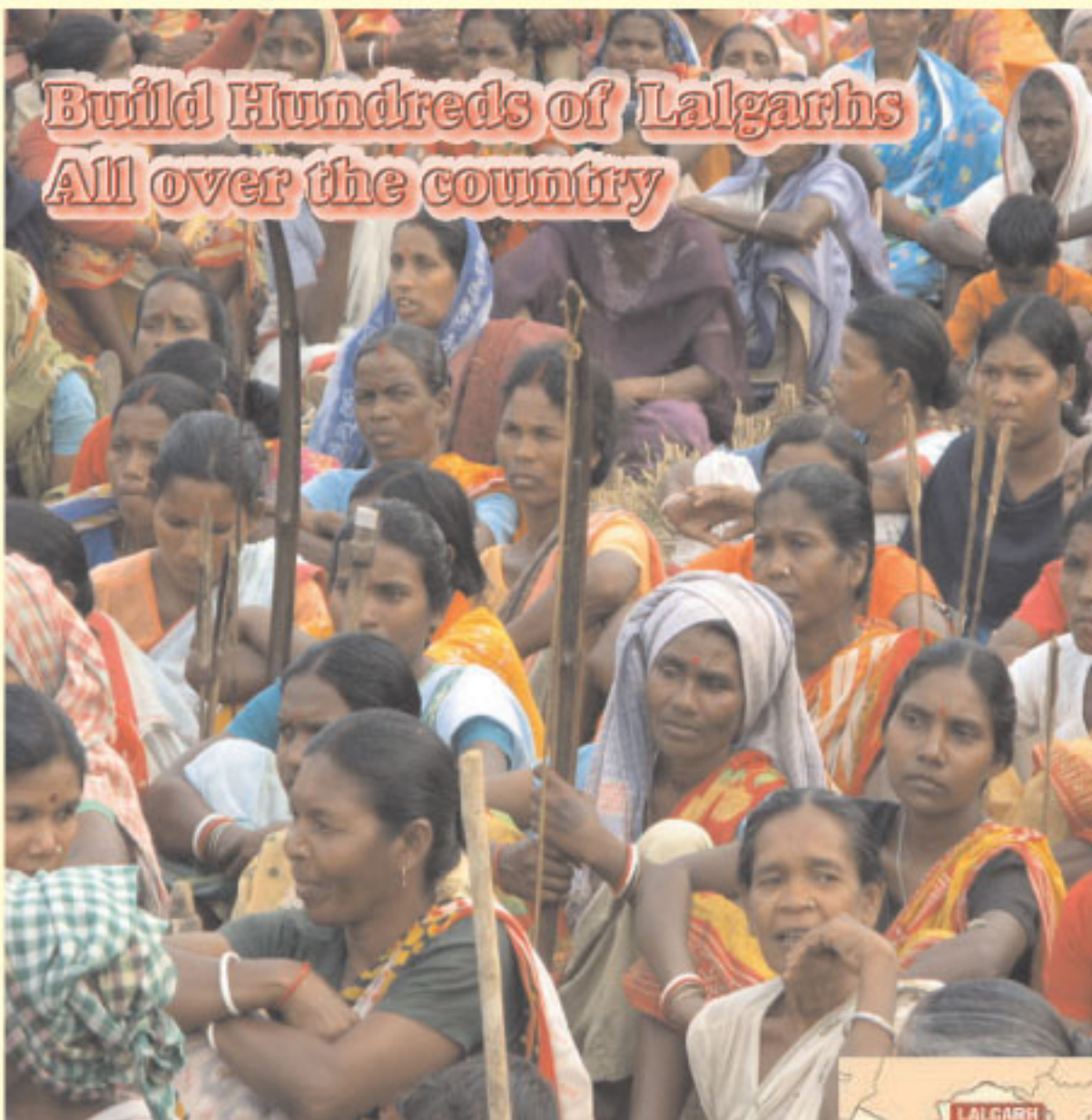


Peoples' Truth

Voice of the Indian Revolution



**Inside:
Tamil Eelam Struggle and its Lessons...**





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EDITOR: P. Govindan Kutty
Mobile No. : 99472 76692

E-mail : peoplestruth@gmail.com
peoples.truth@yahoo.in

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THE LALGARH REVOLT A 'FESTIVAL OF THE MASSES'

Cherag

WHAT has been taking place in Lalgarh during the mid-June period was a festival of the masses. It is a festival the like of which was not seen anywhere else in our country for a long time. People who had been oppressed and humiliated for a long time have stood up with arms, with their heads held high like a mighty storm and are attacking their enemies, and destroying their property, annihilating the most hated among them. The CPI (M) leaders and cadres—the most trusted stooges of the ruling classes, the revisionists and most notorious of the reactionary elements have been rightly identified as the main enemies of the people and they are being dealt crushing blows with ferocity. Never in the wildest of dreams could these enemies of the people think that they would be reduced to such a fate in a state where they had been lording over for more than three decades with sky-kissing arrogance. The heroic people of Lalgarh have targeted those symbols of power—the most hated CPM leaders and goons, those social fascists, their party offices and property. It was a scene worth beholding.

Locals describe the CPM cadre as the government's rampaging bull. Thirty-two years of CPM has brought no change in their way of living they say. The dirty primary health centre is in abysmal condition, there is not even drinking water, people have to travel a long distance to get basic medical care, the public distribution system has collapsed, wages are low, there is no infrastructure and acute poverty stalks the land. The chief occupation is agriculture; but there is no irrigation. The pent up anger of the masses has now burst forth.

A Festival of the Masses

On June 14, 2009, the People's Committee Against Police Atrocities procession started from Lalgarh,

covered 11 kms and took control of 48 villages including CPM party offices in Dharampur—an apparently invincible CPM citadel used by the CPM *hermads* (armed CPI (M) goon gangs) for launching armed attacks on the people. This was preceded by intense firing between the CPM goons and the Maoist fighters for five days in areas such as Dharampur, Jirapara, Hodhodi and Bhaudi. An unspecified number of CPM goons (around 14) have paid the last penalty for their misdeeds, many such goons left their homes from the battlefield and the Maoists, according to press reports, have seized the weapons left behind by the miscreants. Then they attacked Sijua, a CPM stronghold that would allow them easy access to the Jindal's proposed steel plant site at Salboni. So decisive was the power shift in Dharampur that CPM zonal secretary Anuj Pandey, a resident of the village and notorious tyrant of that area, had to flee out of sheer panic.

Around midnight on 15 June, 320 policemen vacated their camps in Dharampur, Ramgarh, Belatikuti and Koima. Now thousands of villagers from Lalgarh, where the police had been unable to enter since November 2008, swept into areas known as CPM strongholds. They burnt down the police camps at Ramgarh and Kaima; one CPM party office after another was burnt down by the masses, thereby displaying the pent-up hatred the people nourished towards the CPM leaders. The first wave of attacks hit Koima police camp around 11 am ransacking it, destroying furniture and setting it on fire. PSBJC {Police Santrosh Birodhi Janasadharan Committee} activists had *gheraoed* the camp for the past few days, leaving policemen posted there without food and water. The police sneaked out at night. Then the PSBJC masses fanned out across 25 sq km area over the next

few hours targeting administrative and CPM strongholds. One group ransacked and torched Ramgarh police camp at 2 pm. Two hours later another group attacked Dharampur CPM office and burnt documents. The next target was the palatial home of CPM zonal secretary, Anuj Pandey. The police tried to enter Dharampur on 14th night to protect the CPM forces, after the night long battle on 13th night between the CPM goons and the Maoists. But they had to retreat faced with an army of women and children.

