



CPI(Maoist) Information Bulletin—2

: May 10, 2008



Interview with comrade Azad, spokesperson of the CC, CPI(Maoist) on the present developments in Nepal

Q: *The results in the April 10 elections to the Constituent Assembly in Nepal have been overwhelmingly in favour of the Maoists, a development least anticipated by even the keenest observers. How does your Party in India, the CPI(Maoist), look at the election results in Nepal?*

Azad: As mentioned in my press release on behalf of my Party's central committee last week, the election results in Nepal have demonstrated the overwhelming anger of the masses against the outdated feudal monarchic rule in Nepal, against the Indian expansionist's bullying and domination of Nepal, against US domination and oppression, against comprador-feudal parties which allowed this to continue and betrayed the masses for too long. The results are a reflection of the growing aspirations of the Nepali masses for democracy, land, livelihood and genuine freedom from imperialist and feudal exploitation. It is these aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the masses that had completely trounced the parties that had either supported the King and/or the Indian ruling classes or hesitated to come out strongly against feudal, imperialist oppression and Indian intervention in Nepal. The royalists could not win even in a single constituency out of the 240 constituencies where direct elections were held. And leaders of the so-called mainstream such as Madhav Nepali, Sujata Koirala were rejected outright which came as a great shock to the ruling classes.

Hence, when an alternative like the CPN(M) came to the fore, with its open commitment to abolish the feudal monarchy once for all, abrogate all unequal treaties signed with India by the former ruling classes of Nepal, and ensure democracy and equality for the oppressed sections of society such as Dalits, adivasis, national minorities and women, the masses enthusiastically veered towards the Maoists. To put it in a word, the people of Nepal had come out resolutely against constitutional monarchy, Indian expansionism and US imperialism; the results reflect the growing aspirations of the Nepalese masses for land, livelihood and democracy.

Our Party looks at the election results in Nepal as a positive development with enormous significance for the people of entire South Asia. We send our revolutionary greetings to the people of Nepal for rejecting outright the monarchic rule and the comprador-feudal Parties during the April 10 elections to the Constituent Assembly. These results point to the real aspirations of the Nepal-

ese people and should serve as a guide to the CPN(M) for its future course of action.

Q: *What do you think are the reasons for the impressive results in favour of the Maoists in the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Nepal?*

Azad: There are six major reasons:

One, the masses of Nepal had enough of King Gyanendra's autocratic and authoritarian rule. Constitutional monarchy is indeed an anachronism even in the 20th century leave alone 21st century. In fact, people of Nepal had put up with such a rotten, reactionary feudal rule too long a time. And when they found an opportunity to throw it out they grabbed it. There was never such an opportunity during earlier elections as all the parliamentary parties were either loyal to the King or displayed nominal opposition to the King. It is only the CPN(Maoist) which had shown its firm commitment to abolish the monarchy once for all and had come to the fore as an alternative to the bourgeois-feudal parties.

Two, the masses of Nepal had enough of bullying, intervention and domination by Indian expansionism. There is a general atmosphere of suspicion regarding the motives of the Indian ruling classes in Nepal. The people of Nepal had suffered too long under the obnoxious unequal treaties signed by successive rulers of Nepal with the Indian government such as the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship, the Mahakali Treaty, and so on. The Indian rulers have always had an eye on the natural wealth of Nepal, its rich natural gas reserves, hydro-electric potential, forest products etc. Along with imperialist exploitation, oppression and plunder, the Indian CBB too is seen as an obstacle for the development of the local industry and trade. Besides this, Indian ruling classes have been continuously interfering in the political affairs of Nepal. They supported the monarchy all along and in the past few years took up the so-called two-pillar theory of supporting the King as well as the Nepali Congress. They gave training, supplied arms to the Royal Nepal Army, and sent all sorts of aid to contain the Maoist revolutionaries in Nepal. All these despicable acts had only fuelled the anger of the masses against Indian government. Now when an opportunity presented itself before them in the form of the CPN(M) they naturally voted for it which should be seen as a vote against Indian domination. None of the other Parties showed the guts to confront India. It was only the CPN(M) which

categorically assured the people that it would do away with all the unequal treaties with India, ban obscene Hindi films, stop recruitment of Gurkhas into the Indian Army and provide them with alternative employment, and so on.

Three, the masses of Nepal had enough of the exploitation, oppression and intervention of the US imperialists. Throughout the rule of King Gyanendra and even until today after the humiliating defeat of his loyalist parties in elections, US imperialists has stood by his side rendering all aid to perpetuate his rule and to brutally suppress the Maoists. They had placed the CPN(M) on its list of terrorist outfits. This is a grave insult to the people of Nepal who view this as unwarranted meddling in Nepal's affairs. By supporting the discredited King US imperialists became even more discredited and hated by even those who had no anti-imperialist consciousness or opposed to US imperialism as they see it as a protector of feudal monarchy.

Four, the promises made by the CPN(M) to establish a democratic, federal, secular Nepal with freedom, democracy and equality for all the oppressed sections of society such as Dalits, adivasis, national minorities and women had an electrifying impact. For the first time, these oppressed sections were given considerable representation in the elections. Under such conditions, the oppressed masses came out enthusiastically in support of the Maoists. Women's turn-out, it is said, was equal to, and may be even greater than that of men—something unimaginable in a feudal country like Nepal.

Five, the most important factor is the positive impact created by the decade-long people's war led by the Maoists on the overall balance of forces in Nepal. The Maoists had established control over almost three-quarters of rural Nepal. Through the people's revolutionary governments in the countryside they had carried out several reforms which brought the masses closer to them. Most of the Parties had thus become irrelevant in the eyes of the people. The impact of armed struggle should not be underestimated. For instance, even in India if we see, the united Communist Party won an overwhelming majority of seats (31 out of 32 seats) in the elections to the state assembly in Telangana region in 1957. This, in spite of the fact that the CPI had withdrawn the Telangana armed struggle so much was the impact of the anti-feudal armed agrarian struggle on the people of Telangana.

Lastly, though a less important factor, mention must be made of the support of the local capitalists and a section of the traders who, even though are opposed to the Maoists in general, think that bringing them to power is the only guarantee for peace in Nepal. They fear that Maoists would once again take to arms if they are defeated in the polls.

Q: Now that the Maoists have come to power will they be able to carry out the promises made?

Azad: This is the most difficult question to answer. The immediate problem for the Maoists is to secure a coalition of forces that can meet the target of two-thirds majority in the Constituent Assembly in order to incorporate their radical reforms into the new Constitution. But to achieve two-thirds majority they have to rely on the reactionary comprador-feudal parties such as NC and social democratic UML. Needless to say, it is impossible to carry

through the promised reforms with such a hotch-potch combination of forces. These Parties in the coalition will not be willing to be a party to the programme of the Maoists and will, moreover, try to subvert any radical changes which are aimed at curtailing their own class interests.

It is a fundamental tenet of Marxism that no radical restructuring of the system is possible without the militant mobilization of the vast masses into bitter class struggle. It is impossible to make genuine changes in the system through measures initiated "from above", i.e. through state decrees and laws. Whichever Party may be in power, not excluding the most radical Maoists, it can only make laws at best, but to implement these it is imperative to mobilize the masses and advance class struggle against exploiters and oppressors. Without this the liberation of the vast majority of poor is an impossible task. And for the CPN (M), even enacting the much-promised laws will be an almost impossible task given the present coalition in the CA. No ruling class will give up power without putting up a bitter struggle and carrying out counter-revolutionary activities against the oppressed class. **Hence the real, bitter and most cruel struggle for power will now unfold soon after the elections. The reactionaries will oppose every change tooth and nail. And, lacking a majority in the Constituent Assembly, the Maoists will be powerless to affect radical changes in the Constitution. Either they have to compromise and adjust with a section of the reactionary forces thereby sacrificing the class interests of the oppressed in whose interests they had come to power, or, they have to mobilize the people and intensify the struggle through all means, including armed insurrection, in order to implement genuine democracy and establish people's power. There is no other alternative.**

We must not forget the experiences of Indonesia, Chile, Nicaragua and other countries where the Communist Parties had come to power but were either thrown out in counter-revolutionary coups accompanied by counter-revolutionary massacres of Communist cadres, or threw out the Party in so-called elections as in the case of Nicaragua. The experience of Nicaragua is very much relevant in the context of so-called multi-party democracy.

Q: How do you envisage the future scenario in Nepal? Will India and US imperialism adjust to the new reality that had emerged in Nepal and support the Maoist government or will they create hurdles?

Azad: We will be living in a fool's paradise if we think that imperialist America and expansionist India will be comfortable with the Maoists in power in Nepal or that they will adjust themselves to the new reality. Though they will have no other go but to continue diplomatic relations they will also continue to create an adverse situation for the new government if it does not obey their dictates. The fact is that the US rendered all help to its stooge parties in Nepal to defeat the Maoists. It tried its best to keep the monarchy alive as the King was the most reliable pillar for its rule by proxy in Nepal. And as for India, it received a slap in its face when its chief stooge—GP Koirala and his NC—tasted an ignominious defeat. Most of the stalwarts of NC were trounced and swept away in the flood of people's fury as their

traitorous deals with India have by now become well-known to the Nepali people.

However, India has gained in another front. In the Tarai region it supported the two Madhesi parties which won a considerable number of seats with the backing of India. **India will use the Madhesi trump card to create disturbances in Nepal if the new regime does not toe its line. Already Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) led by Upendra Yadav has demanded that the Maoists should make their stand clear on the demand for Madhesi autonomy (Ek Madhes Ek Prades) and had asked the Maoists to discontinue their relations with international forums like the RIM and CCOMPOSA. Both US and India will try by various means to bring the new government to toe their line.** They can, for instance, hit at Nepal's belly—its economy—by paralyzing industrial production, blocking trade and supply lines thereby creating food shortages and shortage of consumer goods; in other words it can squeeze Nepal through an economic blockade. This it will do if it thinks the new regime is going too far. As it is, the situation in Nepal is already too delicate with almost 10 hours of load-shedding even in capital Kathmandu and a shortage of all essential commodities. Its powerful neighbours can alter the balance through economic blackmail which could lead to growth of social unrest and massive protests against the Maoists. **Acute shortage of essential items and rising prices can lead to disenchantment with the fledgling regime and a dip in its popularity thereby giving an opportunity to the discredited parties to re-establish themselves. Thus the situation in Nepal will remain extremely delicate and unstable even though the Maoists had won an impressive electoral victory.** Comrades Prachanda and Bhattarai know this well and hence they have been appealing for India's cooperation. They had gone on record saying that there will not be stability in Nepal without India's cooperation. The fact that Nepal is a small country sandwiched between two powerful and big neighbours—India and China—and that it is a target for the US imperialists makes the governance quite a difficult proposition. **Hence we should not read too much from the electoral victory of the Maoists in Nepal.**

Q: Then do you mean the electoral victory of the Maoists and their capture of state power through parliamentary means is a futile exercise, and that it cannot bring the desired radical change in the social system?

