martyrs and is sending deep condolences to their family members, relatives and friends.

People of our country are coming into the streets and fighting the pro-imperialist exploiting policies implemented by the Indian ruling classes. Many areas in our country are emerging as hotbeds of mass struggles. The ruling classes have realized that it is impossible to continue their exploiting policies without suppressing these mass struggles and so are resorting to bloodshed. In Kalinganagar of Odisha, the police fired on adivasis who refused to hand over their lands to the corporations and killed many people; in the recent past on July 13, 2010 three persons were killed when police fired on the people who were protesting against the thermal power plant which was detrimental to their very existence in Sompeta in Andhra Pradesh. The exploiting ruling classes are day dreaming that they would be able to break the back on these movements by physically eliminating the forces which are leading these mass struggles. The cold-blooded killing of Andru and Singanna in Narayanapatna (Odisha) where people are fighting for land and the murder of Lalmohan Tudu in Lalgadh (West Bengal) where people are fighting against police atrocities in the name of an 'encounter' are all examples of this. Our Central Committee is paying humble homage to all the comrades who had agitated and led the movements against the exploiting ruling classes all over the country and had been brutally murdered by the police in the past one year.

As part of the Operation Green Hunt launched by the ruling gang with the aim of handing over the wealth and natural resources of our country to the MNCs by completely decimating revolutionary movement, adivasis are being massacred on a huge scale, particularly in the Bastar area of Dandakaranya. In the past ten months, nearly 150 adivasis were killed by the police, paramilitary, SPOs and other forces in Dandakaranya alone. Most of them were portrayed as 'encounters' while some of them were not registered at all. People were massacred in Gollagudem, Vechapadu, Singanamadugu, Palachelima, Gompad, Tettamadugu, Gumiapal, Kutrem, Takilod, Ongnar, Rajurveda and many other villages and stories of 'encounters' were circulated. In other states too there are many instances where ordinary people were killed in the name of 'encounters'. Our Central Committee is humbly paying homage to all the people who have lost their lives in the indiscriminate massacres perpetrated by the government armed forces as part of the ongoing war against the people by the ruling classes.

Our Central Committee is paying homage to all the fighters and people who have laid down their lives in the anti-imperialist struggles waged as part of the world socialist revolution in many countries all over the world, in each genuine people's struggle, in national liberation struggles of Kashmir and North-East.

Hail the ideals, fighting spirit, determination and sacrifices of the Immortal Martyrs !

On July 1, the blood-thirsty Andhra Pradesh SIB and central intelligence agencies caught Politburo member Comrade Azad and a freelance journalist named Hemchandra Pandey in Nagpur of Maharashtra and killed them in the name of an 'encounter' in the Adilabad forests of AP. Comrade Azad's death is a huge loss to the Indian revolutionary movement. His revolutionary life started as a radical student in the Warangal Regional Engineering College in the 70s and for the next four decades he played a crucial role in the Indian revolution, particularly in the ideological and political spheres. Azad had worked in an inimitable manner as the official spokesperson of the party, as propagandist of the revolution, as editor for various revolutionary magazines, as writer, as organizer, as agitator, as a proletariat intellectual who had upheld Marxism as an invincible ideology by shredding to pieces the baseless theories and mean logic of various kinds of revisionists and several counter-revolutionaries, as a communist fighter who had strived for the unity of revolutionary forces in the country and as a proletarian internationalist who had strived for developing relations with revolutionary organizations at the international level. It is impossible to separate Azad and the advancement achieved by the Indian revolutionary movement in the past forty years. Our Central Committee is giving a call to the youth, students-intellectuals, workers and peasants of the country to hold high the red flag given to us by Azad by following his ideals.