The decision to vacate the police camps was taken at a meeting on Jun.14th night attended by the IG of police and SPs of Bankura, West Medinipur and Purlia. The District magistrate said that the reason for abandoning the camps was unease among the policemen.

One of the most hated of the despicable CPM lot was Anuj Pandey. The time he came to West Medinipur from Jharkhand, he was a person of ordinary means. But gradually through party connections, this fellow minted millions out of the toil and sweat of the people, constructed a palatial building in an area where people have been deprived of the basic necessities of life. He was protected by three bodyguards round the clock, and there was a police camp in front of his palace also. It was he who exercised total control over everything in the area, viz, distribution of pattas (land titles) among the poor in the Dharampur area, clearance of 100 days' work under NREGS, BPL cards, application for the construction of deep tube-wells—all these and many more were controlled from the Dharampur party office. Votes were looted year after year by intimidation and application of terror. To suppress the opposition, armed *hermads* were sent from Dharampur by this fellow to Khejuri and Gorbeta. Whenever money came

for bringing about development of the area, Anuj Pandey pocketed everything and bought arms and ammunition. In the name of giving employment, he robbed the poor of millions of rupees. The money that came through 'Indira Awas Yojana' could only belong to him. Many of those unfortunate ones who stood against or criticized him were killed by his hired goons. He had the last word there. Such a giant of a fellow proved to be a paper tiger, a pigmy and had to flee to save his life from people's wrath. What happened to that palatial building? It is worth narrating, as it symbolized the destruction of reactionary authority in the area. The men in Alimuddin, we are sure, are spending sleepless nights having nightmares of those days when their party office would be reduced to dust and their leaders would meet with the same fate that the East European revisionist rulers faced after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Anuj Pandey's palatial house was broken down by the people. This is how an English daily wrote: "The hammer rose and fell, the energy of the man behind it rising steadily as the blows gradually brought down chunks of concrete from the roof. On the first

floor, three men were tearing down the fancy grills of the iron railing adorning the balcony. A huge crowd gathered below in an area now under Section 144, lustily cheering each blow that fell on the white two-story house, quite out of place in this land of deprivation under Lalgarh police station. By sundown, the hammers had chopped off the first floor, leaving behind a skeleton of what was a "posh" house in the morning' (*HT*, 16 June 2009). Every punch of the hammer was greeted with the sound of the conchshells blown by the standing women (*Sanbad Protidin*, 16 June 2009). To them, it was like a festival worthy of rejoicing. For what was being demolished was the symbol of power, the symbol of oppression and domination. When Mao Tse-tung wrote his Hunan Report in 1927 during the Hunan peasant uprising, he hailed the rural revolution as the 'festival of the masses'. The adivasi women remarked that for them it was a social festival like that of Dussera when the effigy of Ravana—the villain of the Ramayana epic was burnt down. The women on that day talked about the inhuman treatment meted out to the people by that fellow and stated that their act of destruction was a

spontaneous outburst emanating out of their veins. And then to climax it all, the Maoist leader, Bikash, with an AK-47 slung over his shoulder, addressed the press openly and proclaimed their leadership in this expanding festival of the masses (*Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 16-06-09).

On 17th some Maoists on motorcycles killed three CPM goons right in the heart of their stronghold. These three were leading members of a vigilante force, called the Maoist Resistance Force, set up by the CPM to counter the Maoists and masses. One of those killed was the secretary of the MRF, while another was the CPM branch secretary of the area. This vigilante force, as is the norm, also doubled up as police informers, and was also responsible for getting a number of PSBJC people arrested.

In response to the comments made by some that adivasis have been duped by the Maoists to do such acts of destruction, the leaders of the People's Committee (PSBJC) replied that the mystery lay elsewhere. The 'Marxism' of the CPM leaders and the 'Maoism' of the Maoists—both are foreign. Why is it that despite being in power for 32 years, the CPM had failed to win the people over to their side, while the people could grasp Maoism with ease? In reality, the main thing is neither Marxism nor Maoism, but to remain by people's side by sharing their weal and woe. They have robbed the people of the money meant for their development and fattened their purse by owning houses and cars, oppressing the people with the help of the police forces and 'looting' votes during elections; the people of Dharampur-Lalgarh have proved that such things cannot go on forever (*Bikeler Protidin*, 16 June 2009).

To the *HT* correspondent, the destruction of Anuj's palace was carried out in a manner which 'appeared to shake to its foundations the world's longest surviving, elected communist government'. To him, it



was also ‘a small-time rerun of the storming of the Bastille’ (14 July 1789, that signaled the beginning of the French Revolution). What the people of Jangal Mahal have been doing is something which has great historical importance. They have been able to identify their enemies correctly, deal telling blows at them like a mighty storm and have sent them to their graves. The myth of impregnability of the CPM social fascists has been broken beyond repair; the Maoists have already made their presence felt strongly in this part of the country as the only alternative force genuinely striving for the cause of the downtrodden people. Meanwhile the Lalgarh party office of the CPM was destroyed by the people on 16 June, and the People’s Committee has declared that they would extend their movement to Salboni, Goaltore and other areas as well in the near future.

With the mass movement taking on the form of a massive revolt, after seven months of keeping the administration and police out of the area, and with the elections over, the central and state governments began plans for their massive crackdown. Notwithstanding the contradictions that existed between the CPM and the central Congress ministry, they began acting in tandem to crush the rising movement. This was despite the opposition from Mamta Bannerjee, who was now a central minister, and the West Bengal Congress, both of whose single aim is to oust the CPM from power in the next assembly elections.

The Crackdown & Resistance

In the midst of this mass upsurge, by June 16th itself reports began coming in that the central government and the WB state governments are sending 5 companies of para-military forces including one notorious Cobra unit (Combat Battalion for Resolute Action) supposedly specially trained to deal with the Maoists. It is also reported on 16 June that Grey Hound units of Andhra Pradesh—notorious

Send Food not Forces to Lalgarh – Mahasweta Devi

Food and not force is the answer to solve the Lalgarh crisis. Noted writer Mahasweta Devi has asked the Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee government not to arrest Chhatradhar Mahato, the People’s Committee against Police Atrocities leader. *“If Chhatradhar Mahato is arrested, I’ll go and sit on a dharna outside the office of Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee. This is not the time to send forces to Lalgarh,”* she told reporters in Kolkata on Monday. *“Whatever the state government is doing is wrong. People are fighting unitedly for certain demands. Respect it. The state government has snatched the rights of the people living in Jangalmahal,”* she said.