Azad: I don't exactly mean that. The control of state power, if they really can control, does give the Maoists a means to defend the gains accrued during the long years of revolutionary war and to affect radical changes in the social system. But this cannot be achieved through the type of state power that has fallen into the hands of the Maoists at the present juncture. In fact, even in classical revolutions as in China, where the Communist revolutionaries had seized power through an armed revolution, Mao had warned of the danger of the rise of a new class by virtue of their positions in the state machinery. After Mao, the state had degenerated into a machinery of oppression and suppression of the vast masses. **The lesson that we Communists had learnt from this experience is that the Party**

should concentrate on organizing the masses and mobilizing them to rebel against all types of injustice and exploitation perpetrated by state and Party bureaucrats.

In Nepal, where the Maoists have come to power in alliance with a section of the reactionary ruling classes, it is an even more urgent task of the Maoists to continue the class struggle by organizing the masses against all forms of exploitation and oppression. To the extent possible, the Maoists should use their relative control over the state to help the masses in their struggle for freedom, democracy and livelihood. **But it would be an illusion to perceive the state as an instrument for bringing about a basic change in the lives of the people. This can be achieved through continuation of class struggle for which, the state can, at best, render some help.**

Q: Sitaram Yechuri of the CPI(M), among several others, have said that the Maoists of India have to learn from Nepal's experiences and take the parliamentary road to come to power. What does your Party say in this regard?

Azad: Why Yechuri alone? Even the DGPs of Jharkhand, AP and other states where Maoist movement is strong had said that before. Leaders of other reactionary ruling class parties had been harping on the same theme ever since the revisionists began participating in parliament in our country. Some like former RAW chief Thorakan have said that the Maoist victory in Nepal would have a demonstration effect on the Maoists of India.

Firstly, those who say this forget that the situation in Nepal and India are completely different. In Nepal the immediate political task before the entire Nepali masses was a struggle against the monarchy which circumstance had brought about a measure of unity among the various parliamentary parties and broad sections of people. The King himself, with the active guidance and aid from US imperialism had created a situation where all forces had to close their ranks and wage a struggle for democracy. The fact that hardly two per cent of the Nepali population supported the monarchy, as revealed by a 2008 Survey report, shows the basis for such a united struggle of the Nepalese people and the CPN(M) utilized such a situation. In India, it is a fight against the semi-colonial, semi-feudal social system of which the parliamentary system is part and parcel. All the major parliamentary parties are representatives of the comprador-feudal classes, obey the dictates of imperialists, and hence stand in the counter-revolutionary camp. Here the immediate task is struggle for land, livelihood and liberation for the vast majority of the masses.

Even in Nepal, to achieve these, class struggle has to be waged and parliament can do hardly anything to mitigate the sufferings of the masses. Now with the exit of the King, when the real questions confronting the people have come to the fore, it will not take much time for them to realize this universal truth.

Yechuris, Karats and Buddhadebs have over 40 years of experience in the Parliamentary pig-sty. But what basic changes have they brought in the system? Their parliamentary cretinism has done no good for the masses. The rich have grown richer and poor poorer even in the states where these revisionists have

been in power. Without their support the ruling UPA government headed by Manmohan Singh would not have dared to carry out the anti-people policies. They had correctly dubbed themselves as “*a barking dog that doesn't bite*”. **They agree that they are powerless to do anything more than acting as “speed-breakers”, as described by one of their spokespersons, in the path of the anti-people onslaught by the UPA government at the Centre. The fact is, they are not merely speed-breakers. They actually act as political brokers intermediating between the vast masses and the reactionary rulers trying to bring about class harmony in place of class struggle.** In the states where they are directly in power they have become no less exploiters and oppressors than the Congress and the BJP. Singur and Nandigram are their laboratories for carrying through their pro-imperialist, comprador big business policies. And in this they have become even more brutal thanks to the vast army of social fascist gangs at their disposal. These political prostitutes spin one theory after another such as “*the bigger evil versus the lesser evil*”, that they have no power to stop the SEZs across the country, unless, of course, they come to power at the Centre to justify their hobnobbing with Congress at one time, TDP at another and such antics. But in the same breath they hypocritically say that without SEZs, privatization, foreign investment, etc., West Bengal and Kerala cannot go ahead with industrialization, and so on.

No wonder, imperialist and comprador capital is very impressed by the performance of the Indian “Left”. NRI industrialist Lord Swaraj Paul, who is the chairman of the Caparo Group which is setting up a component unit in Singur, was all praise for the CPI(M) and its leader Buddhadeb when he visited West Bengal as the head of a delegation of the United Kingdom branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. **These social fascists have now become the blue-eyed boys of the World Bank, Tatas, Salems, Swaraj Pauls and the people of India will fare no better under a CPI(M) government at the Centre.**

There is little wonder they have been asking the Indian Maoists to follow suit. Our Party firmly believes that a basic change in the system cannot be achieved through the parliamentary path but through class struggle. In our country this takes the form of armed agrarian revolutionary war. We, of course, do not reject other forms of struggle and organization, besides armed struggle and armed organization, and you would have realized this if you are a keen observer of our movement. This is of no consequence to our Mr. Yechuri who only dreams of seats in the Parliament like any other ruling class party. We, on the other hand, invite everyone opposed to imperialism, feudalism, comprador bureaucrat capitalism and the neo-liberal policies of the reactionary ruling classes of India, to come forward to wage a united militant struggle instead of whiling their time in an impotent anti-people Parliament and acting as lobbyists and power brokers. For revisionist chieftains like Yechuri, who are bogged down neck-deep into the morass of parliamentarism and bourgeois lobbying, such a revolutionary alternative is naturally an anathema.

Q: Prachanda had earlier said that he would be the first President of Republican Nepal but a few days ago he changed tack and declared that he would head the ministry. Do you think it is correct for anyone in a Communist Party to be the head of

the government, chief of the Party and army at the same time?

Azad: We too had seen his statements in this regard. He still says he wants to be the President if it is acceptable to all i.e. by consensus. As such, the present Constitution of Nepal has no provision for an Executive President. It will take another two years for the Constituent Assembly to adopt the newly drafted Constitution and to arrive at a final decision on this. Hence comrade Prachanda might have reconsidered his earlier decision and decided to become the Prime Minister.

Now the question is not whether the Party chief should be President or Prime Minister. We have a different opinion altogether. We think that the Party chief should be neither. He/she should concentrate on developing class struggle and not get immersed in the administration of the state. If we believe that the role of the Party is to continue class struggle until the final stage of Communism then we can appreciate our viewpoint. The history of revolutions had shown that once the Party has led the revolution to final victory it also lays the basis for the rise of a new class of Party and state bureaucrats. When the Party and state completely coalesce then it will be terribly difficult to fight the rise of bureaucratic class and to mobilize the people against the wrongs done by the state. Hence it is very much essential that the party leaders remain with the masses, organize and guide them against each and every form of exploitation and oppression. In Nepal this becomes even more crucial as the Maoists have to share power with a section of the comprador-feudal classes.

Q: Prachanda and Bhattarai had declared that they are willing to invite FDI and to create a business-friendly environment in Nepal. They also said that they would encourage capitalism. Is it correct for a Maoist party to invite foreign investment and develop capitalism?

Azad: Firstly we must understand the reality of Nepal. It is an extremely backward, semi-feudal country that lacks the minimum infrastructure and industrial production. It is a part of the Fourth World, if we can call it so. The UN has placed it in the category of Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Hence the first task in Nepal would be to liberate the vast masses from the feudal clutches and develop industry on that basis. As regards developing capitalism in Nepal there need not be any objection from revolutionaries as long as it is national capitalism and is properly regulated to meet the needs of the masses and is directed towards the growth of the internal economy and not for exports or for serving the imperialists. **But if the encouragement is for inflow of foreign capital it will be detrimental to the interests of the country in the long run. The foreign capital would begin to control the economy of Nepal even if the Maoists are the major partners in the government just as it had done till now. The Maoists should encourage indigenous capital and help its growth while gradually eliminating foreign capital.** Both Prachanda and Mr Bhattarai had a meeting with businessmen under the aegis of the Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI) as soon as the results became clear. There is pressure from businessmen for an investment-friendly environment, maximisation of profit, tax reforms, new flexible labour laws and a positive industrial policy.

In the past Maoists had opposed private institutions in health and education sectors. But now Prachanda has promised private-public partnership will be encouraged in health and education sectors. Mr Bhattarai has promised to remove whatever hurdles that may arise in the private sector. We have been hearing reports of talks between the Maoist leaders and the officials of World Bank. If these reports are true then it will have dangerous consequences on the future of Nepal. Depending on FDI and adopting pragmatic approach towards industrialization of Nepal in the name of overcoming the country's economic backwardness will only lead to opposite results and strengthen the hold of the imperialists.

Q: How do you foresee the future fraternal relations between your Party and the CPN(M)? Given the fact that the Indian state does not want the Maoists of Nepal to maintain relations with the Indian Maoists, and the demands by MJF in this regard is a clear indication of growing Indian pressure, will fraternal relations between the two Parties continue as before?

Azad: We believe and desire that fraternal relations between the CPI(Maoist) and CPN(Maoist) should continue as before. As long as both the Parties stand firmly committed to proletarian internationalism international pressures and internal pressures will not come in the way.

Of course, there is bound to be increasing pressure from various quarters on the Maoists of Nepal to cut off their relations with other Maoist Parties. Particularly India and the US will exert utmost pressure in this regard. We do understand the complexity of the situation. However, we must keep in mind that every Communist Party is a detachment of the world proletariat. And any proletarian Party will place national interests subordinate to the interests of the world proletariat. Comrade Prachanda had correctly said that ideological ties between the two Parties will remain intact. And we believe the ideological debates and discussions have to continue. The various international fora such as CCOMPOSA should continue with their aims and activities in spite of the new situation that had arisen.

Q: What do you have to say about comrade Prachanda's comment in his interview to *The Hindu* that "for the Indian Maoist party, its leaders and cadres, these efforts of ours provide some new material to study, to think about and go ahead in a new way. Our efforts provide a reference point."

Azad:

Q: Finally, is there anything you want to say to the people of Nepal and the CPN(M)?