On March 12, the APSIB murderers killed party senior leader, central Military Intelligence director Comrade Sakhamuri Appa Rao in a fake encounter. Comrade Appa Rao's 32 years of revolutionary life serves as an inspiration to the younger generation. He became part of the revolutionary student movement and within a short period left his engineering studies to become a professional revolutionary. He worked as a courier, as an organizer and a member of district, regional and state level committees. Appa Rao who developed into the central Military Intelligence director carved a niche for himself particularly in the AP revolutionary movement. In 1993 he was arrested but he did not reveal any party secrets though his life was at stake. He spent eight years in prison and opened a new chapter in the jail struggles' history of AP. He was an inspiration to many and directly influenced many to dedicate themselves for the revolution. He created an indelible impression on many comrades and posed a challenge to the enemy till the end. He always studied the enemy tactics and prepared the PLGA to face them and his role in this would be remembered forever. On May 8, Comrade Jeevan (Suryam) was injured and succumbed to the injuries when they ambushed the enemy forces. His martyrdom is a big loss to the people's war in the Central region. Jeevan who had worked as a state committee member in AP had been working in the Central region since some years and he played a key role in many of the military operations carried out by the PLGA in Dandakaranya, AOB (Andhra-Odisha Border) and North Telangana. His role in making success military operations like Nayagadh is significant. With his death, the party and PLGA have lost a greatly skilled comrade in People's War.

Sacrifices are inevitable in revolution. This is an era of revolutions. People are the makers of history. The people and the people's movements have given birth to great revolutionary intellectuals like Azad, a steeled communist fighter like Appa Rao and an expert in People's War like Jeevan and mass leaders like Andru, Singanna and Lalmohan Tudu. They would give birth to more such leaders. It is the People's War which gave birth to valiant fighters like Mangesh, Rukmati, David, Bandu and Ramesh. It would give birth to more fighters in the future. So, only by intensifying mass movements and Maoist People's War and developing it to a higher stage and by recruiting thousands of new forces into the revolutionary movement we can fulfill the dreams of the martyrs. Only thus we can fill the void created by their demise. Our Central Committee is giving a call to the people and party ranks to dedicate themselves one more time to achieve this goal on this occasion.



(Abhay)

**Spokesperson,
Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)**

Press Release

August 30, 2010

Hail the Historic 6th Anniversary of the Party Formation Day!

**Defeat the fascist Operation Green Hunt!!
Come together for a united struggle against
the loot of our country!!!**

Call of the Polit Bureau of CPI (Maoist) on the occasion of the 6th anniversary of the party to be celebrated with revolutionary enthusiasm and great fervor from September 21 to 27, 2010

Our beloved comrades and people!

On the 6th anniversary of our party formation day on September 21, 2010, our PB extends hearty revolutionary greetings to the Party, PLGA, Revolutionary people's committees and comrades of all mass organizations and to the revolutionary people who are advancing the people's war by fearlessly fighting back Operation Green Hunt, the countrywide massive counter-revolutionary military offensive of the enemy, who is bent upon annihilating our party. On this fervent occasion our PB also congratulates the comrades in the jails who are bravely facing the enemy.

Our PB humbly pays homage to the more than 10,000 great martyrs, 1500 of them after the unified party was formed in 2004, and 300 in one year, who sacrificed their invaluable lives for the success of the New Democratic Revolution in India and for the achievement of the greatest cause of human kind, i.e. socialism and communism. The fact that a majority of these martyrs are common people, revolutionary mass organizations' members and militia member shows how the vast masses of India are thronging into the revolution.

Since we celebrated our party formation day last year, the war between revolution and counter-revolution in our country has intensified further. There have been many significant changes of strategic importance in this period which would affect the Indian revolution for a long time to come. It is necessary to look into our strengths and weaknesses, the favourable and unfavourable conditions for the revolution on this occasion and place before the people and the ranks of the party.

Firstly - starting from May 2009 to July 2010, eight topmost comrades including PBM and beloved leader Azad and ten state level comrades had either been caught and killed by the enemy or had been put behind bars. Many leadership comrades from district level to lower ranks were either arrested or killed. These losses had all affected our party and movement seriously. Particularly, losing comrade Azad who had been fulfilling key responsibilities in the highest committee and had been rendering multi-faceted services most efficiently in many fields is a great loss.

