

COMMITTEE FOR THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

185/3, Fourth Floor, Zakir Nagar, New Delhi—25

Condemn the continuing detention and incarceration of Ms. Subashree Panda (Mili)!

It is the inalienable right of Subashree Panda (Mili)—a voice of dissent to the present establishment—to be considered and granted the status of the political prisoner!

Stop all forms of torture, intimidation and coercion to implicate her in trumped up charges!

As per the reports from various civil rights organisations and the print media Ms. Subashree Panda (Mili) has been arrested on the 14 January 2010 along with her daughter and Mr. Kishore Jena from Bhubaneswar, the capital of the state of Orissa. The police as usual planted stories about her arrest along with a surfeit of seizures. It took the state a legal intervention from the father of Subashree, Mr. Dhanurdhar Das citing the missing case of his daughter before the SDJM Bhubaneswar to produce her after two days of intense interrogation in another court at Banapur. In between the father of Subashree was summoned by the police to hand over the ten year old daughter. Despite revealing the arrest of Subashree while handing over her daughter to Mr. Dhanurdhar Das, the police had the audacity to bend the law by keeping her under illegal detention and torture to force her into all possible forms of coercion so as to implicate her under various charges. Otherwise it goes against any reason and law to unlawfully keep someone under custody beyond the stipulated time given under the court of law.

The court—despite the fact that she was illegally detained by the police—allowed the cops to further interrogate her from 16 to 19 January 2010. Again when she was produced on the 19 January 2010 was further given police custody to the Crime Branch till 25 January 2010. In this entire period of interrogation under police custody she was kept in the SOG camp in Bhubaneswar. Many officers from various states such as Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Bihar Andhra Pradesh etc., interrogated her in this period. All this was happening without her being allowed to have her lawyer present while being subjected to interrogation. The vulgar behaviour of the interrogators further added to the mental torture of the detained. It should be noted that no law in this country allows the prosecution to invade the right to silence of the detained or accused. And this right of the accused is vital for him/her to defend them from any kind of incrimination indulged in by the state. This cannot happen without the able presence of lawyer as the police/paramilitary/SOG behaves with impunity when it comes to the matters of upholding the law let alone the constitution!

The CPI (Maoist) have come out with a statement that Subhashree Panda has been spreading Marxist ideology through her writings and she has been a consistent voice of dissent against the present establishment, the system which breeds inequality, oppression, exploitation and discrimination. They have further reiterated that it is the inalienable right of anyone to express their opinion without fear or favour and Subhashree has been only doing that. To incarcerate someone for their beliefs no matter even if it is against the system goes against the very fabric of the democracy that we claim ourselves to be. Incidentally Subhashree Panda is also the life partner of Sabhyasachi Panda who is the Secretary of the Orissa State Committee of CPI (Maoist). There are also efforts to demonise her so as to stigmatise and prejudice the politics of the dissenting voice of Subhashree.

Subhashree was initiated into the progressive politics from a very young age as her father belonged to the progressive/democratic stream of politics. Working for the most oppressed and deprived made her firm in her convictions to be the partisan. This made her choose her life partner who also agreed to the way she understood and believed the world should be. To incarcerate her for being the 'wife' of the Secretary of the Orissa State Committee of CPI (Maoist) speaks volumes of the democracy which we

live in—that cannot look beyond the feudal patriarchal mores where women hardly has any role to play.

CRPP strongly demand that Subhashree (Mili) be immediately given the status of the political prisoner as she has been put behind bars for envisaging and also getting involved in the building of a new world that she earnestly believed and fought for to be free from all forms of exploitation, oppression, discrimination and mistreatment. The Constitution of the Indian republic has the heart to acknowledge the well being and survival of such human beings. The question is whether the people who uphold that constitution has the political will to implement it or not.

In Solidarity,



Gurusharan Singh
President



Amit Bhattacharyya
Secretary General



SAR Geelani
Working President



Rona Wilson
Secretary Public Relations

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