Azad: Our Party, CPI(Maoist), sends its revolutionary greetings on behalf of our CC, entire Party rank and file, and the people of India to the CPN(Maoist) and the people of Nepal for their categorical rejection of monarchic rule and the comprador-feudal Parties through the elections to the Constituent Assembly. We wish to appraise them that the real battle for the transformation of their lives and the life of Nepal begins now. Lack of vigilance even for a moment could prove dear to the Maoists as well as the

people of Nepal as vultures within and outside their country are only too eager to maintain the existing social order and itching to destroy all the gains achieved by the people and the Maoists. We wish to remind the CPN(M) and the people of Nepal to bear in mind the warning we had given in November 2006 when they decided to become part of the interim government. I repeat what we said then: *"The agreement by the Maoists to become part of the interim government in Nepal cannot transform the reactionary character of the state machinery that serves the exploiting ruling classes and imperialists. The state can be the instrument in the hands of either the exploiting classes or the proletariat but it cannot serve the interests of both these bitterly-contending classes. It is the fundamental tenet of Marxism that no basic change in the social system can be brought about without smashing the state machine. Reforms from above cannot bring any qualitative change in the exploitative social system however democratic the new Constitution might seem to be, and even if the Maoists become an important component of the government. It is sheer illusion to think that a new Nepal can be built without smashing the existing state."*

Our Party hopes that CPN(M) will take heed of our fraternal advice and continue the class struggle to achieve real liberation of Nepal from imperialism, feudalism, Indian expansionism and advance towards socialism and Communism. It has no other go but to continue the people's war to achieve the above aim as it is impossible to carry out basic transformation in the social system through the coalition of forces that have come to power at the present juncture.

Our Party will wage uncompromising struggle against the machinations and expansionist designs, the intervention and bullying and acts of subversion of the Indian ruling classes in Nepal and assure that we shall stand firmly by the side of the CPN(M) and the people of Nepal in their fight for genuine freedom and independence. It is only the victory of the revolution in India that can ensure real equality and mutual respect between the two countries. And our Party will step up its efforts to advance the revolution in our country to its ultimate victory.

Q: Before departing I would like to have a clarification regarding some recent reports in the media that the spokesperson of the CC, CPI(Maoist), Azad, and his wife Rama had died in an encounter with the police in the Eturnagaram forest in Warangal district of AP. So, after all, this had turned out to be just a rumour!

Azad: Need I to say anything more on this when you are face-to-face with the supposedly dead person? I only wonder at the incapacity of the media to verify facts before publishing. Every lie that is churned out by the media acquires a certain measure of credibility in the eyes of the people at least for some time. They create confusion and mislead public opinion. With regard to the so-called encounter that was supposed to have led to my death the first lies that were circulated in the media, though these were not repeated in the later news reports, were enough to create a dent in some people's minds. Even when the facts eventually come out it would be too late to correct the impressions created. Many people still think that Azad is dead. In last Tuesday's (April 22) Indian Express, for instance, there was a centre page article by former

chief of Research & Analysis Wing, Mr. P.K. Hormis Tharakan who wrote that “*CPI(Maoist) spokesperson and CC member, Azad (Gajarla Saraiah) and his wife Rama were killed in an encounter in Eturnagaram forest*”. This was in the context of his analysis of the electoral results in Nepal. One can imagine how great is the impact of news reports appearing in the media which can easily carry away an experienced senior intelligence officer of the Indian establishment! On the other hand, this also shows how raw is the brain of a former chief of RAW!!

Q: Wasn't Gajarla Saraiah alias Azad a member of the CC and CMC?

Azad: No. Even that is not a fact. The fact is that comrade Gajarla Saraiah (also known as Azad and Raghu) was a member of NT Special Zonal Committee until 2004 after which he was transferred to Maharashtra where he served as a member of the state committee and secretary of Gondia-Balaghat divisional committee until August 2006. He was never a member of the CC or the CMC as propagated by the media. He and his wife Rama were picked up by the APSIB from Kolhapur town in Maharashtra and brutally murdered after torturing them cruelly. Their bodies were thrown in the forest in Warangal and, as usual, the notorious SIB of AP projected this cold-blooded murder as an encounter. They also tried to make it appear that he was a senior member of the CC and CMC. The police in AP know very well that both these comrades were out of the state for over four years and yet had the audacity to claim that they were killed in Warangal forests. That is the power these licensed goondas of the state enjoy in a country that is said to be a Republic having a Constitution. Every encounter killing—and these run into thousands over the years—is a telling vindication of the Maoist thesis that Indian democracy is formal and fake. The lawlessness of the police and security forces had never come into question by the Courts and not a single officer in AP had been indicted for murder in spite of carrying out over three thousand murders in the past two decades.


News from Battle-field


Ten cops injured in landmine blast in Jharkhand

On April 2, Maoist guerrillas set off a landmine near Galobad on the road leading to Chanho under Vishnugarh police station limits in Hazaribagh district of Bihar. Ten security personnel, including eight CRPF jawans along with two personnel of Special Task Force, travelling in an Anti-Land Mine Vehicle (ALMV) were injured in the blast. The blast took place when the vehicle just crossed a newly constructed culvert between Badhkharo and Banaso villages, about 35 km from Hazaribagh, during the afternoon when a team of CRPF and state police were conducting a joint patrolling in the area. The blast was so intense that the rear portion of the ALMV was considerably damaged and the spare wheel attached on the rear was catapulted over seven hundred feet away. The vehicle, manufactured by the Medak-based Ordinance Factory, was purchased by the state as part of the 'modernisation programme' sponsored by the Union Home Ministry.

Dandakaranya bandh successfully observed on April 8 as a protest against cold-blooded murder of 17 revolutionaries in Darelli (Pamedu)

A bandh was called by CPI(Maoist) on April 8 to protest against the killing of 17 Maoists a fortnight earlier in a joint operation conducted by Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh police near Darelli (Pamedu) in Bastar. Normal life was affected in at least eight districts of southern Chhattisgarh. The bandh was total in Charla and its adjoining areas in Andhra Pradesh and partial in all the mandals of Bhadrachalam and Palvancha divisions.

The Railways had to stall operation of train services in forest areas leading to a total halt of iron ore movement from Bailadilla mines in Dantewada district. Vehicular movement on Dantewada – Sukma road was also affected after guerrillas damaged the roads.

Hundreds of villages were plunged in darkness as the guerrillas blew up power supply lines in Bhoopalpatnam – Usur blocks of Bijapur district and Narayanpur district on 7th night. This was the second black out in the past one year in the Bastar region. Last year, the entire region was engulfed in darkness for 12 days when the guerrillas blew up three high tension towers on May 31, 2007. This was said to have caused a loss of nearly Rs. 2000 crore, according to Chhattisgarh government sources.

News from Battle-field



Jharkhand Bandh against Garhwa

fake encounter and state repression observed successfully on April 16

The Bihar-Jharkhand Special Area Committee of CPI(Maoist) issued a call for Jharkhand bandh on April 16 to protest against the growing brutalities and fake encounters staged by the police and para-military forces on the Maoists and those associated with the revolutionary movement in the state. The bandh was specifically called to protest against the Garhwa incident, where eight Maoists and their sympathisers were brutally murdered, and against the so-called encounters in East Singhbhum and Hazaribagh.

The authorities of Dhanbad railway division, which sprawls over 13 districts, have cancelled all the passenger trains plying in the Maoists-affected Coal India Chord (CIC) Section. On the night of April 15, about 200 Maoists gheraoed Jogeswar-Bihar and Daniyawan stations on the CIC section. They also blew the railway tracks between Choudhary bandh and Chengro railway stations in Grand Chord (GC) section which falls under the jurisdiction of Dhanbad Railway Division in Giridih district. Due to the powerful blast that ripped off tracks from the concrete sleeper plates, all movement of traffic on the tracks from both sides came to halt.



Scene at the bus stand in Ranchi during bandh

On the day of the bandh, armed Maoist guerrillas raided Fesar railway station in Aurangabad district in neighbouring Bihar and held its five employees captive, disrupting rail traffic on the Aurangabad-Mughalsarai section of the East Central Railway. Movement of trains on the section was affected for more than two hours due to the incident. The Maoists later freed the railway employees.

Naxals torch machines at Railway camp office

Hazaribag: An armed squad of PLGA raided the Railway Construction Camp office at Besh-Rasham village under Katkamasandi PS of the district on the night of April 14 and torched half-a dozen heavy machines. They dismantled the shed built for accommodating staff members. The place is situated some 35 kms from Hazaribag town inside the forests.

As per reports, a team of some 30-40 armed guerrillas reached the camp office and torched the vehicles. The heavy machines, including imported ones, were torched one by one from the fuel-tank. A jeep, a generator set, a vagon drill and a compressor were also gutted. The work for the two-kilometer stretch of Hazaribag-Ranchi railway project was given to the Ranchi-based Highway-Hayden Group.

News from Battle-field



Punishments to police agents and reactionary elements

** On April 5, PLGA guerrillas annihilated Vanju Kungat, a police informer in Kachanpura village in Etapalli tehsil in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra.

** On April 9, around 30 guerrillas raided the village of Peta in Malkangiri district of Orissa and annihilated a police informer and village head Madakam Kannayya.

** Six members of the vigilante gang, Shashastra People's Morcha (SPM), were annihilated by PLGA guerrillas in Rohtas district of Bihar on the 9th of April. All of them belong to Gaya district.

** On April 2, four police agents were annihilated by PLGA guerrillas in Arki village in Khunti district, 50 Km from Ranchi.

** Three CPM men shot in Salboni: A CPM leader and two party supporters were annihilated by Maoist guerrillas at Garmal in Salboni on April 13. CPI(M) Garmal branch committee secretary Mukul Tewari, Naba Kumar Murmu and Jugal Murmu were actively involved in organizing attacks on the Maoists and were acting as police agents. Four others were injured, but managed to escape. The killings have shaken the social fascist CPI(M) in Salboni, Belpahari, Binpur, Lalgah and Chandrakona. They fear more Maoist attacks in the run-up to the rural polls.

** Nine members of Shanti Sena annihilated: The reactionary vigilante gang, Shanti Sena, is notorious for its counter-revolutionary activities in Jharkhand. It was set up by the police specially to suppress the Maoists. On 1st April, the goons of Shanti Sena tasted the wrath of the PLGA. Nine members of the vigilante gang, including its leader Bhado Singh, were annihilated near Senari village in Gumla district. The private armed gang continued to fire at the Maoists when their vehicle was attacked but the latter managed to overpower and annihilate them.

Hunger strike by Maoist prisoners in Nagpur central jail: Authorities feign ignorance

The jail authorities in Nagpur central jail and the Maharashtra police have become notorious for their treatment of prisoners and for foisting one case after another on those who come out on bail. Whether it is the Maoists, Muslim militants or ordinary people—all have to bear the brunt of police vindictiveness and harassment. The moment a prisoner is let out on bail he/she is picked up again and pushed into the jail on some trumped up charge. One such glaring instance was the repeated re-arrest of comrade Mallesh by the police.

Protesting against such -handedness of the jail administration, 12 Maoist prisoners, including former members of Maharashtra state committee of CPI(Maoist), comrades Mahesh Reddy and Arun Fareira, sat on a indefinite hunger strike since the beginning of April 2008.