Mahasweta Devi said the Lalgarh movement was another example of the Left Front government’s failure.

“This is one more reason why the government should go. It came with much fanfare but has done nothing for the tribals. The state forest department has protected contractors involved in illegal felling of the trees. This has resulted in the loss of livelihood for the forest-dwellers. There are no roads, no water, no electricity. There is no other state like Bengal where the tribals are so deprived.”

The veteran writer said, *“The people of Lalgarh have organized themselves to solve their problems. It is a shame that the state government has declared war on a section of its own people. Give Lalgarh people BPL cards, drinking water, solar lights and see what happens.”*

for torturing and killing Maoists and other fighting people in cold blood — are also coming. With this, the Lalgarh struggle began entering a new phase bloodier than the earlier ones. Mao Tse-tung remarked time and again that it is not the weapons, but people who are real motive forces of history. However powerful the enemy might appear to be, they are no more than paper tigers. The People’s Committee declared that the entry of the central forces would be actively resisted by the people. The CPM requested the centre for six companies but they were given 40 companies — including CRPF, Eastern Frontier Rifles, BSF, Greyhounds and the elite CoBRA.

On June 19th the operation began with the helicopters dropping government handbills in Bengali and the local dialect, asking the villagers to fight the Maoists and support the government. The airdrop was from a height fearing being shot down by the Maoists. Simultaneously ground forces, as though in a military operation against a foreign country, began to move

cautiously towards Lalgarh. The security forces unleashed a reign of terror in the region. They stripped women and girls, pointed lathis at their private parts, used the vilest language, beat and brutalized innocent men, and smashed shopkeepers and shops that refused to entertain them. Village after village were targeted by the police. In one place women attacked them as they were found urinating in a pond shared by locals for drinking water. At other places they have entered homes of sick people and dragged them out, beating women black and blue and unleashing relentless violence. Young men are being forced to look for landmines. Others are being detained with no evidence. Even family members of local Congress leaders or *panchayat* committees have been beaten up and hounded. Meanwhile, the CPM’s men, including the discredited Anuj Pandey are trying to come back and “recapture the territory” under protection of the security forces.

The imperialist stooge and Home

Development Work in Lalgarh

Decades of neglect by the bosses of the CPM who ran this area like their fiefdom, minting money from government schemes meant for the poor, has resulted in the outburst at Lalgarh of West Midnapore district and the neighbouring areas in Bankura and Purulia districts. Led by the PCPA (People's Committee against Police Atrocities) the people of the area have not only risen in revolt against the CPM, administration and police, but have also taken up developmental works. They have work through *shramdan* (*voluntary labor*), to improve irrigation facilities and roads. They have even set up health centers and schools.

As the Indian Express Reported on June 3 2009:

Having mobilized the villagers to prevent the police from entering the villages in Lalgarh and boycott of the administrative machinery, the PCPA has collected Rs.40 lakhs – its budget for developmental works, it says.

Among the initiatives, stress is being given on irrigation projects like construction of embankments and digging ponds, construction of roads and setting up health centers. In certain pockets, groups of villagers are trying to turn barren or single crop areas into fertile, multi-crop land by introducing proper irrigation. Work is going on in villages like Dharampur, Kumarbandh, Bansher, Dargapara, Junglekhand in Ramgarh and Lalgarh blocks.

The PCPA is currently constructing roads in three areas. A 4.5 km stretch is being laid in Sizua in Lalgarh block, and another 8 km road is being constructed from Birkar to Patisol. A 1.5 km stretch from Dharampur to Sargapara is also being laid. It is also putting up tube wells in several villages of Lalgarh and Katapahari. In Baropelia, where many innocent villagers were allegedly assaulted after the police crackdown there, the PCPA has dug a large pond.

Two health centers have been set up at Katapahari in Lalgarh and at Chakkadoba in Belpahari. Another health centre is being run at Ranibandh in Bankura.

The PCPA has started teaching Alchiki in six schools of Lalgarh and Ramgarh, ignoring the norms of the state education department (i.e. of imposition of Bengali)

When asked about the funds, Mahato said the budget of the PCPA depends on the donations of the people and big donations from the Lalgarh Andolan Samiti Mancha in Kolkota.

The Hindusthan Times Reported on June 10th 2009:

“.... a Maoist run state within a state where development for more than two lakh people is unfolding at a pace not seen in 30 years of Left rule. Apart from taking over the organs of the state, most notably the executive and the judiciary, the Maoists have built at least 50 kms of general paths, dug tubewells and tanks, rebuilt irrigation canals and are running health centers with the help of local villagers.

Today priority is to answer a desperate call for drinking water in Borapelia, said a Maoist planner. “We build a tank at least 50-60 ft deep. Otherwise the miserly earth won't throw up water. But we are planning it to serve like a master reservoir of drinking water.” Apart from this tank many tube wells are being revived. You can see gushing tube wells in the villages of Amdanga, Khairashole, Bahadanga, Pairabila and Shyamcharandanga.

With crores at their disposal over the past decades this entire region has seen no development whatsoever with all development funds being siphoned off by the bosses of the CPM and the bureaucrats. Any dissent was ruthlessly crushed by the *goonda vahini* of the CPM in league with the police. For all their left talk, at the ground level the CPM was little different from any of the other ruling class parties; in fact in their ruthlessness against the masses they could teach many a lesson to the Congress and BJP.

Minister P.C. Chidambaram (once lawyer to the bankrupt company Enron and also on the Board of the mining mafia company Vedanta) banned the CPI(Maoist) and began spewing venom, calling them 'terrorists'. He insisted on utilizing a British Act (used against the nationalists) to ban the Maoists, under

the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908, which has much wider provisions than the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. He called on intellectuals not to visit the area, to hide from the world the planned rampages of the paramilitary forces on the masses. And when some intellectuals went to the area, led by film star

Arpana Sen, dramatist Shamili Mitra and poet Joy Goswami around June 21st, the faithful Buddhadeb clamped a case on them for supposedly breaking section 144.

After the banning of the CPI (Maoist) while the left front partners opposed the ban and the CPM did much doublespeak on it, the CPM not

only immediately arrested the 60-year old open spokesperson of the CPI (Maoist), Gour Chakravati, under the ban clauses, but also roughed up his house and remanded him to 14 days police custody torturing and interrogating him. Before the ban was announced the PM and HM consulted with Buddhadeb and got his agreement. Later Sitaram Yechuri, a PBM of the CPM openly endorsed the PM's description of Maoists as the "single most serious security threat" and complained of lack of cooperation of the centre in West Bengal.

But for all the hype the forces sent to the area were a panic-stricken force, having faced the wrath of the people since the past six months. The social boycott they faced resulted in not a single person giving water or food to them. In fact the policemen at the Lalgarh police station were allowed after four months to take water from a shop in front of the station.