The formation of the new party in 2004 placed before the people of our country enriched political, organizational, military lines, a strong party, a strong leadership, a people's army, the PLGA and a vast mass base and struggle areas. This created very favourable conditions for the advancement of the revolution. Fearing all these favorable conditions, the enemy sought to crush our party and all the losses in 2005 and 2006 occurred due to this conspiracy. Yet, the Unity Congress - 9th congress had strengthened the unity of the party and the party leadership and laid down a thorough plan for the advancement of the revolution. Though Andhra Pradesh movement and North Chhattisgarh movement suffered setback and though we suffered heavy losses in North Odisha, the successes won filled the revolutionary camp with self-confidence.

The successful completion of the Unity Congress and the later successes worried the enemy camp to no end and so the enemy had intensified war on people at an unprecedented level to annihilate the party leadership. These losses which occurred since 2009 May are larger in number and more serious in nature than before. However, serious they may be, in the past 45 years, revolutionary movement had been giving birth to new leadership constantly and it will do so again. As long as masses need a revolution, they give birth

to its leaders too.

Secondly - UPA-2 had launched the fascist 'Operation Green Hunt' (OGH) as a concrete form of the multi-pronged offensive strategy. Of all the offensive strategies formulated by the Indian ruling classes to crush the revolutionary movement in India, the one which started from mid-2009 (and continuing) is unprecedented, country-wide, most severe, deceptive, centralized and protracted one till date. The military suppression campaign is concentrated on our strong rural areas and guerilla zones, especially Dandakaranya, Jharkhand-Bihar, Lalgarh and bordering areas of Jharkhand-Odisha, Andhra-Odisha and Telangana-Chhattisgarh. This 'War on People' has intensified social contradictions. No other suppression campaign had earned the wrath and resistance of people as much as the OGH in the past 45 areas.

Thirdly - after UPA came to power for second time, there was a qualitative change in implementing the counter-insurgency theories which are restructuring or influencing the state machinery, Indian constitution, judiciary, legislating bodies, administrative bodies, politics, economy, culture, media and so on. This is inspired and led by the 'War on Terror' waged by the imperialists under the leadership of US imperialists. This will lead our country to a disastrous situation. The more they try to wage this brutal war, the more protest and resistance they would encounter from the vast masses. Such resistance is clearly seen all over the country.

Due to the struggles waged by us in all the fields and due to the immense sacrifices of our most revered and beloved three hundred martyrs in the past one year we have won significant successes. They are:

1. The successful attacks in Singanamadugu, Mukaram (Tadimetla) and Kongera of Chhattisgarh; Laheri in Maharashtra; Sankrel and Silda in Bengal; Gumla, Vishnupur and Latehar in Jharkhand; Sono, government toll plaza (Gaya) and Tandwa bazaar in Bihar; Potakal and Baipharguda in Odisha, particularly the historical Mukram (Tadimetla) attack had broken down the initiative of the enemy and increased that of the guerilla forces. These attacks had armed the PLGA with more weapons and new experiences in guerilla war. Tadimetla experience is of the highest level of all these. If not for this active resistance of our forces and people, the enemy would have found more ground to obliterate our movement. These great experiences would definitely help us in fighting back the enemy forces employed for a bigger attack. It was nothing else but the active support of the people which served as the foundation for all these successes.
2. The struggles of Kalinganagar, Singur and Nandigram shook the ruling classes and later Lalgarh and Narayanpatna struggles had burst forth on an extensive and higher scale than these struggles. These were led by our party against revisionism or right opportunism and were waged against the enemy classes, imperialists and the state. We had not seen a deluge of such vast, militant, long drawn mass uprisings in the past 25 years. The lessons of these revolutionary mass uprisings for the development of people's war in our country are invaluable.
3. Lalgarh armed peasant movement which had erupted, spread and consolidated in a period when the enemy had deployed forces on a large scale and was attempting to crush the peasant uprising, is very significant and earned a special place in the annals of Indian armed agrarian revolutionary struggle history.
4. Vast masses under our party's leadership have successfully thwarted the attempts of the MNCs and CBB corporations to loot the natural resources in Eastern and Central India. Our PB sends revolutionary greetings to all the people, revolutionary, democratic, progressive and patriotic organizations and individuals who stood firmly in these struggles and promises that our party would stand in the forefront in these struggles.
5. Our party had conducted ideological and political propaganda war against the enemy's psychological war, under the leadership of Comrade Azad. If our entire party had not fought along with Com. Azad at various levels, the people's war would not have won this much credit. His services in this field are most significant and paramount. Let us continue the struggle in this field with Com. Azad's inspiration.