Both the state anti-naxal operation cell and the jail administration tried desperately to underplay the issue. When asked by reporters they first denied that Maoist prisoners were on hunger strike, later when the facts came out in the press they feigned ignorance. For instance, ANO chief Pankaj Gupta has claimed that he was kept in the dark regarding the ongoing protest by Naxals and their demands. *"It seems that the Naxal inmates in the jail have formed some groups and are trying to mount pressure on the administration,"* said Gupta. *"The ANO should have been informed earlier about the demands and developments of the Naxals in prison,"* added Gupta.

The Maoist prisoners submitted a petition before the adhoc sessions judge to seek permission to interact with the media. For the media is kept in the dark by the police and the jail authorities about the reasons behind their protests regarding various issues.

Apart from seeking court permission to meet the media, Latakka, Ramu Salame and Sanjay Madavi (all arrested in 2004 for operating an arms factory in Gittikhadan area) have also written to the government regarding their demands which they are highlighting through the hunger strike.

Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister, RR Patil, had to order a probe into the charges framed against the Maoists and their sympathizers.

News from Battle-field



Maoists PLGA carries out Bihar’s biggest raid in Jhajha: 44 arms seized

On 14 April, 2008, Maoist guerrillas carried out a daring raid on the government railway police (GRP) station situated in Jhajha railway station in Jamui district on Patna-Howrah mainline in Bihar. Five policemen, including one Sub-Inspector, were killed on the spot and one more died in hospital later, and several more were injured, some of them critically. Traffic between Patna and Howrah was disrupted after the attack snapped railway communication links at the station. The railway station comes under Danapur division.



Maoists seized 44 weapons, including twenty seven 303 rifles, six SLRs and two carbines, besides ammunition from the GRP armoury. The attack, which came at 6.30pm, also targeted the railway booking office and the RPF post at Jhajha station.

News from Battle-field



News from Counter-revolutionary camp

Maharashtra elite force to fight Naxals

MUMBAI, APRIL 2 : In a clear indication of the seriousness with which the Naxalite threat is being viewed by Maharashtra, the state police is raising an elite force of specially trained men who would be provided with state-of-the-art technology and weapons to battle the Leftist extremists, according to the Director General of Police A N Roy. The force is expected to be on the lines of similar units in Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh even though the level of Naxalite violence in Maharashtra is not the same.

"We are taking the Naxalite problem extremely seriously, and are putting in focused efforts to tackle it," Roy told *The Indian Express*. "To this end, we are soon going to form a special crack team to deal with counter-Naxalite operations in affected parts of the state. Although, a proposal for forming such a team is under process, I can say that it will take off soon."

"The need for such an initiative had been felt for some time now, and it is necessary to bolster the existing machinery that we have," he said.

Maharashtra had planned a "special action group" for this purpose and recruited about 200 constables about a year ago. But it had failed to take off as no senior officers were appointed and the constables were just posted across police stations in the eastern districts.

"It will be a small yet elite operational group of men who would have received special training," Roy said referring to the new force. "We are contemplating what rank of officer should head the team, as well as the men who should be chosen for the job. Operational details are being worked out at this stage," he said, refusing to discuss details.

Fresh from a visit to Naxalite-affected areas of the state, Roy, who took over office as DGP last month, said he was also drafting a comprehensive plan to deal with Naxalism. Days after he took over, he said that fighting the Naxalites would be one of his top priorities.

Roy said he had met families of victims of Naxalite violence as well as surrendered Naxalites during his trips.

"The tour of Naxalite-affected areas was something truly educational for me. Our men who have been posted in some of these areas are living under the most trying circumstances, and it was necessary for me to visit them," the former Mumbai police commissioner said.

"This was the first time that a high ranking officer had visited some of the areas close to the Chhattisgarh border. We have now gained a clear understanding of the ground situation and a comprehensive plan to tackle the problem is being chalked out," he said.



Naxals planning major strikes in UP, says report

Abhinav Pandey, Press Trust Of India

Lucknow, April 06, 2008

Naxalites have set up new bases in Uttar Pradesh and are planning "major strikes" in the state, a top police officer reveals. "We have information that new entrants are being trained in the jungles and rugged zones. We are working to avert any strike," the senior officer, who refused to be identified, told PTI.

Quoting intelligence reports, the officer said the Naxals were planning to attack offices and camps of security forces besides planning to loot explosives from godowns of rock industry units and wholesale suppliers based in Sonbhadra and Mirzapur.

The last major Naxal strike in Uttar Pradesh was on November 20, 2004, when the ultras ambushed a police patrol party and killed at least 17 cops near a culvert in Chandauli district.

The incident occurred when landmines blew up the vehicle carrying Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) personnel, who were proceeding towards Naugarh police station area for a combing operation.

Besides, the senior officer said that the Naxals were also using "money power" to recruit people from weaker sections of the society with the help of some NGOs and smaller political outfits.

Such recruits generally conducted single strike after which they returned to their native villages to evade any suspicion, he added.

Janashakti chief nabbed in Pune

Omer Farooq | Hyderabad

The CPI(ML)Janashakti, the second largest Maoist organisation in the State after the CPI(Maoist), has suffered a major blow with the arrest of its central committee secretary K Devendar alias Amar. Karimnagar District Superintendent of Police Y Gangadhar, who produced the Maoist militant before the media, said Amar was arrested from his hideout in Pune in Maharashtra.

In his interaction with the media Amar admitted that the Janashakti had become alienated from the people as well as other CPI(ML) organisations. Amar, who had participated in the peace talks with the State Government in 2004, said that the movement had weakened ever since the peace talks.

Amar denied reports that he had surrendered to the police. "It is not correct. I was taken by surprise and arrested by the police, " he said. Amar is the second chief of Janashakti to be arrested by the police in two years. Earlier Amar's brother K Rajanna, the then central committee secretary was arrested in 1996.

Amar has forty cases against him and has ten non-bailable warrants pending. The charges he was facing include seven murders, two attempted murders and a conspiracy case. Hailing from Karimnagar district, Amar had gone underground in 1985 and starting as district committee member he went on to become its central committee member and then took over as the secretary.

Ranchi police arrest cultural activist Jeetan Marandi, claim he was involved in Chilkari incident

On April 6, the Ranchi police arrested comrade Jeetan Marandi, a leader of **Jharkhand Eben**, a cultural organization, and also an activist of PDFI. Paradoxically, he was charged with the murder of 20 persons including Anup Marandi, youngest son of Jharkhand Vikas Morcha-Prajatantrik (JVM-P) supremo and Koderma MP Babulal Marandi on October 28 last year. He was arrested from Ratu Road under Sukhdeonagar police station in Ranchi on April 5. Jeetan has been moving actively in organizing people against the government's anti-people policies such as displacement, SEZs, and various forms of repression and hence has been picked up under false pretext. Question arises why the police slept for over five months if they know that Jeetan was involved in the incident when he was moving freely attending legal meetings, protests and other activities since last October.

14 Maoists arrested in West Bengal

KOLKATA, April 4: Fourteen Maoists, including a woman, were arrested in West Bengal's Nadia district on April 4.

"This is the most important arrest after that of Somen [State secretary of the Communist Party of India (Maoist)]", Inspector-General of Police (Law and Order) Raj Kanojia, said.

Somen was arrested in February. In March, five suspected women Maoists were held while pasting posters at a railway station demanding his release.

The arrest of "a commander" of a Maoist "action squad" was said to have led to the arrest of 13 persons from the Kotwali area of Nadia district. Arms believed to have been snatched from the police were seized from those arrested. The police arrested Bapi Debnath, who used to be a zonal committee member of CPI (Maoist) and Raju alias Prosanta Das, who was the secretary of the Nadia-Murshidabad-Kalna Maoist zonal committee from Galakata Bhatjangla late on 5th night.

Orissa to submit blueprint to tackle Maoists

Pioneer News Service | Bhubaneswar

In a bid to tackle Maoists menace in Rayagada and Malkangiri district, the State will soon submit a blue print on its preparedness to Centre. The State Government hopes to get Rs 25 crore from Centre under the Security Related Expenditure scheme.

The Centre has decided to spend Rs 500 crore under this plan in the 81 Maoists affected districts in a span of five years. In the first year, the Centre has decided to spend Rs 100 crore in the Maoist affected districts of the country.

It has included two districts of Orissa under its funding scheme. Under this scheme, major thrust would be given on the overall development of infrastructure and improving the socio-economic conditions of the people of the Maoists affected areas.

The State Government hopes to receive Rs 25 crore under this fund. The funds will be spent to meet the critical gap like improving road net works, construction of school buildings, hospital and helipads.

In the second phase, the districts like Deogarh, Samabalpur and Gajapati would come under the security related expenditure. In order to expedite the developmental process in the Maoists affected areas, a monitoring committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Ajit Tripathy.

All secretaries and the DGP are the members of the committee. A high level meeting to this effect was conducted under the chairmanship of Home Secretary TK Mishra.

Laser light on terror war

TAPAS CHAKRABORTY

Lucknow, April 6: A laser technique that can be used to map terrain with high accuracy, penetrating even dense foliage, could help India boost its war on terror and guerrilla groups hiding in forests, experts and former defence officers have said.

Aerial surveillance based on the light detection and ranging (LIDAR) technology may help security agencies track down terror cells in deep forests more easily than conventional aerial photography, experts attending a LIDAR training programme at IIT Kanpur said.

“This is a technology to create very accurate 3D maps of terrain very fast,” said Bharat Lohani, associate professor of civil engineering at IIT Kanpur, who had organised the five-day training programme.

The technology will be a “boon to anti-insurgency operations” in the forests of the Northeast, Bastar, Andhra Pradesh and in the mountainous terrain of Jammu and Kashmir, said R.C. Padha, a former defence officer who participated in the training.

LIDAR technology can be used to pinpoint militant activities in deep forests which are often favoured hideouts of terror and guerrilla groups, including Naxalites, an expert at the programme said.

The LIDAR system placed on an aircraft sends laser pulses to the ground 400 times a second. These strike the surface and bounce back to the source, allowing operators to create a detailed 3D image of the terrain.

The laser pulses can yield detailed information about terrain altitudes, measuring even the height of grass in an area. Scientists say this capacity of the LIDAR may be used to identify forest pathways that have been eroded by human foot-falls.

Security experts point out that Naxalites in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand have managed to resist police and security forces by staying put in the thick jungles. Heavy foliage has been a major bottleneck in the police attempt to bust Naxalite cells.

“Conventional aerial surveillance cannot achieve this,” said an expert. “But a LIDAR can go through foliage and help create maps of areas with dense vegetation.”

Detailed 3D maps of specific locations could also help security agencies prepare in advance for attacks against terror groups, the expert said. “Security personnel could be far better trained when they go in.”