After just four days of the operation a newspaper report said that from day one the state forces, besides battling the Maoists and fearful of guerrilla attacks had to also battle hunger, thirst, heat and lack of sleep. The report, dated June 24th, said: that since the operation commenced six days ago, 3,000 state forces have been marching on empty stomachs. They had reached Midnapore town on Wednesday evening and started for Pirakota at dawn. After camping in the heat for seven hours they were given just a little *khichri*. While marching again they had to battle Maoists fire and mass resistance from the people. At the end of the first day's operation they had to camp on the road at Pirukhuly. They had no food that night and no breakfast the next morning. After walking 7 kms they reached the Binpur camp — where they managed to get water but there was no arrangement for food.

On June 22nd the newspaper reported that the only visible activity amongst the 600 odd policemen

camping near the Lalgarh police station was the IGP's move into the danger zone with 10 commandos — he returned quickly after getting reports of Maoist movement in the area. The state forces are in a state of total panic, but without their initiative the central forces are not familiar with the territory. One such commander said, "*We do not venture out after dark, the forest is very unsafe and we do not even have torches. Let alone searchlights*". The BSF complained that they have been sitting in the same place for 48 hours after sanitizing an 8 km stretch en route to Lalgarh as the state forces are not prepared to move.

On June 19th shortly before noon a landmine went off in Kadashol village. Soon after, advancing columns of Central and State forces came under intensive firing. Many were injured and they had to turn back. As the battle of Lalgarh began an IED blast hit the Domkal SDPO's car at Pirakota, critically injuring three police personnel. This was 2 hours after the road had supposedly been sanitized. A culvert was blown up at Nimtala and gunfire was heard near the Lalgarh police station creating even more panic amongst the security forces.

On June 20th a police contingent — heavily armed but without the protection of Central forces — was

ambushed at Pingboni (16 kms from Lalgarh) — Rattled by the attack many constables have refused to carry out any operation without Central forces accompanying them. In the 2-hour long battle six were injured. The same area had supposedly been cleared by the Eastern Frontier Rifles the previous day, but they retreated out of fear. In another incident as policemen waited, a large crowd charged at them. Some police rushed forward with *lathis*, only to scatter as arrows were shot at them. Suddenly a deafening explosion took place as a policeman tripped on a booby trap. This was followed by a hail of bullets and arrows. One sub-inspector and three constables were injured in this surprise attack.

But in some place the police went berserk terrorizing the villagers while in many other places the tribals have all fled to the forests. On June 22nd when the police went to Dhangori village they started beating up everybody. Homes were ransacked and food and utensils thrown about. On June 22nd the newspapers reported that more and more cases of clashes between security forces and tribals are emerging as the battle for Lalgarh enters a crucial phase. On 21st when security forces arrested 3 rebel suspects, they faced a hostile crowd baying for their blood. Scores of men

Massive Increase in Instruments of Repression

As announced in the press on June 29th the state plans a massive increase in expenditure on the para-military — the main force in the country to suppress the masses rising in revolt. The ministry of Home Affairs has asked for a massive hike of 15-20% in budgetary allocation for the current year, which itself had risen phenomenally from Rs.21,634 crores in 2007-08 to Rs.25,923 in the last budget. Even a force like the Special Protection Group, which is meant specifically for the protection of the Prime Minister increased phenomenally from Rs.117 crores in 2007-08 to Rs.170 crores in 2008-09.

Not only that, after the Chattisgarh action killing at least 50 security personnel, Chidumbrum announced a huge increase in the CRPF forces by 35,00 from the existing 2.7 lakhs.

The government and media keep talking on the need to curb expenditure on subsidies for the poor but not a word is mentioned on these gigantic wasteful expenditure which if used for the benefit of the masses could bring about a change in their lives.



and women resisted these forces as they caught hold of the three. A woman, Rajari Tudu, led the village folk and attacked the BSF jawans with household knives, injuring a jawan.

With shopkeepers refusing to give anything to the police many were beaten up and shops and huts were looted by the police. Even the Panchayat Executive of Banaspahari, Tarachand Soren, was not spared — thrashed and whisked away by security forces. All this ignited further tension in the region. A large number of women came out of their huts and dared the forces on patrol near Negusila police camp.

On June 25th, starting from Goumi Chowk (6 kms from Lalgarh) the PSBJC marched down the narrow gravel path through villages with traditional weapons, beating drums and shouting slogans against the police and CPM.

By June 25th forty companies of the para-military plus the state forces were present in the area, but most were confined to the main roads, too panicky to enter the forests. Few if any of the Maoists have been arrested and neither have the leaders of the PSBJC been apprehended. No doubt the battle will be protracted but justice is on the side of the oppressed masses and the Maoists leading them.

Political Equations and Lalgarh

As a fact-finding report (April 12th 2009) says: *The people of Lalgarh have expressed their demands in a 13-point charter which involves restoration of dignity and deliverance of justice. There is in addition a 9-point charter which makes specific demands relating to developmental needs like 365-day employment under NREGA, provision of basic health facilities and ration cards under the BPL scheme.*

The report also adds: *From eyewitness accounts, victims and families of victims we heard that the police was present on several occasions when the Harmad Vahini carried out murders and inflicted injuries on people in Lalgarh. The state administration has taken no action against the perpetrators and made no effort to compensate the victims' families for these killings and neither have any medical assistance been provided to the injured.*

Maoist leaders have sacrificed the luxuries of urban life to live amongst the tribals since over a decade. They have shared the weal and woes of the tribals and rural poor and won their confidence. They have slowly built up leaders from amongst them. Now the

Party and the masses are part of a homogenous whole fighting the perpetrators of exploitation and state terror. And it is within this scenario that the ruling class forces of the CPM and the TMC have lately been battling it out for supremacy.

Revolutionary Storm Awaits WB

With CPM terror not confined to the Maoists but also the opposition parties in order to guarantee their vote strength, the sweep of the TMC in the Lokh Sabha elections is for the first time in over three decades, shaking the CPM fiefdom as never before. Fed up with CPM social fascist terror and domination, and with no other alternative, the TMC (in alliance with the Congress) is emerging as a strong possibility in the next assembly. In the course of this entire battle the main focus of the two parties has to keep account of the forthcoming assembly elections within the next two years. After Nandigram impact the CPM is terrified of further alienating the masses, so is being more cautious at Lalgarh; while the TMC and Mamta Bannerjee is relatively silent on the Maoists more keen to discredit the CPM and take advantage of the clashes. On June 18th even the Congress spokesperson, Manish Tiwari, called the Maoist violence a backlash against 32 years of cadre raj enforced by the Marxists, saying “when you sow the wind, you can only reap the whirlwind”. These contradictions amongst the ruling class forces and the weakened position of the CPM is no doubt an extremely favorable situation for the revolutionary forces. And this situation is likely to continue till the assembly elections.