Along with these five main successes, in some states, we had expanded to new areas, consolidated party, PLGA, politically and militarily, consolidated the existing Revolutionary People's Committees/Janatana Sarkars and expanded them in newer areas. All these successes had won us the support of many revolutionary forces, intellectuals, democrats, progressive and patriotic forces.

Comrades!

Our losses had been very severe. Unless each committee from the CC to the lower committees and the entire party strives very hard to build up new forces in a planned manner on a wide scale and continues the rectification campaign effectively we will not be able to fulfill the losses incurred, particularly that of Com. Azad and other leadership comrades at central and state level.

Only when we understand the real reasons behind the losses, we can prevent them and only then we can strengthen the party as an impregnable fort to the enemy. To identify the real reasons we have to take lessons from the experiences of our party and Maoist parties of other countries.

We have to expand and intensify the self-defensive war waged under the party's leadership by PLGA, people and by uniting with all struggling forces of our country and other countries. If we firmly rely on the masses and make use of our PLGA properly in the war, we would definitely be able to defeat Green Hunt.

Let us prepare ourselves to wage people's war with utmost courage and determination. Celebrate the 6th anniversary of our party formation day with brimming revolutionary enthusiasm and zeal. Let us propagate widely the successes won even amidst severe repression in the past one year.

Our beloved comrades and people of India!

The CPI (Maoist) is issuing a call to all the people of our country to unify under the leadership of the party and rise against the feudal and comprador rulers who are selling our country to the imperialists. We cannot liberate our country from the clutches of these predators without a revolutionary party. The party calls upon all the resistance struggles against the loot of our country to come together which would lead to a broad united front. The fight for land to the tiller, democratic power to the people and basic needs and against SEZs, displacement, corporate mining, plunder of our natural resources, price rise, corruption and all such burning problems have to be carried out in an united manner. We can win only through our unified strength. As our fight intensifies, the state onslaught on all the democratic and revolutionary struggles would also intensify. Let us prepare ourselves for this. Jan Jagrans, Salwa Judums, Sendras and Green Hunts can never break a determined people or their revolutionary party. Final Victory belongs to the people.

- ❏ *Let us consolidate our party as an impregnable fortress and avoid huge losses to leadership and ranks !*
- ❏ *Hail and follow the exemplary model battle of Tadimetla to defeat 'Operation Green Hunt' !*
- ❏ *Let us unite with and bring together all resistance movements paving the way for a countrywide strong United Front !*
- ❏ *Let us hail and follow the exemplary model of Comrade Azad in effectively fighting back the enemy's psychological warfare !*
- ❏ *Let us extend to vast areas to fulfill the multi-faceted tasks of People's War!*

For Polit Bureau,



(Abhay)

**Spokesperson,
Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)**

Press Release

September 23, 2010

Stay alert to the heinous attempts of the ruling classes to divide us in the name of religion and stop killing each other in their interests !

Court judgment on the demolition of Babri Masjid was initially awaited on September 24, 2010, which has been postponed for a week today. Even before the judgment is delivered the air is reeking with apprehension and trepidation. The uneasy memories of that fateful day (December 6, 1992) are giving fear to all democratic sections in the country and needless to say, especially to the Muslims all over the sub-continent. Any sane person who wants to learn history in order not to repeat it is waking up with a start from the nightmare of our history of communal flare ups. The unprecedented deployment of police and paramilitary forces in all the states and Union Territories on the eve of the judgment is creating doubts as to what is to be awaited from the court which is but an organ of the Hindu religion and upper caste-biased state that is the Indian government. The callous, cold-hearted, pro-imperialist, anti-Indian people, traitorous judgment in the Bhopal gas leak case is sending alarm chills down the spines of concerned citizens and is issuing warning calls. There is not much in our whole history of court judgments which could reassure the people.