But IIT Kanpur's Lohani said the focus of the workshop was civilian applications. “Any long-term urban planning would require detailed topographic images, but there aren't enough of such maps being generated in India,” he said.

LIDAR facilitates extremely fast map generation, Lohani said. For example, he pointed out, the entire city of Kanpur could be covered by an aircraft flying over the city for just two days, and all terrain data could be processed for storage within four weeks.

Bullet proof: AP is second on scare list

Hyderabad, April 4: Andhra Pradesh has the largest number of bullet-proof cars in the country after Jammu and Kashmir. The Police Transport Organisation uses at least 200 bullet-proof cars for the protection of the Chief Minister, Dr Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy, his Cabinet colleagues and other VIPs. Following intelligence reports that Maoists may try to target the Chief Minister while he is in Delhi or when he tours the districts, police has also started using bullet-proof cars in these places.

Bullet-proof cars are now being used in Chittoor, Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam and other key areas when Dr Reddy is on a visit. The PTO recently bought 30 new bullet-proof Scorpios from Mahindra and Mahindra and handed them over to the Intelligence Security Wing. Top police officers said that the heightened security measures were necessary since the state faced both jihadi and Maoist threats. The police nowadays purchases bullet-proof cars directly from automobile companies and private fabricators in the city rather than the ordnance factory at Medak. Ambassador cars are no longer in fashion and police prefers Safaris and Tata Sumos.

"There are three kinds of bullet-proof cars," said a senior police officer. "One can withstand revolver shots while others can withstand all automatic weapons. Their tyres can also take bullets." Meanwhile, the police is also planning to set up more "anti-fidayeen" spike systems near main gates of key installations to prevent terrorists from driving in with explosives-laden vehicles.

"They are already installed at the office of the Director General of Police and the State Secretariat," said the senior policeman. Intelligence agencies had learnt recently that terrorists had planned to ram an explosives-laden car into the DGP's office. "This can happen anywhere," said the officer. "So we will be installing them in all major offices. The spikes will damage all four wheels of a speeding vehicle."

Martyrs in April 2008

**Red Salutes to comrade Anuradha Ghandy, member of the Central Committee,
CPI(Maoist)!**

APSIB's lawless goons kidnap and brutally murder Comrades Azad and Rama

On April 2, the APSIB men murdered comrades Gajarla Sarayya (alias Azad, Raghu) and Rama (alias Aruna, Lalita) after arresting them a day before in Kohapur city in Maharashtra. They were brutally tortured and their bodies were thrown in the forests of Eturnagaram in Warangal, the native district of comrade Sarayya. The ghastly incident shows once again the audacity with which the lawless SIB police in AP can murder at will and escape scot-free, how this torture and murder apparatus is accountable to none but the fascist thugs like YSReddy ruling the police state of AP.

The police know, and they also know that the people of the state know, that Azad had left the state of AP more than four years ago and that he was working in Maharashtra as a state committee member

The superintendent of police, Mr Vishwanath Chinnappa Sajjanar, said that a police party had moved to the forests near Ramapur village after getting a tip-off.

A group of six Maoists were holding a meeting in the forest area when the police party reached the spot. There was an exchange of fire and four Maoists escaped while Azad and his wife were killed, said Mr Sajjanar. Police recovered a 30 mm carbine, a pistol, a revolver and three kit bags from the encounter site.

Azad's son, Naveen, a second year BSc student, approached the Human Rights Commission on Wednesday requesting that the post-mortem on his father's body be conducted at the MGM Hospital here. The judge K. Kishan Rao directed the police shift the body to the MGM Hospital for the post-mortem in the presence of a judge and also ordered that it be videographed.

Tension prevailed in and around the hospital as the police laid a siege around the building and refused permission to any body except blood relatives to go inside the hospital. The battery of TV channel crews, reporters and activists were s

(Villagers carrying the dead bodies of comrades Sarayya and Rama) topped from entering the hospital building leading to tension. The popular balladeer Ghaddar and a revolutionary poet Varavara Rao were also prevented from seeing the bodies.

Speaking to the reporters both Ghaddar and Varavara Rao alleged that Azad and his wife were nabbed by the police elsewhere and killed in cold blood.

VV demanded that a murder case should be booked against the policemen involved in the incident. Azad's son Naveen said that the family was receiving threat calls to keep quiet and not organise any funeral procession.

They were cremated in Velishala, the native village of Sarayya, on the 3rd.



Comrades Azad and Rama meeting in the forest area



to

Azad Statement on the murder of comrades Sarayya (Azad) and Rama:

8 Maoist guerrillas become martyrs in Garwah

On April 1st eight Maoist guerrillas became martyrs in an exchange of fire between the special police forces and PLGA near Bandu village in the Makhhatu forest of Garwah in Jharkhand. Among the martyrs were sub-zonal committee member Basant Yadav, and ACMs Lalan Singh and Rajesh Paswan. In a joint operation, the 13th battalion of the CRPF, JAP-7 and district police led by officer in-charge of Ranka and Bhandari police stations took part in the attack on the Maoists. The exchange of fire took place when the paramilitary force and district police encircled a suspected Maoist hideout in Makhhatu forest, 55 km away from the district headquarters. The incident took place just one kilometer from Chattisgarh border at around 1 AM. The CRPF and state police surrounded the Maoists who were deep asleep and fired indiscriminately upon them. Those who were injured were caught and brutally murdered. The police used para bombs that illuminated the area.

SPECIAL NOTES:**ON SALWA JUDUM: Growing resentment and wide-spread condemnation on arming of private gangs by the state**

Of late, particularly after the Supreme Court's observations on the role of the state in arming the private vigilante gangs in the name of salwa judum, there has been wide-spread condemnation by various organizations, individuals and the media. We cite below some of these reactions that had appeared in the editorial columns of some newspapers in the month of April 2008.

Hindustan Times, April 1, 2008: When the state arms citizens to take on powerful opponents like the Naxals, it is admitting that it has failed in its role as the custodian of people's security. The Supreme Court has come out strongly against the State's nefarious role in setting up Salwa Judums in which arms are provided to civilians to fight Naxals in states like Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. The apex court has rightly accused the state of being an abettor to crime when it gives arms to citizens that they are meant to use to kill Naxals. The Salwa Judum project has been disastrous from the beginning. For starters, the State expects armed locals to take on powerful, ideologically motivated Naxals, a task that they are not trained to do. In other words, they are cannon fodder behind which the state can take refuge under the guise of passing power to the people.

Under no circumstance can the state be a party to encouraging vigilantism and this is what the Supreme Court has pulled it up for. Incidents of vigilantism have been recorded by a fact-finding team that visited Dantewada in Chhattisgarh and Khammam in Andhra Pradesh in January, 2008. It is now quite clear that these Salwa Judum is not spontaneous movement by people against Naxals. It is the result of coercion by the state of a people caught between the devil and the deep sea.

There are several mechanisms and institutions to deal with insurgencies. Should we believe that they are so ineffective as to leave policing in the hands of untrained citizens? Or could the more sinister motive be that the police, even paramilitary, do not want to be in the line of fire and would instead sacrifice the very people they are meant to protect? The verdict will play a significant role in affixing accountability for law and order. What has been going on so far in the name of the Salwa Judum amounts to criminalising society. The state must endeavour to get to the root cause of the disenchantment that attracts so many people to Naxalism. The court's ruling is a clear signal to the State that it cannot abdicate its responsibility as law-enforcer any longer.

End vigilantism (Paper to be verified)

The Supreme Court's trenchant criticism of the Salwa Judum offers the first glimmer of hope that the reign of terror unleashed by the Chhattisgarh government and its vigilante squads in Dantewada since 2005 might finally be brought to an end. Sponsored, armed, and financed by the State government with the support of the Centre in the egregious belief that fuelling a civil war in the heart of India is the best way of countering Naxalism, the Salwa Judum has exterminated more than 500 innocent civilians and caused the forcible displacement of tens of thousands of tribal people. Substantial numbers have fled to neighbouring Andhra Pradesh and are living in pathetic conditions. Neither the State nor the Central government can evade responsibility for trampling on the rule of law and for the human calamity that has been amply documented by a host of official and unofficial inquiries. As Chief Justice K.G. Balakrishnan justly observed, during the hearing of a public interest petition calling for the disbanding of the Salwa Judum, the distribution of arms to private persons by the government is tantamount to abetting murder. In the light of mounting evidence that the vigilante outfit is involved in large-scale atrocities, the Chhattisgarh government has made two flagrantly false claims. The first is that it is a "spontaneous" people's initiative. The second is that it is similar to the village defence committees set up in parts of Jammu and Kashmir to protect villagers from terrorist attacks. VDCs are defensive formations rooted in accountable institutions like the village panchayat. The Salwa Judum, on the other hand, is an unaccountable extension of the state designed to apply violence minus the government's fingerprints. Gondi for 'purification hunt,' it is a roving, offensive formation led by anti-social elements — not dissimilar to the death squads sponsored by dictators around the world to deal with insurgencies and all manner of deemed opponents.

Far from bringing peace, the Salwa Judum proved counterproductive: it is no coincidence that Chhattisgarh has the highest number of casualties at the hands of the Naxalites. Although there are enough reasons to warrant the immediate disbandment of the Salwa Judum, an independent inquiry monitored by the Supreme Court will be a welcome interim measure. Meanwhile, the path must urgently be cleared for the displaced tribal people to return to their homes and fields before the sowing season. Naxalism needs to be countered resourcefully but the response must not end up preying on the very people the government claims it wants to save.

Call off salwa judum 3 April (Paper to be verified) :

The Supreme Court on Monday questioned the legal premise of the Salwa Judum movement in Chhattisgarh. Echoing observations of various civil society groups, the court told the Chhattisgarh government that it was illegal to arm civilians and to allow them to kill. The Chhattisgarh government should now stop defending the indefensible and immediately disband private militias it has put together to fight Maoists.

Correctives to the failures of democratic politics have to be sought within the constitutional framework. These can't be achieved by curtailing the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to citizens or by promoting vigilantism. What is needed in states like Chhattisgarh is a right mix of public policies that address problems of education, health and employment and democratic institutions to ensure effective delivery of public funds. Crony capitalism and private militias are not substitutes for genuine market forces or a professional police force.

A strong civil society is necessary to ensure transparency and accountability in public administration. Efforts like Salwa Judum and laws like Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act do not help in the formation of a civil society. The latter especially has become a handy tool for the state government to stifle voices critical of the administration.

Activists speak up against draconian Acts

Say Chhattisgarh government is misusing the Special Security Act

NEW DELHI: Castigating the Chhattisgarh government for continuing with the draconian Special Security Act, Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy on Saturday said the Act was being misused to ban organisations and put people in the lock-up.