Besides this the Singur, Nandigram and now more specifically the Lalgarh struggles have aroused the democratic forces in Bengal after three decades of confusion created by the CPM. Democratic minded people have only now come to realize what the Maoists

have been saying for years — i.e. the social fascist character of the CPM. Till now they did not realize the nature of CPM terror in the countryside and would only judge it by its hypocritical talk. There has been a big upsurge of support for these movements by democratic and progressive people throughout West Bengal. Many have come to help out in the health centers and other development projects in the Lalgargh area. Intellectuals like Mahashweta Devi have come out in support of the struggles of the people of Lalgargh, openly and boldly. {See Box on previous page}

Unfortunately even now some sections feel that the Maoists and masses under their influence are going too far in killing the CPM leaders and

chasing their activists out of the villages. Some have even gone so far as to compare the Maoists attacks as being similar to that of the CPM, ignoring the class content of these attacks. The CPM terrorized the masses in order to loot the people, and now, is still utilizing their instruments of terror (in close coordination with the police) to fight back the Maoists and aroused masses. Without crushing this force survival in the area itself would be impossible. In any revolutionary upsurge the forces of reaction must either surrender to the new people's authority, apologise for their mistakes, return the looted monies, and stop acting as police informers — or else face the wrath of the masses. That alone is justice — not equating the

violence of the exploiters and fascists with the counter-violence of the masses and Maoists. Equating the two does not help the cause of the people to win justice and equality. You cannot look lovingly at a scorpion with the good intention that it won't bite.

But most genuine democrats are firmly standing with the oppressed masses of Lalgargh. The conspiracy of silence against CPM terror has at last been shattered. There is no doubt that the revolutionary and democratic forces will once again bring to the fore the great revolutionary traditions of the Bengali people — witnessed first in the 1930s in the struggle against the British and then again in the 1960s and 1970s with the path-breaking Naxalbari uprising. Pt

People's March Is Coming Back

On 7th August 2009 the Hon'ble Press & Registration Appellate Board, New Delhi set aside the order dated 15-01-2009 of the District Collector, Ernakulam canceling the Declaration furnished by People's March which was forwarded to The Registrar of Newspapers for India, New Delhi. It showed the utter vindictiveness of the Government/State to suppress the views hostile to it. People's march has uncompromisingly stood on the side of the oppressed, exploited masses and the middle classes of our country who comprise an overwhelming 90% of our population. The Government/State represents the mere microscopic moneybags of this country and their agents and hangers-on who comprise barely 5% of the population. Both stand in direct conflict to each other. But the interests of the country must and always be the interests of its bulk population. Before the Appellate Board stood a lawyer paid by the Government. On the other side stood me the Editor without any lawyer. The Government/State has no answer for the arguments and grounds put forth by me in my appeal as to under which clause under Section 8 B of the Press

and Registration of Books Act 1867 the Declaration furnished by me was cancelled. After a few minutes of silence by the Government advocate The Press & Registration appellate Board set aside the order of the Collector, Ernakulam. A copy of the order is awaited.

Likewise after my illegal & arbitrary arrest and release on bail even after 21 months the Government/State charge sheets were not filed. But the cases foisted on me are pending as a form of threat.

It is clear that both the arrest and the banning of the non publishing magazine while I was under custody together with the earlier banning of the website www.peoplesmarch.com was nothing but a crude attempt by the Government/State to stifle the freedom of speech in this fake democratic setup. It sought to muffle the revolutionary voice of the oppressed masses, their cries of agony and their call for liberation. People's march represented the truth and stood on the side of justice. The moneybags and their government/State could not tolerate this, so they resorted to suppressive measures.

People's March will never be cowed down by these efforts of the

Government/state to muffle its voice. It will continue to stand up for the truth, will forever be on the side of justice and will never bow down before any fascist authority.

We apologize to our readers for this gap, but we thank you for your unstinting support in this period of trial. We request you to fight this conspiracy of silence by the Government/State by supporting People's March in all possible ways and propagating widely this victory of People's March to renew publication. You can do by renewing your subscription and each reader making personal attempts to get at least 10 subscribers. We request you to propagate widely in the media and the net this victory of People's March fraternity of patriotic, democratic and revolutionary people can grow and grow, both in India and abroad. We also request you to donate your mite with all your material and financial support in our attempts to change the world. We once again thank you for your unstinted support in our period of difficulty.

With revolutionary greetings.

Editor

CPI (MAOIST) MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF LALGARH

We Hail Your Glorious Struggle!

Your Mass Upsurge Inspires Millions to Spread The Red Flame of Lalgarh to Every Corner of the Country!!

YOUR revolt, with arms in hands, has risen like a storm against decades of social fascist neglect, misrule and terror. You have stormed the police camps, CPM offices – the centres of state terror – and chased them out of the area. For over seven months you and your comrades from the surrounding areas have practically paralysed the whole administration in a vast region. Not only that, while exposing the hoax of so-called development of three decades of the social-fascists, you have yourselves undertaken numerous development works through *shramdan*, like health projects, irrigation, roads, schools, etc. It is indeed an inspiring example of new forms of struggle for all of us to learn from resulting in the Call to build thousands of Lalgarhs in every corner of the country!

Terrorised by your mass upheaval, the central and state forces, along with the *Harmad bahini goonda* force of the social fascists, have launched massive attacks on the entire people of your area. With wide-scale anti-propaganda the government turned your area into a war zone. Armed people, with traditional weapons, have heroically resisted the attack launched by 40 companies of central para-military forces, the special forces of the Cobras, Helicopters, along with State forces and the CPM *goonda bahini*.

It is known to all that there was resentment of the people against the handing over of 4,000 acres of forest land to the Jindal plant, on which it is you and you alone that have the rights. It is you, the villagers of the area, who alone have the rights over this land, and not the government. After the attack on the convoy of the Chief Minister and others while returning from the inauguration of this plant and the terror then unleashed by the police, your movement took a political shape with thousand and thousand of masses mobilised against the police and administration. Along with the heroic mass resistance against the police and para-military attacks, this mass upsurge has created a big political impact over the entire country arousing a hope and inspiration amongst the toiling masses fighting against all kinds of exploitation, repression and injustice. This has had the added political impact to thoroughly expose the social fascist face of the CPM revisionists and accelerated the process of polarisation of the forces of revolution and reaction.

The Politburo of the CPI (Maoist) hails your glorious mass uprising and strongly condemns the cruel repression unleashed on the masses in your area by the central and state forces. It calls on the whole Party and PLGA, its mass organisations and each and every section of the revolutionary masses, to come forward in support of your movement and rise against the brutal attack on the struggling and fighting people of Lalgarh. We further calls on the Party and people in the surrounding areas to take proper actions and conduct necessary activities in support of your great uprising. We vow to lend you all support in every possible way, particularly the support of the oppressed masses throughout the country.

The most significant aspects of the struggle from which we can all learn and emulate throughout the country are:

- (i) Yours was a truly armed mass movement which drew into it the entire masses of the area with the ability to keep out the entire reactionary state machinery for a full seven months
- (ii) Yours form of mass organisation of constituting a committee in every village comprising five men and five women was a truly new example of a real mass-based democratic organisation which can mobilise and organise the vast masses of the people
- (iii) Yours was not a movement for mere economic interests but a political upsurge for your political rights and self-respect of the adivasi and non-adivasi toiling masses.
- (iv) Yours movement was an example of how to truly build a united front of all forces drawing in all sections of the masses and also involving the progressive and intellectual forces of the cities as well, combining a skilful balance between reform work, political agitation and armed resistance against the state and government

Comrades,

Our entire Party will learn from this heroic experience, vow to spread Lalgarh-type movements throughout the country, propagate your movement throughout the country and lend your movement all kinds of necessary assistance

July 15, 09

Pt

EXTRACTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH COMRADE BIMAL, POLITBURO MEMBER OF THE CPI(MAOIST) TAKEN FROM NEWSPAPERS

Hindustan Times: What is the future of the so-called Indian revolution you are spearheading?