We, the CPI (Maoist) appeal to all the people of India to stay alert to the possibilities of a flare up of communal tensions with the instigation of the ruling classes, especially by the saffron fascist brigades in the wake of this judgment. Whatever may be the judgment, what they would like to do is to divert the people from their problems, struggles and political and economic crises. Since the days of the Partition, many a time lakhs of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and people of other religions and minorities in the sub-continent had fallen victim to the vicious propaganda of the ruling classes and massacred each other. In the context of India, the main perpetrators had been the Hindu chauvinist fascist gangs and the main victims had been Muslims and other religious minorities. The state is not an accomplice; in fact it is the main actor in all these massacres. The main culprits among the political parties are the Congress and the BJP.

We appeal to the people that it is high time we realize the conspiracies of the ruling classes in dividing us. Let us say a big **NO** to their scheming. Let us stand united against their devious plans to massacre us, especially the Muslims. However hard they may try to make us raise swords against each other, let us stand united and turn those swords against those who are trying to drive this wedge of communalism between us.

CPI (Maoist) has been the most consistent among all the political parties of this country in unequivocally condemning the demolition of the Babri Masjid and demanding its reconstruction at the same place. It has stood firmly in support of the minorities, especially of Muslims and Christians and had put up a bitter struggle against the Hindu chauvinist Sangh Parivar and the pseudo secularism of the Congress. We once again firmly reiterate that reconstruction of the ancient, historical monument at the same place is the only solution to this issue.

We appeal to all the Hindus of the country not to believe the divide and rule policy of Congress and Hindu chauvinist fascist propaganda of BJP and Sangh Parivar. We appeal that as the majority community in the country more responsibility lies in their hands as massacres are perpetrated only through their known and unknown collaboration. It is the duty of every concerned citizen of our country to stand in support of the victims of communal pogroms and do everything possible to stop genocide of innocent people, whatever may be their religion. We appeal to the people of Muslim community to stay alert to the opportunistic attempts by some fundamentalists to stoke the fires instead of taking up a united resistance of all peoples against the common enemy. Our party stands with people and would do everything possible to stop massacres of innocent people.

- ★ Stand united against the malicious attempts of the ruling classes to divide us in the name of religion and community !
- ★ Fight back the communal pogroms on minorities, especially Muslims which may be perpetrated in the wake of the judgment on demolition of Babri Masjid !
- ★ No more killing of our own brothers and sisters, no more innocence in being at the receiving end of the false propaganda of all hues of communalism, particularly Hindu communalism, Indian state and the US imperialists !



(Abhay)

Spokesperson,
Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)

Press Release

September 23, 2010

**Condemn the brutal killings of Kashmiris
who are agitating for their freedom by the
Indian ruling classes !**

**Participate in huge numbers in the 24 hour bandh called
on September 30, 2010 in protest of the massacre of
Kashmiris by the government armed forces and
in support of the just movement of the Kashmiri people!**

Massacres of people in Kashmir by the state is out bursting all limits. People are conducting protest marches all over the Kashmir valley against the innumerable atrocities, indiscriminate firings and endless curfew hours. The slogan of AZADI is reverberating all over the valley. More than a hundred Kashmiris have lost their lives since June 11 in the firings done by the paramilitary, army and police forces to suppress the just struggle of the Kashmiri people. Most of those who died are youngsters below 20 years of age and children. Hundreds of protestors have been injured. The exploitative and expansionist Indian ruling classes who claim that this is the biggest democracy in the world are shamelessly deploying the armed forces to suppress the Kashmiris who are conducting peaceful, unarmed and just protests. While the UPA government led by the Congress and all parliamentary parties including the so called left parties CPI, CPI(M) are supporting directly or indirectly this massacre of the Kashmiri people, the Hindu chauvinist BJP is repeatedly inciting the government to suppress the Kashmiri people in cruelest manner. The Omar Abdullah government which is working as a stooge of the Indian ruling classes is participating in this brutal suppression and has been completely isolated from the people. Kashmiri people hate these traitors. Firing, tear gas shelling and

lathi charges on each and every procession have become the order of the day. It is in this background that the Kashmiri youth are resorting to counter offensive by hurling stones. This resistance done in self-defence against the brutal massacres is completely justified and democratic.