Speaking at a convention on "**Special Security Legislations and the Making of a Police State**" at the Gandhi Peace Foundation here, Ms. Roy said: "*Six hundred and forty villages have been emptied in the State and the villagers have been living in police camps. The State government has the powers to ban any organisation without giving any reason.*"

Under the Special Security Act, the government had the power to pick a Gandhian, a doctor, a journalist or a writer and put them in the lock-up, Ms. Roy claimed. The Chhattisgarh government feels that without this law it cannot implement its development programme.

"If we speak against the Special Security Act, then the government can put the same extraordinary clauses in some other Act."

Senior lawyer Prashant Bhushan said that under the pretext of arresting naxalites and Maoists, the government was arresting people working in peaceful organisations.

"The government has just one agenda — of increasing the Gross Domestic Product of the country even if that means handing over the control of our mines to national or multi national companies for exploiting our rich natural wealth of iron ore and bauxite. But the royalty paid to the government is the same as it was 40 years ago."

Noted journalist Praful Bidwai said that before the tribal State of Chhattisgarh was carved out of Madhya Pradesh, the tribals were controlling the State's rich mineral wealth. But now they were living in abject poverty.

"In South Bastar there is appalling poverty, sharp increase in infant mortality rate and retrograde steps like closing down of schools are being carried out. The Communist Party of India and other progressive organisations had recently mobilised 1.5 lakh people at Bastar, but it had no effect on the State government. There were more assaults on fundamental rights to perpetuate a regime of extracting capitalism."

According to the convener of the **Forum for Democratic Initiatives**, Radhika Menon, the United Progressive Alliance government had declared in 2004 that the much-misused and dreaded Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) was on its way out. "However, four years hence, people continue to be tried under the POTA as it was not retrospectively repealed and those booked continue to prove their innocence under provisions that puts the onus on them to prove their innocence."

CPI: Probe atrocities by SJ men

NEW DELHI, April 13: Seeking the Centre's response to its call for disbanding Salwa Judum (SJ) ~ an anti-Naxal movement spearheaded by armed villagers in the BJP-ruled Chattisgarh ~ the CPI today demanded an urgent inquiry into alleged atrocities by the SJ members from the government.

"Far from being a peaceful campaign, Salwa Judum activists are armed with guns, lathis, axes, bows and arrows. There has been a breakdown of civil administration and the rule of law in Dantewada district (the place of origin of the Salwa Judum movement)," the CPI national secretary, Mr D Raja, alleged here in a letter to the Prime minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, today.

Even as the facts concerning the brutal atrocities by sawa judum-police goons on the hapless of adivasis of Dandakaranya have at last begun to see the light of the day, and the series of white lies by the BJP government in Chattisgarh, Mahendra Karma of the Congress and the police top brass stand exposed in all their naked colours before the people, the reactionary DGP of Chattisgarh continues to churn out the same old nauseating tales that slawa judum is a spontaneous movement of adivasis against the Maoists and is an unarmed, peaceful movement. Are there any takers except a George Bush, a Tony Blair and their offsprings?

We present below some of the gems from the interview given by the biggest liar of Chattisgarh, Vishwa Ranjan given to the Pioneer.

Vishwa Ranjan (DGP, Chattisgarh): The court's observation has given the psychological war industry of the Maoists a momentary advantage. They will go all over the world quoting the court's observation. Why only common man, even the media, which should have known things better seems to have bought the Maoist assertion that Salwa Judum is illegal and that members of the movement have been given weapons to kill innocent tribals.

The truth is that there are no Salwa Judum camps and no civilian has been given arms. The truth is that there are 23 relief camps consisting of those tribals who ran away from their villages as a result of the Maoist oppression. Most of them belong to the Maria sub-groups of the Gond tribe. Now, a camp may have old people, women, children and youth. Some youth joined the Salwa Judum that was organised by Mahendra Karma to lead peace marches to various villages to persuade other tribals to revolt against the oppression of Maoists.

PNS: Are you saying no one has been given arms to tackle Maoists?

Ranjan: I'm not saying that. There are around 3,400 Special Police Officers (SPOs) who were appointed under Section 17 of the Police Act of 1861. They have been given training in handling of weapons. They are being called for periodical refresher training. They have been explained their duties. According to Section 18 of the same Act, every SPO has the same powers, privileges and protection as an ordinary police officer. The Chhattisgarh Police Act 2007 (Section 9) incorporated the same from Police Act 1861.

PNS: What are the task assigned to these SPOs who have been drawn from the volunteers living in the Salwa Judum camps?"

Ranjan: The SPOs have been assigned two duties. They assist the police in security of relief camps and

also guide the policemen when they send deep penetration patrol parties in area of Maoist domination. But the Maoists and their supporters have been successful in selling their line that the whole of relief camps consist of Salwa Judum and SPOs are part of the peaceful movement and they are civilians who have been armed illegally by the State.

I think the Indian mindset because of the psychological imprint of historical social hierarchical system of caste is still extremely elitist. The Brahmin of social order has transformed himself into Brahmin in the hierarchy of modern institutions. A policeman has a lowly place in this order. Take for example Ramachandra Guha. Guha is an eminent historian, known all over the world. Nandini Sunder is a professor of Sociology at Delhi School of Economics. She has studied at Oxford and Columbia Universities, been a scholar in Chicago, and a research fellow in Edinburgh University. If they can be influenced by 'psychological-war machinery' of Maoists, you can understand how sophisticated the Maoist psychological-war operators are? Who would listen to a poor police officer even if he dares to tell the truth.

If Vishwa Ranjan can utter such lies and get away with it, it is not surprising. His actual mentor is the Central government led by the World Bank stooge and bootlicker of US imperialism, Manmohan Singh. On April 15, the UPA government came out openly justifying the bloody terrorist campaign of extermination and genocide it had let loose along with the BJP government on the indigenous people of Dandakaranya. A DGP is, after all, a faithful dog of the reactionary ruling classes and bites upon the orders from his masters! Let us see what the satraps in Delhi have to say on Salwa Judum. Given below is a press report describing the reaction of the UPA government.

New Delhi, April 15: The Centre has for the first time endorsed the formation of a band of armed vigilantes to take on Maoists.

The virtual stamp of recognition came in the Supreme Court today when the Union government strongly opposed the disbanding of the Salwa Judum, an armed group of tribals that has the blessings of the Chhattisgarh government.

"To assume that the Salwa Judum was an army of people with weapons and asking for it to be disbanded will be no more than asking for these people to be pushed out to be killed (by the Naxalites)," additional solicitor-general Gopal Subramaniam told the Supreme Court which is hearing a batch of petitions seeking to have it disbanded.

Activists Kartam Joga, Nandini Sundar, E.A.S. Sarma and Ramachandra Guha have in their petition alleged widespread rights violations by members of the Salwa Judum. They have also sought an independent inquiry into the human rights violations committed by this counter-insurgency force. The court directed the NHRC to send a fact-finding mission to Bastar and submit a report.

The Centre today agreed to a probe into rights excesses by individual activists of the Judum.

Corruption at high places: For the police, bureaucracy and ruling classes morality is a scarce commodity

In our country as well as all over the world the reactionary rulers, top brass among the police and bureaucracy, live off the blood, sweat and tears of the toiling, oppressed masses. In nine out of ten cases, or rather, ninety-nine out of a hundred cases, these daylight robbers go scot-free while the innocent and petty thieves who are forced to steal food for filling their hungry stomachs find themselves behind bars. Thus we find the vast majority of the poor and destitute languishing in jails for years without even a trial while the robber barons, scamsters and mafia gangsters sitting in the Parliament or in high positions in the government or becoming members of the esteemed billionaires list. We present below some instances of the misdeeds of these robbers ruling our country.

A Delhi police officer,, a notorious 'encounter specialist', was killed in Gurgaon by a property dealer three months ago. Another encounter specialist from Mumbai,....., was found to have amassed enormous wealth through extortion. In AP, a Deputy Superintendent of Police, Murali, was lodged in jail due to corrupt practices and illegal accumulation of wealth. He too was notorious for murdering several Naxalite cadre in so-called encounters. And the list goes on and on. All these revelations, which are only the tip of the iceberg, have left none in doubt that the so-called encounter specialists are actually 'extortion specialists'.

In 2004, as many as 7,755 Delhi Police personnel were punished in departmental inquiries for their involvement in corruption and various other crimes. Among those punished were one Assistant Commissioner of Police, 63 Inspectors, 1,385 Sub-Inspectors, 724 Assistant Sub-Inspectors, 1,569 Head Constables, 3,570 Constables and 54 class-IV employees.

A whopping 2,276 long-pending cases investigated by the CBI are awaiting trial. While 244 have been pending trial for more than 20 years, the remaining 2,032 have been gathering dust in different courts for over 10 years. In all, 8,297 CBI cases are awaiting trial after completion of investigation. Incidents of brutality, murder, rape, dacoities, extortions and other atrocities by the police have become the order of the day.

A DG-level officer of Bihar is under investigation for possessing assets worth over Rs 60 lakh. A former Punjab DGP has been suspended and chargesheeted by the State Government for "buying" *benami* property. The fact is that criminalisation of police cannot be de-linked from criminalisation of politics. It is the criminalisation of politics that allows a bad policeman to get away with mistakes.

Even in Parliament, as per the affidavits filed at the time of contesting elections, the following number of elected MPs had cases pending against them. The number comes to 100 out of 543 members of the Lok Sabha. In other words, almost every fifth Lok Sabha MP has had a brush with the law, with cases pending against them.

Corruption and lack of morality, however, are not just India's problems. An American had this to say about his country and its leadership, *"I have, in my life time of 79 years, lived through and with: Two Presidents who had mistresses unknown to their legitimate wives. One President whose mother did not know who was the father was of her child. One President who shouted from the rooftops about drugs, but was on them himself. One President who accumulated illegal cash in White House. One President who lied under oath to a grand jury. Two Presidents who had sex in White House with women other than their wives. A Vice-President who was found guilty of tax evasion. A Secretary of Defence who lied to the Congress and was charged with improper conduct and got off only because a President pardoned him! What else can you expect from a generation of Americans who have lost their way? Our culture sponsors them, generates them and teaches them to be thieves, liars, cheats and crooks." It is impossible to punish these gangsters and cure the illnesses of the rotten social system without a social revolution.*

Book Review

Red Sun: Travels in Naxalite Country by Sudeep Chakravarti

Penguin/Viking Pages 320; Rs. 495

The Maoist movement in India is one of the oldest and longest-sustained revolutionary movements in the contemporary world. Spanning a period of over four decades beginning with the first earth-shaking volcanic eruption in a tiny village in Naxalbari it has become part of folk-lore in some regions in the country. It had risen, phoenix-like, every time the political pundits had confidently pronounced its certain demise. Top political and police brass had time and again boasted that they had "finished off" the revolution which they claimed as having been "imported from abroad". They asserted that Maoist revolution is something alien to the conditions in Gandhi's India where, they claim, people are not prone to violent ways. The latest in this long list of liars, wishful thinkers and vicious propagandists is Mahendra Karma, who declared amidst much fanfare in June 2005 that he would decimate the Maoists within a year through his state-sponsored terrorist campaign christened as *salwa judum* (peace campaign). When his armed gangsters and the state's khaki-clad goons took a beating in the hands of the Maoists this scab of the imperialist-big business-feudal combine kept on barking over the past two years that he would finish off the Maoists within a short time. However, nailing all these lies and disgusting boasts by the mediocre politicians and police officials ruling the country, the resilience and growth of the Maoist movement had surprised many skeptics who see the Indian state as an almighty behemoth that can snuff out any armed resistance.