Bimal: We have a considerable mass base in eight or nine states. Moreover, the capitalist economy is going through a crisis all over the world, and sooner or later, India will suffer the same fate as the West. So, the conditions are quite ripe for a revolution.

HT: You had earlier supported Islamic militancy. Do you still do so after the Mumbai attacks?

Bimal: We do not support the way they attacked the Victoria station (Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, or CST), where most of the victims were Muslims. At the same time, we feel the Islamic upsurge should not be opposed as it is basically anti-US and anti-imperialist in nature. We therefore want it to grow.

HT: How is your party faring in states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal and Maharashtra?

Bimal: Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa will be the new storm centers in Indian politics. We have our strongest base in Chhattisgarh – particularly in Old Bastar, which stretches across five districts – and it's totally in our control now. Our militia in the state is more than one-lakh strong.

We have also taken up development projects. Then, we are gaining strength in other states you mentioned.

HT: Your party suffered a major setback in Andhra Pradesh. What are you doing about it?

Bimal: It's true that we faced a major setback in Andhra Pradesh (when the police drove the Naxalites out of their former strongholds across the state). But we will definitely recover because most of our leadership is alive and safe in our Dandakaranya camps. Our mass base, built up over 30 years,

is still intact. But in a war, there will always be ups and downs. (Excerpts from interview given to a correspondent of the Hindustan Times, published in the June 10, 2009 edition of that paper.)

Mint: The administration alleges that you ambush people and run away – that you don't have the courage to fight them...

Bimal: Absolute rubbish – they know we don't run away, but say so because neither they can ignore us nor can they fight us. Even on 2 November, when Bhuddhababu's (West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee) convoy was attacked, I was within a kilometer of where the blast took place. Huge forces were deployed, the area was combed, but I did not run away. All our comrades in (West) Bengal are sons and daughters of the soil. Where will they run away? We are not scared of appearing before the people. Lakhs of villagers and tribals know what I look like since I interact with them regularly.

Mint: How do you forge ties with the locals?

Bimal: We play very diverse roles, which the people don't get to know. Because they have lost faith in the administration, villagers approach us with their day-to-day problems. We organize camps in villages so they can voice their grievances. We deal with the villagers with lot of compassion and kindness, which is why they love and protect us. We also work for women's liberation. There are many women who are tortured by their (parents) in-laws, husbands or parents. But they can not protest because they dependent on them. We fight for the liberation of such women. Women are very important for our movement. Many oppressed women have joined us in our struggle across the country.

They have led from the front in many a battle that we have fought. However, in terms of the strength, our

women cadre in (West) Bengal is slightly weaker compared with other areas such as Jharkhand, Dandakaranya and Andhra Pradesh. Whereas elsewhere the ratio of men to women is 50:50 and even 60:40 in favor of women, in Bengal, the ratio is around 70:30 (in favor of men). Besides our guerilla operations, we also lead strong mass movements in many parts of West Bengal such as Lalgargh and Nandigram. A lot of women are participating in such movements, though they may not be members of the party. Exposure to such movements leads to political maturity. We need mature organizers for the party and would look to recruit women who have actively participated in these movements.

Mint: How do you recruit people for your movement?

Bimal: We don't recruit from villages on our own. We have a party controlled mechanism under which we receive proposals from the locals. After obtaining the consent of the parents of applicants, we forward the proposals to one of our committees. It vets them and takes a final call on whether or not to recruit, based on the person's antecedents, class and disposition towards others in his or her village. The responsibility of the group that I lead is to train the new recruits. Many of them are initially intimidated by the difficult life we live, but most of them eventually learn to cope with it.

(Mint, May 29, 2009.)

Mint: How long can you hold out? The state is mobilizing more forces...

Bimal: Let them send another 500 companies (of police). We are ready. This protracted war is not going to end soon. And we have prepared for it with full understanding of the strength of our opponents. We have enough resources... but more importantly, we have the support of the locals, and the whole area is surrounded by them. Tell Buddhhababu, his forces should fight

us – the guerillas – and not the tribals.

Mint: So you agree that you are using the tribals as human shields...

Bimal: We have never used the tribals as human shields. They are with us voluntarily...and some of them are even leading our forces. Come to Lalgargh, and you wouldn't take long to understand that they support us, and the support is entirely voluntary.

Mint: A lot of civilians might die in the crossfire. Wouldn't you be morally responsible for those killed?

Bimal: In a war, there are no civilians – there are people either on your side or against you.

Mint: And moral responsibility?

Bimal: The Centre and the state should be held responsible for the bloodshed. We have repeatedly appealed to them to withdraw the forces and initiate a dialogue, but they ignored (the appeal). So, let them face the consequences. But yes, I will be hurt if the locals died in this war.

Mint: If the state government eventually agreed to your proposal for a dialogue, would you come?

Bimal: If the government agrees to discussions or debate, the people of Lalgargh will take part. The government will have to sit with the civilians and

their representatives to understand what they want. (Mint, 22 June, 2009)

Bimal to Hindustan Times; June 18th: By defying the public mandate, they have initiated the war. Now no one should blame us for the bloodshed.....The Germans made more advances in Russia than the State and Central Government made in Lalgargh. Let everybody be patient and see how the people of Lalgargh fight the battle. The State was supposed to pay heed to the local's grievances and solve them but they chose the way of policing. They will have to pay for acting against the people's decision.

Pt

Our Aim is to Break CPM shackles

[Interview given by the Zonal committee secretary of Communist Party of India (Maoist) for West Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia districts, comrade Bikash to The Hindustan Times.]

What are your immediate plans?

Our aim is to break the shackles that the ruling CPM has put on the people of this area. For nearly two decades, the people have not reaped the so-called benefits of parliamentary democracy. Gradually, everything began to be controlled by CPM. Its leaders even had a say in marriages and other social and personal matters. There are many leaders against whom FIRs are pending. The police have taken no action against them. We will punish them. Those who have spent money or used political connections to avoid justice will be tried by people's courts.

The government is preparing to strike in a major way. How will you counter this?

We have seen media reports in which government officials have spoken about bringing in central forces, COBRA or Greyhound personnel. We are prepared for any strike. PCPA is with us. In Purulia, Bankura and West Midnapore districts, we have set up gram committees in over 250 villages. We shall ultimately liberate Keshpur and

Garbeta. The state cannot stop us by using force.

Why have you resorted to violence?

We were forced into taking up arms by the administration. When we had guns pointing at us, one can't expect us to respond with flower petals. Violence was started by CPM. We took up arms to counter this. Many of them are educated unemployed youths. Family members of CPM have got jobs that were meant for them.

Why do you target the police? Many of the constables belong to poor families.