Kashmir people had never considered themselves a part of India. By 1947 when a sham 'independence' was handed over to India and Pakistan by the British rulers, Kashmir was an independent state under the rule of Raja Hari Singh. The Indian and Pakistani ruling classes who are stooges of the British imperialists had integrated Kashmir into their countries for their own interests and against the aspirations and desires of the Kashmiris. One part was occupied by the Indian expansionists and the other half was occupied by Pakistan. Thus Kashmir was divided into two parts in the most atrocious manner. In order to cool down the fury of the Kashmiris, Nehru government had promised to the people of Kashmir and the UNO in writing to conduct a plebiscite and promised that it would give them independence if people wanted to secede. Nehru had reiterated this promise many more times. But within a short time Nehru began suppressing the Kashmiris under the iron heels of his armed forces. This promise had been deeply buried by every ruling class party which had come to power from Nehru to Sonia-Manmohan's UPA. Indian expansionists had always used repression against the Kashmiris whenever they agitated for their independence. The Indian ruling classes had been conducting a planned propaganda that Kashmir is an integral part of India by hiding even the recent past and burying the promises. The desire for independence has been simmering inside the hearts of the Kashmiris since then and it turned into a militant armed movement in the 90s. Many militant organizations conducted armed struggle. Though there are some differences in the political aims of these organizations, they got the support of the people because they expressed the national liberation aspirations of the Kashmiris. But the fascist Indian ruling classes had deployed more than 7 lakh para military and military forces all over the Kashmir valley and had already killed more than 80 thousand Kashmiri people. Thousands of Kashmiris had gone missing. It is no exaggeration to say that no other government had carried out such a cruel repression on any nationality struggle by deploying armed forces in such large numbers on such a massive scale. The Indian ruling classes had resorted to all kinds of conspiracies and scheming and had ignited differences between Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims using divide and rule policy. They are still conspiring to counter pose the Kashmiri Pandits against the just movement of the Kashmiri people. Particularly, the role of the expansionist chauvinist Congress, and role played by the saffron Hindu chauvinist Sangh Parivar in the past and present is outrightly heinous. With the excuse that there are pro-Pakistan forces and Islamic forces in the movement of the Kashmiris, Indian rulers are propagating that the movement of the Kashmiris is aimed at seceding from India and integrating in Pakistan. This is nothing but an utter lie. The only aspiration of the Kashmiris right from the beginning is to win liberation for their nationality. That is why, though the Indian ruling classes had been repeatedly stating that they had put down militancy in Kashmir, in fact, it had never been extinguished. Though this movement has been erupting under various circumstances as a response to different problems, the fact that the main slogan of all these agitations is AZADI is testimony to this. CPI (Maoist) firmly reiterates that Kashmiri movement for the liberation of Kashmiris, for their right to self-determination is completely just and that neither India nor Pakistan have any rights over them.

Freedom-loving people of Kashmir,

Our party supports and stands in complete support of your struggle for independence and right to self-determination against the expansionist Indian ruling classes. Our party is sending revolutionary greetings to you on behalf of the entire revolutionary, democratic and struggling people of India and salutes the determination you are demonstrating in your agitations braving police firings, lathi charges, curfews, continuous searching operations and unending insults. Though dozens of youngsters are being killed in indiscriminate firings, you are hoisting the dead on your shoulders and are participating in the funeral marches in thousands all the while demanding AZADI. Your determination and sacrifice will forever be etched in the annals of history. Our party expresses deep condolences to all the martyrs' families, their near and dear and to the whole Kashmiri society who had lost their beloved sons and daughters to the bullets of the mercenary troops of the Indian expansionists. It is the ruling classes who are trying to isolate you by branding you as anti-national and your

movement as a secessionist movement who are the real enemies of all the oppressed nationalities and peoples all over the sub-continent. So let's fight unitedly against this common enemy of ours. Let us intensify our struggles.