Surprisingly, given the great international significance of revolution in a vast country like India—the second most populous in the world—very few scholars have attempted any serious research into this social phenomenon and books dealing with this protracted insurgency are very few. But of late, several research scholars belonging to various persuasions and particularly so-called independent agencies have suddenly jumped into the fray. There is very less objectivity and realistic analysis in most of these writings. Many of these have begun to paint a scary picture of rapidly-growing "Red Terror" which is supposed to undermine development measures undertaken by the government. They talk of Maoist movement spreading at an alarming speed to the majority of the states in India. Agencies like the ORF, SATP, Institute of Conflict Management, *Jane's Defence Weekly*, etc began taking keen interest and a plethora of articles have been appearing in various magazines. Some websites too had sprung up both in support of, and decrying, Maoism in India.

In **Red Sun**, published by Penguin (Viking) Books India in early 2008, the author, Sudeep Chakravarti, makes an attempt to understand and present the phenomenon of Maoist movement in India. It is not, as the writer himself claims, a history of the Maoist movement, but a travelogue which tries to understand the Other India, as he christens it. The positive side of the book is the writer's attempt to present the conditions of the vast majority of the common people—their grinding poverty, excruciating indebtedness, horrific tales of their destitution and displacement by so-called development—leading to extreme helplessness and heart-rending suicides. The writer had tried to focus on the aspirations of the majority in India that had been left out of every development scheme and model touted as great boons for the poor by the Indian ruling classes. Overall, the writer has been able to present in a lucid manner the explosive socio-economic milieu that gave rise to, and continues to nurture, the Maoist movement in India. And as a travelogue, this aspect often comes forcefully through conversations with people from various walks of life. He logically anticipates the inevitable spread of the Maoist movement to the urban areas since similar conditions had pushed the vast majority of the urban poor into utter wretchedness.

Good exposure of state-sponsored terror campaign in Dandakaranya:

The exposure of the state-sponsored terrorist campaign in Dandakaranya through the so-called *salwa judum* comes out forcefully in the book. It is here that the writer is seen at his best and he boldly exposes the havoc created by the state-sponsored vigilante gangs combined with the state and central forces. There is some amount of depth in the writer's presentation of the movement in one of the crucial regions of the Maoists. He vividly describes the war theatre, the explosive situation and the strategies and plans of the state. As far as the writer's description of the Maoist movement goes this is the best part in the entire book. Well, if one has time constraints one can either have a cursory glance at the remaining pages of the book or just drop them altogether after going through the first hundred pages or so. For, after this, the presentation of the movement elsewhere is shallow and based more on hearsay.

None of the movements in other regions such as Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, or Andhra Pradesh has any in-depth analysis and reflects lack of real interaction with the actual players. Even the conversations with such an eminent personality in the revolutionary camp like VV lack punch and analysis. The principal weakness of the travelogue is that the writer had traveled more along the periphery of the war zone and has hardly any interaction with the Maoist fighters and leaders in any of these regions. Whether this is deliberately done, or the writer found no opportunity to meet the Maoist revolutionaries in the battle-field, is not clear. With the right contacts—and the writer claims to have many such contacts—it is, of course, not difficult to meet underground cadre of CPI(Maoist). He had sought to make up this weakness by meeting people belong-

ing to various legal organizations which profess to be revolutionary such as Kanu Sanyal and CPI(ML)-Liberation.

The excerpts from the Fact Finding Report by a team of democratic intellectuals which was released to the media in December 2005 and from the Report of April 2006 entitled '**When the State Makes War on Its Own People**', Mahendra Karma's statement on the aim of *salwa judum* ("*Unless you cut off the source of the disease, the disease will remain. The source is the people, the villagers.*"), presentation of the full text of Bijapur SP DL Manhar's instructions on the wireless to his men which was taped by the Maoists, the story of local journalist Kamlesh Paika, conversations with KR Pisda, Collector of Dantewara, abuse of journalists in the most filthy and uncivilized manner by Alok Awasthi, additional director in Chattisgarh's Directorate of Public Relations, etc are well brought out. The aim of *salwa judum* as admitted by the government in the official document is also quoted exhaustively. The most chilling story of the evacuation and setting afire the village of Darzo in Mizoram by the Indian Army during the early 1970s as part of the sordid plan of resettlement of the villages is very much relevant in the context of the *salwa judum* campaign and the planned resettlement of the tribals in Dantewara. The comparison with the Mizoram of the 1970s is a commendable job.

At several places in the book, during conversations with the revolutionaries, bureaucrats and police officials, the activities and viewpoints of the two opposing forces in this class conflict are brought into sharp contrast.

Some of the remarks by top political and police brass make interesting, and at times, disgusting, reading. For instance, the health minister of Jharkhand, Bhanu Pratap Shahi, says in an interview: "*One vasectomy in a Naxalite dominated village means that many potential comrades less...when you have too many mouths to feed and too little food to eat, you may turn into a Naxalite. All I want is to minimize the number of mouths.*" The cynical revelation by an officer of the military intelligence of how he and his team had hacked off the heads of six militants just to petrify their Islamic colleagues and to serve as a spiritual insult makes chilling reading. "*Then we heard these human rights chaps were coming. So we put the heads back on somehow, crudely stitched them up. We didn't bother with matching head and body.*" (p 78) That cynical laughter of the officer while narrating this ghastly incident shows the general sadistic mindset of the police and security establishment, whether it is in Kashmir, North East, Dandakaranya, Jharkhand, AP or elsewhere. Their proposed solution to the Naxalite issue is such outright murders and fascist suppression, despite their occasional declarations, if only to please and appease civil rights activists and liberal-minded intellectuals, that the issue is more a socio-economic one rather than a law & order problem. Khadi and Khaki bandits are all one and the same with regard to this.

The bogey of Naxal surrenders is also well depicted by the author. Chattisgarh's DGP OP Rathor (who died of heart attack on anti-terrorist day) bursts out venom against the Naxals: "*Bloody nuisance. There's no Marxism, Leninism or Maoism about them. When I was young I at least sensed some ideology about the Naxalites. But these chaps (now) are nothing but thugs and extortionists*" (p 263). The Additional Chief Secretary (Home), Government of Chattisgarh, BKS Ray, shows the same abysmally crude attitude and approach towards Naxalite movement. "*These people are just thugs and extortionists. That's why in Chattisgarh you have a spontaneous popular movement against them—these tribals are fed up of the Naxals*" he says. Why the tribals were not fed up with the Naxals for 25 years and why all of a sudden they became restive is something this arrogant bureaucrat will never be able to grasp or explain. And why will the tribals be angry with Naxals, even if one accepts the allegations of the rulers that they are extortionists, since the tribals have nothing to lose and everything to gain? Is it not only the big contractors, bureaucrats, traders and industrialists who have big property amassed through primitive methods of exploitation of tribals and loot and plunder of the entire region that actually fear the Maoists and try to snuff it out with all means at their disposal? No wonder, this bureaucrat with a police mind set can only think of extermination of Maoists as the solution ('*sabko khatm karo*' he says over the phone to the police officials.) It has become a fashion for every police officer and political bigwig to express nostalgic feelings about the Naxals of yesteryears as if they really believed Naxals were sincere in the bygone times and had become a nuisance now. They say they were an educated lot in earlier times but now have lumpen elements in dominance. The fact is today Naxals have the real oppressed classes behind them which is why it is becoming increasingly difficult for the reactionary ruling classes to suppress them. The change in the composition of the Naxalite movement shows the maturity and grass-roots strength of the movement.

Ideological biases:

As is natural in a class-divided society, the presentation in the book, and the conclusions drawn, are subject to the limitations set by the class and social background of the writer besides the inescapable influence of oft-repeated verdicts on the movement by earlier writers of various hues. It is not easy to wriggle oneself out of the shackles of ruling ideology, culture and long-inculcated values that continue to reinforce upon one's mind ever since one's childhood. Some of the remarks of the writer bring home this point. For instance, referring to VV's speech at the *Tehelka* summit in November 2006 in Delhi, the writer says: "*Democracy, with all its ills, allows him this public space. I hope he realizes the irony that dogma*

and undemocratic institutions have no space for others, tolerate no dissent. Mao didn't. The bloom of a Hundred Flowers turned into deepest tragedy. Maybe when the Maoists talk about New India, they really need to talk about gentler Maoism—possibly an oxymoron—as their counterparts have done for Nepal's fragile peace." (p292)

The author also cites some instances of punishment given to informers in DK, Jharkhand, Orissa by the "dreaded Jan Adalat, or People's Court, which is little more than kangaroo court" and concludes that "These acts are as gruesome, and gratuitous, as what the Maoists accuse state security of."

Another comment or rather conclusion of the author without any analysis runs thus: "In Dantewada, democracy is quite dead, on both sides of the battle line." Surprisingly, he cites the game of *chor-police* (cops-and-robbers) played by tribal children to arrive at such an obviously biased conclusion!!

The author's ideological biases can be seen also from his bland statements regarding the future post-revolutionary society and about Maoist China. He says: "What would it be like if ever revolution were to succeed in India, enough to impose its imprint beyond tribal and caste-roided areas? Most probably, instant justice, dogmatic and Puritanical life, Soviet-style post-revolutionary rot, vast May Day parades." And he goes on: "Perhaps even brutal China-style state control and a repeat of the Cultural revolution of Mao himself, that ended up killing and damning millions of unbelievers." (p 210)

He concludes: "From available historical evidence, a Maoist state might do little else but backslide all of India's hard-won victories despite the mire of grand corruption and the utter small-mindedness of administration." (p 211)

Needless to say, this writer, as any other writer without living links with the lives of the oppressed masses and the movement, has also become a victim to the almost inescapable influence of the imperialist and ruling class ideological biases as regards comrade Mao and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, post-revolutionary societies, and so on. From the opinions expressed by the writer such as the above one cannot but come to the conclusion that he prefers the status quo in place of a new revolutionary order where, he imagines, freedom will be the first casualty. He forgets that Maoists are also learning from the socialist experiments of the past and will certainly imbibe the positive aspects while rejecting the negative ones.