We have appealed to the police a number of times, not to blindly follow the diktats of CPM. We have asked the police not to torture poor villagers. There are some who heeded our appeal. Those who we targeted worked at the behest of CPM and paid a price.

What is your ultimate goal?

We want public funds to be used by the people's committee. They will be accountable for all development work done. We have already done a

lot of development work in the villages. CPM talks a lot about land reforms. Anuj Pandey and his two brothers owned 40 bighas of land. We shall distribute such land among the poor.

[The Hindustan Times; 18 June, 2009]

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and become untraceable. Their repeated demand to be sent back to their homes is still not accepted. Food, water, sanitation and other basic amenities are not provided to the people. The Rajapakshe government is planning to convert Tamil areas into Sinhalese settlements, on the lines of the Zionists in Palestine. The Srilankan Army Chief, Sarath Fonseka, openly declared that the Tamils should be ready to live as second class citizens in Lanka.

The Tamils, learning from their mistakes, are bound to fight until they achieve their goal of liberating themselves from not only national oppression and persecution, but also from class exploitation and oppression. All progressive, democratic and revolutionary people in India and worldwide will continue to support the just struggle of the Tamil people of Srilanka for a separate homeland. Pt

We will spread this Fire

[Comrade Manoj, a prominent CPI (Maoist) leader in Lalgarh tells his story to *The Times of India*.]

My name is Manoj. It's not the name my parents gave me, but all my comrades call me 'Manoj'. My father's name is Dhiren Murmu. I am his second son and I am 25. I was born at Bamundanga village in Salboni. I've lived most of my life in this hopeless village.

Our village falls under the Kansijora gram panchayat. The left Front has been in power here for 30 years. Salboni has always been a CPM stronghold. But, in 30 years, neither the state government, nor the panchayat and Zilla Parishad took any interest at all in developing this area. We might have been living in the Stone Age.

When it rains here, the dirt tracks turn muddy and we are forced to drag ourselves and our cattle through the muck. We are not able to ride our bicycles or use carts. We don't have clean drinking water. People are forced to drink filthy, yellow water. After sunset, we live in the dark as there is no electricity here. No jobs either. During the paddy season, we work in the fields and then sit idle for the rest of the year. Because we are tribals, no one has bothered to do anything for us.

In 2002, we got tired of being treated like rodents. So, the villagers got together and demanded development in our area. This infuriated the local CPM bosses. The police and Marxists slapped false cases on us, accusing us of working for the People's War Group (PWG). They branded us Maoists. So we began to think we might as well join

the Maoists.

Things turned nasty quickly. The former police superintendent of West Midnapore, KC Meena, lodged an FIR against the entire village. Nearly 90% of the men and teenage boys were charged with being Naxalite. We knew what was coming. We had to do something to save ourselves.

I was just 18 at the time. I was in class XII at the local school. But, I too joined in protests against the police. Within days, the police filed a case against me, my father and brother. They accused all of us for working for the PWG. Our family has always supported the Congress party. In 1988, when Mamata Banerjee formed the Trinmool Congress (TMC), we switched loyalty to her.

One day, police jeeps rolled into our villages, picked up people from their houses, bundled everyone into their vehicles and dumped all of us into the Midnapore jail. That was where I first met Maoist leader Sushil Roy [comrade Barunda]. I found the Maoist ideology very appealing. Roy asked me to join the Maoists so that I could help the poor. I liked his ideas. Then I met two PWG leaders in prison. And I realized that neither Congress nor the TMC can stop the CPM's terror. I also realized that under CPM rule, we had lost the right to speak up. It was time to take a stand and speak up.

I joined the Maoists. They gave me a new name, a new identity and a new life. Now, I work for the Lalgarh movement. I joined this great surge of people last year. On November 5, the police arrived here looking for

people who had blasted landmines at chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharya's convoy at Salboni. In Lalgarh, the police rounded up innocent tribal women and began to molest and torture them. One woman lost an eye. Others were badly injured. After this incident, we decided to join the Lalgarh movement. It was our party's decision. The Maoists always stand with the deprived. We joined them at Nandigram and Singur. Now, we have joined them in Lalgarh.

It's been easy for us to win the people's support. Most of them have been victims of torture by police. The people listened to us and joined the Peoples' Committee against Police Atrocities (PCPA). Opposition party workers have also supported us. Everybody is rebelling against the CPM cadre and police.

We know the government forces want to crush us. But, we plan to expand our area of influence. As soon as we are able to turn Lalgarh and Junglemahal (a forested area spanning three districts – Bankura, Purulia and West Midnapore) into a Maoist-dominated area, we will apply our ideology here. We will undertake development work for the poor. We will raise money through public donations. And nobody will pay tax to the government anymore.

After victory at Lalgarh, we will expand our fight to the tribal communities of Jharkand, Bihar, Orissa and Chattisgarh. Our war has just begun.

[June 21 2009' Sunday Times of India]

Pt

LALGARH KE SHOLAY

Manas Chakravarty

WE are a non-violent people. We hate it when people resort to violence. In Lalgarh, the tribals have all along been very peaceful. True, the primary health centers in their villages didn't have any medicines and doctors from the towns rarely visited them. So what's new? Many people saw their sick loved ones die as they made the long trek to the district hospital from their villages over the dirt tracks that pass for roads. But there was no violence.

Finding drinking water in the summer has always been a problem in the villages. Ponds have had to be used for both drinking water and for bathing. Children have often suffered from diseases as a result. But the tribals of Lalgarh are used to their children dying early. They never complained.

Most villagers in the region are caught in a vicious poverty trap. Malnutrition is rife. Doctors from Kolkata who recently visited the place said that what the people needed was not pills but food. Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen once said that hunger was "a quite violence". He meant that if a state can't feed its people it's guilty of violence towards them. But he was just twisting words to suit his theory.

Indians are malnourished not just in Lalgarh, but all over the country. A recent UNICEF report said that 405 million people in South Asia suffered from chronic hunger. India's rank in the Global Hunger Index of 88 countries is 66, below several African countries. So there's nothing special about Lalgarh. Also, in spite of being hungry, the people were peaceful. Being peaceful is a most important thing.

Every election, the Lalgarh tribals voted the Left to power in the hope that these self-proclaimed friends of the poor would help them. But in spite of the promises, nothing happened. The money from the anti-poverty programmes never reached them, the

police occupied the buildings that were supposed to be clinics and the irrigation canals dried up. They watched in silence as the local party bosses built mansions and businesses for themselves and their cronies.

For more than 60 years after independence, they patiently waited for better times. And it's not that the country wasn't doing well. Some of them went to the grand city of Kolkata and came back with wondrous tales of shining malls and air-conditioning and taps that never ran dry. They were right to wait. For as we all know, it's just a matter of time. Once the Sensex goes up enough and CEOs start earning several crores a year and India becomes a world power, then money will trickle down and reach places like Lalgarh. True, generations may be destroyed before that happens. But that is not violence.

Some things do seem to suggest, at first glance, a hint of brutality. Take the routine manner in which the police pick up tribals for questioning and then torture them. But that's required for the police to conduct their investigations. How else will they

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revolutionary successors will step into the shoes of these beloved leaders turning the dreams of the reactionary rulers into nightmares.