Justice-loving people of India,

Our party is appealing to all of you to not to believe the chauvinist lies propagated by the Indian exploitative ruling classes, particularly by Congress and saffron terrorist brigade against the just struggle of the Kashmiris. It is appealing to all of you to verify facts and stand in firm support of this just struggle. We are calling upon all of you to participate in huge numbers in observing a 24 hour bandh on September 30, 2010, in support of the just struggle of the Kashmiris and against the massacres perpetuated by the government armed forces.

The concrete demands of our party in this context are as follows

- 1. Stop immediately the massacres of Indian armed forces in Kashmir !**
- 2. Withdraw immediately military and para military forces from Kashmir !**
- 3. Immediately repeal the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) which authorizes the armed forces to kill the people indiscriminately !**
- 4. Plebiscite should be conducted in Kashmir and Kashmiris should be allowed to decide their future on their own !**
- 5. Release all political prisoners unconditionally !**

We are calling upon the people of six states (Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh), people of Gadchiroli, Gondia, Chandrapur districts of Maharashtra and people of Balaghat in Madhya Pradesh to close down all rail and road traffic, banks, government and private offices, industries, educational institutions and business establishments and refuse to attend them. We are excluding essential services like hospitals and other services from this bandh call.



(Anand)

**Secretary, Central Regional Bureau
Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)**



(Abhay)

**Spokesperson,
Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)**

Defy the Orders to Kill Fighting People of Jangal Mahal!

Dear Friends,

You are the soldiers of the Nagaland Indian Reserve Battalion. You have been deployed in this mountainous terrain of Purulia district of West Bengal to fight against the Maoists and the poorest of the poor people who have dared to struggle against extreme poverty, visible and invisible murders every day, every moment and against this unjust system. You the Naga soldiers will be compelled to kill, injure and brutalize the poverty-stricken people in exchange for a fixed salary to look after your poor parents in Nagaland. With this monthly

income the government of the rich uses you as cannon fodder in this war against the class of people who are like your parents, brothers and sisters. The government considers you as ambush expert Nagas who can easily kill and get killed in the battle-zone of the Ayodhya Hills of Purulia district in West Bengal. Your precious lives are of no value to the government of the rich. They think you are like robots who can be utilized like lifeless machines. And with such a hatred and disdain the central government has sent you to risk your lives in this treacherous battle field.

You do not know why this unequal war of the State against the exploited people continues in Jangal Mahal. But you are definitely aware that this same State has never stopped its brutal war on the Naga people in your native land struggling for freedom and justice. This Indian State thinks you the Naga soldiers are like beasts who are adept at ambushes. So you can be deployed here for the most risky and brutal war against the uprising of the people of Jangal Mahal. And as this is a war against the Maoists and the common people, retaliation shall inevitably kill and injure many of you. A few years back even after our earnest appeal to your colleagues in Chhattisgarh not to participate in anti-people operations, they did not heed to it and many got killed. You must remember that common people in Nagaland protested then against sending the Naga soldiers to Chhattisgarh to battle against the Maoists. You must keep it in mind that you are inviting an inglorious end to your lives and infamy to the freedom-loving Naga people.

Here in West Bengal we the Maoist are struggling against centuries-old exploitation and oppression. The Congress-led Central government and the state government here controlled by the fake Marxist CPI (M) want to sell out natural resources, acquire land and destroy livelihoods of the people by any means in the interests of native and foreign corporates. The Operation Green Hunt in West Bengal in collaboration with the armed CPI (M) goons is to clear the land of Maoist patriots and fighting masses. You have been brought here to fight their war against the people and the Maoists dedicated to the interests of the poor people.

It is your duty as sons of the freedom-loving Naga people to resist this conspiracy against the exploited people and their leaders. **The CPI (Maoist) appeals to you: revolt against the Orders to do battle against people, desist from pumping bullets into the bodies of your brothers and sisters and defy all Orders to dispatch you from one place to another at the diktat and whims of your superiors to kill people and get killed.**

With thanks,

Kishanji
Spokesperson

Central Committee (Eastern Bureau)

CPI (Maoist)

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