Some factual errors

There are a few minor factual errors in the book which could have been avoided with a little more diligence and care by the writer. Mistakes such as mentioning Chundru in place of Chundur or Tsundur (p 114), Piyas instead of Riyaz (p 206), Dr. Ramachandran instead of Dr. Ramanatham (p197) referring to the elderly former Vice President of APCLC who was murdered in his clinic in Warangal by police in 1985, referring to Darshan Pal as a Professor when in fact he is a medical doctor (perhaps the title Dr has misled the writer into thinking that he must be a professor), giving out a figure of "anywhere between 200 to 500 weapons" referring to the arms seizure in Koraput in February 2004 when the figure is 552 and published in the magazines of the then CPI(ML) People's War and also in the literature of the newly-formed CPI(Maoist), wrongly referring to the People's Guerrilla Army (PGA) formed in December 2000 by the erstwhile CPI(ML)[PW] as the People's Local Guerrilla Army, describing CC member Shridhar Srinivasan alias Vishnu as "a top member of the CPI(Maoist) Poliburo", Matta Ravi Kumar as a member of central committee of CPI(Maoist) while he was a member of AP state committee, and so on. It is also difficult to understand how and from where the writer got the wrong information that Lanka Papi Reddy (a CC member who had surrendered to the enemy in end January 2008 after the CC demoted him to the rank of District committee following his misbehaviour with a woman comrade) was a former secretary of NTSZC. Or that the People's Democratic Front (PDFI) "would count among its members people like Medha Patkar and CPI(ML) Liberation's secretary general Dipankar Bhattacharya."

On page 24 the writer says referring to the tribal heartland in Chattisgarh: "A true-blue 'guerrilla base' to upgrade to a 'guerrilla zone'. GB to GZ, in Maoist-speak." Here the writer suffers from a lack of understanding of the Maoist concept of GZ and GB. A study of Maoist documents would have shown him how GBs form part of GZ, how they are considered as focal points within the GZs which spread throughout the GZ to transform the later into a liberated zone or base area. The presentation is in the reverse order for it says GB to GZ whereas it is to develop GBs within the GZs and advance towards the eventual transformation of the entire GZ into the Base area. The comment on mobile war in the context of the annihilation of MP Sunil Mahto is also indicative of the poor understanding of the writer about mobile war. He writes: "True to their new mantra of 'mobile war' articulated in 2004 and now in the process of being implemented, Maoist cadres shot dead Lok Sabha MP Sunil Mahato, legislator for East Singhbhum district's Jamshedpur constituency, and three others as they watched a football match at Baguria on 4 March. "

There are also wrong informations such as cadre from Andhra going to Chattisgarh after the breakdown of peace talks in AP in the last quarter of 2004. This has been the pet theory of the politicians and police top brass in Chattisgarh and also Orissa to explain the increase in Maoist activities in their states in recent years. He says: "When peace talks broke down in a matter of months—with both sides trading charges of peace being used as an excuse for greater infiltration and arming—increased pressure from the Greyhounds led to many Maoists spreading outwards from Andhra, mainly into Chattisgarh." But this is not true. The

transfer of cadres from AP to DK had taken place much earlier in accordance with a plan drawn up by the CC and also as a part of retreat. The total number of cadres shifted to DK after the break-down of talks has not been much significant. If this was really done in time, as was reviewed by the Party leadership later on, most of the cadre and leadership who became martyrs in the brutal state offensive in the aftermath of the talks, could have been saved.

There is also wrong picture about the various tiers in the structure of the CPI(Maoist) despite the attempts by the author to present it diagrammatically by using maps. The states falling under the two SACs is not correctly represented. The second SAC is said to include northeastern Jharkhand while it includes entire state of Jharkhand, not just eastern Bihar but central Bihar also, and it does not include the West Bengal districts of West Dinajpur, Malda etc. all of which fall under the West Bengal state committee. Likewise, the three SZCs—North Telangana, Dandakaranya, and Andhra-Orissa—are lumped together into a category of an elite tier which are supposed to have the maximum impact and maximum conflict. This is not true. Special Zone and Special Area are not different categories: the different names were on account of the independent development of the two erstwhile Maoist Parties.

Another problem with the presentation is that several allegations are made regarding the activities of the Maoists by some police officials and political leaders while no opportunity is available to the former to refute these allegations. When an author quotes these officials it will also be the bounden duty to get the response from the Maoists. Or else, it would mislead the people and amounts to gross injustice to the other side in the ongoing war. For instance, the superintendent of police of Dantewada district, Prabir Kumar Das, alleges that Maoists are against development and do not allow bore-wells to be sunk in their stronghold villages. He is quoted as saying: "*When we entered an area 50 kilometers from here, deep inside, we found they had broken hand pumps. Initially, we thought it was to deny police water. Later, when we went to areas we hadn't been to before, there too the pumps were broken. Villagers told us that they were asked by the Maoists to drink only from wells and other natural water sources.*" (p 77) The rationale of the Maoists, behind this move, is attributed to their perception of bore-wells as a sign of oppression (!!)"*Hand pumps were provided by the state or NGOs with state funding; they were a sign of oppression, and therefore taboo*" says this gentleman. Nothing could be farther from truth. This even goes against common sense which the top police brains in India pitifully lack. How can the Maoists (the police can at least get their own mineral bottles), survive if they break the hand-pumps? If the author had verified the facts by touring the areas deep inside it would have been really useful in exposing the deliberate concoctions of the police chief. And all this is only to justify the brutal state-sponsored terror campaign in the name of *salwa judum* with the pretext that the villagers are fed up with Maoist attempts to block development schemes and such trash.

Some good photographs and charts would have enlivened the narration and made the book more meaningful and popular. I do not know why the author hasn't taken the trouble to compile some photographs when it isn't much difficult to get them.

The writer comes to the conclusion that Maoist movement would soon encompass the urban areas and mobilize the vast masses of the have-nots living in the most distressing conditions in the slums and factories. He rightly says that all the material conditions for the spread of Maoists to the urban areas exist there. He includes entire sections from the document of the CPI(Maoist), *Perspective of Urban Areas*, as an Appendix and quotes extensively from this document to prove how the Maoists will emerge as a strong urban force too.

The author also tries to place his own theories of In-Land, Out-Land, City States etc. which he says will characterize the country's social scenario in the future. Or in other words, that India will increasingly be divided into two: one inhabited by the haves and the other by have-nots with continuous friction between the two. Although the essence of his thesis will be the unfolding reality—the pointers to this division are already emerging with the fast multiplying expressways, multiplexes, shopping malls, super fast trains, amusement parks, high cost of education, housing and health, drastic cuts in social welfare schemes, and so on—the emerging scenario will be one of acute class struggle with the vast majority of the Indian population locked up in bitter struggles, armed and unarmed, against the exploitative set up, and fascist state dictatorship becoming the norm. In this cruel, bitter class war the Maoist movement is certain to gain ground and advance towards the goal of liberation of our country from the clutches of the imperialist marauders, decadent feudal forces and comprador big business sharks.

Press Release:**April 23, 2008****Red Salutes to CPI(Maoist) central committee member and great revolutionary intellectual comrade Anuradha Ghandy!****Let us emulate com Anuradha's great revolutionary qualities—her undaunted spirit, staunch determination and selflessness!!**

On April 11, 2008 the oppressed masses of our country and the Indian revolution lost an exemplary Communist leader and a brilliant revolutionary intellectual—comrade Anuradha Ghandy—known to the revolutionary camp as comrade Narmada and Rama. On that fateful day this beloved leader of the CPI(Maoist) had breathed her last, at the age of 54, after a severe attack of falciparum malaria. Comrade Anuradha, had just returned from Bihar-Jharkhand region after attending to some Party work there and she did not realize that the fever she was suffering from was due to the deadly cerebral malaria. The negative result in the blood tests had only misled her and the doctors and delay in taking malaria dose resulted in this tragic episode. Comrade Narmada was cremated on April 12. The CC, CPI(Maoist) pays its humble red homage to this seniormost woman member of the Central Committee and vows to fulfill the revolutionary ideals for which she had laid down her life.

Comrade Anuradha had started her revolutionary career in the early 1970s as a student of Eliphinstone college, Mumbai. She is one of the founder-members of the CPI(ML) in Maharashtra. And in the span of over three decades she had been in the forefront in several fronts: student movement, civil rights movement, women's movement, workers' movement, dalit movement, adivasi movement, literary and cultural movement. She never remained a spectator to any act of injustice and to the spontaneous struggle of any section of the masses. Her spirited and courageous fight for the rights of the adivasis, landless labourers, dalit masses, women and unorganized labour will forever be remembered. She played a prominent role in organizing the intellectuals of Mumbai and other parts of the state to build a movement for democratic rights and civil liberties. She was a leader of the All India League for Revolutionary Culture (AILRC) from Maharashtra and is well-known in revolutionary circles as a talented writer and fiery orator. Comrade Anuradha was a prolific writer and contributed immensely to the magazines of various fronts. She wrote fluently in three languages—English, Hindi and Marathi. She worked in the city of Mumbai, Nagpur, Surat and several parts of Maharashtra. She served as a member of the Vidarbha regional committee and Maharashtra state committee and was elected to the central committee of the CPI(Maoist) in the Unity Congress (9th Congress) held in January 2007. At the time of her martyrdom she was also in charge of the Party's central subcommittee for women.

Comrade Anuradha was known for her exemplary communist qualities: she stood steadfast in the most difficult times, was always spirited, hard working, and led a very frugal and simple life with the goal of declassifying herself. Her frail health had not deterred her from carrying out any task and duty entrusted to her. She was suffering from sclerosis but none suspected that she had serious health problems for she never let others know of her problems. When she was in Dandakaranya for two years, she was a great inspiration to the cadres there: she used to walk long distances without ever complaining despite her health problems and she integrated with the cadres and masses with great ease. It is not easy for urban-based petty-bourgeois intellectuals to integrate with the illiterate poverty-stricken masses but comrade Anuradha did with great ease.

Comrade Anuradha was known for frank and fearless criticism of weaknesses, shortcomings and mistakes in the Party's policies and practice. She had strong views and put these forth without any hesitation in various Party fora. She contributed a lot in making the Party understand the women's question in the correct light and in realizing the lapses and weaknesses of the Party in the women's front. She was forthright in her criticism of anyone in the Party, irrespective of one's position in the Party, if she saw something wrong.

Comrade Anuradha will live forever in the hearts of the Party's rank and file and millions upon millions of the Indian masses. She will remain an eternal inspiration to all those who aspire for a victorious revolution in our country, and a catalyst driving us towards the ultimate goal of establishing a classless society. Let us emulate the indomitable spirit, dynamism, simplicity, diligence, dedication and communist values of comrade Anuradha. Let us pledge ourselves once again to fulfill the great ideals for which comrade Anuradha had laid down her life.

Azad,
Spokesperson,
Central Committee,
CPI(Maoist)