The Peoples' Truth pays its red revolutionary homage to comrade Sudhakar Reddy and Venkatayya and vows to fulfill their revolutionary dreams of a classless society. The people of India, particularly the people of AP, will never forget the great service these comrades had rendered to the Indian revolution. They will certainly avenge the martyrdom of these comrades by intensifying and expanding the ongoing people's war, establishing base areas in the vast countryside of the country, transforming the PLGA into PLA and advancing the Indian revolution to its final victory.

protect the people from the Maoists? True, tribals in Lalgarh lived in constant terror of the police and of the party thugs. But that is not terrorism.

Of late, though, the people of Lalgarh have been behaving very oddly. They drove the police and the party bigwigs out of the area and torched their houses. They have started digging wells, setting up schools and running health clinics, without any help from the state. They have formed a Committee against Police Atrocities which wants electricity in their villages and roads and bridges to be built. Worse, they even want the politicians to apologize! Very strangely, after all these decade, they seem to be running out of patience.

What on earth is going on? Outsiders must be inciting them to violence. We are a peace-loving people and must stop this violence at once. Don't worry, our tribal brothers, our troops are on their way to save you.

[Courtesy, The Hindustan Times, June 21]

Pt

The role of leadership is very crucial in any revolution. All successful revolutions in history had taken great care in preserving the leadership and ensuring continuity of leadership. Without such a continuity of leadership it is impossible to advance the revolutionary war and achieve final victory. Hence the Indian state also has been trying desperately by all means at its disposal to eliminate the Party leadership at all levels, particularly the central and state leadership. Enormous funds have been allotted for the purpose of eliminating the leadership and a vast intelligence network has been set up.

Let us emulate the great revolutionary qualities of comrades Suryam and Prasanna and concentrate on developing worthy successors to these immortal martyrs.

Pt

Samya

WHAT does the recent exercise called elections mean for the families of the over one crore people who have lost their jobs in the export sector due to the global meltdown? What does the elections mean to the families of the 1,80,000 farmers who have committed suicide in the last few years? What does the elections mean for 80% of the population who live on less than Rs.20 per day and who see their limited incomes vanish due to soaring rise in the prices of food and medicine? What does it even mean for the middle classes who are getting more and more disgusted with this so called electoral process giving in return nothing but corruption, fraud, loot and harassment!!

It is no wonder this time there was a massive campaign asking people to merely cast their vote. The Election Commission undertook it, NGOs did it, TV channels did it, and newspapers did it and even industrial houses did it. Film stars, cricketers, models, etc were roped in at huge cost to conduct this campaign. In spite of this massive campaign the voter turn out was lower than ever before. In cities like Mumbai and Pune voter count was barely 40%, while in many states it barely crossed the 50% mark. According to the National Election Study 2009, 58% of the population were not interested at all in the election and only 10% were interested a "great deal". The study also showed that 70% voters feel that the elected representatives can do little for their concerns and problems. Half the respondents felt that on issues and policies there is little difference between the political parties. Yet gigantic sums are spent on this farce (of a minimum of Rs.15,000 crores)

to convince the people and the world that India is a democracy and not a dictatorial state.

But of course there are some who are very interested in these elections. They are primarily the imperialists and big business who pump in crores of money to their favorite candidates/parties; there are the feudal elements who utilize the process to give legitimacy to their autocratic feudal authority in the rural areas; there are the politicians and bureaucrats whose nexus gives them unthinkable amounts of money through serving the moneybags and milking the treasury and funds meant for the poor; and there are the large number of hangers on who get some crumbs from the electoral feast. Most important of all is the political need of the ruling class to show that this and this alone is the only method to bring change in the country and all attempts at armed struggle or militant action are 'anti-democratic'.

Yet what has been the result of these elections? The new Lok Sabha has 153 open thugs who have criminal cases (compared to 128 in the previous house) and 306 are officially declared crorepatis (double that in the previous house). Of course this does not take account of the huge black money that all politicians possess. Of these crorepatis half are from the ruling Congress party. So, we supposedly have criminals and crorepatis to serve the country, comprised primarily of the poor. To get a picture of this 'beautiful democracy' one does not have to read the literature of only revolutionaries but many a sensitive writer, like the article of Arundathi Roy in Outlook (July 13 2009).

Yet, let us do some analysis. There were a number of specific features of this election. First, the 'sweep' of the

UPA to power allowing the unfettered control of the Congress on the Central government. Second, less enthusiasm of the masses in this election, and the more effective boycott of the elections by the Maoists in their areas of strength. And third, what this election means for the future of this country and its people.

The UPA Victory & BJP Disarray

The day after the election results were announced the Bombay Stock Exchange jumped up by as much as 17% in just one day — a jump of this magnitude has never been witnessed before in the history of the BSE. This indicated the euphoria amongst the TNCs and big business over the victory of the Congress. All clamored in unison that the days of coalition politics is over and the Congress will now have a free hand to push through economic reforms. Particularly in this period of deepening crisis of the world economy, and particularly that of the US, 'reforms' were essential to shift the burden of the crisis onto countries like India so that the US economy may get some breathing space. It matters little that through these ties to the imperialist economies over one crore people have already lost jobs in the export sector; what matters to our lackeys who rule the country is that they serve the US and pick up the crumbs from the royal table. Sale of nuclear equipment and other exports from the US will help keep their businesses running in the US and opening out the country for further penetration of foreign capital will facilitate even further loot of the country. Both steps have been promptly taken by the Congress-led UPA government after coming to power. Policies already on the anvil

are: purchase of nuclear plants from the US, disinvestment of government stakes in PSUs, increase in FDI in insurance from 26% to 49%, allowing FDI in pension funds and organized retail, private sector in defence production, banking reforms to allow a bigger role for private capital in the banking sector and labour reforms.

The Budget too has given these imperialist and compradors massive gifts of Rs.68,914 crores in the form of tax concessions to big business. The continued reduction of excises duty (reduced during the last year to bailout big business in the wake of the economic meltdown) will give business another Rs.1,28,000 crores.

Besides, a strong and stable central government was even more needed by the ruling classes in order to crush the rising discontent of the masses which would result from the worsening crisis in the economy and intensified 'economic reforms'. Particularly they were targeting the only real force in the country that could effectively lead the oppressed masses in battle against their exploiters, the CPI (Maoist). With the growing affectivity of the Maoist in some pockets of the country and their ability to hit back with ease against the forces of repression, there was urgent need for a strong centre to evolve a coordinated, systematic and intensified attack on the Maoists and their areas of influence. This too was promptly done by announcing a one-third increase in man-power and technology in intelligence gathering, banning of the CPI (Maoist), and plans for massive increase in para-military operations against the Maoists. For the modernisation of the police forces in the states it has allocated another Rs.430 crores over and above the amount allocated in the interim budget. It has also increased the 'special risk' allowances of the para-military to that of the level of the army. Big allocation

is also there for building the infrastructure for the para-military. An extra Rs.2,284 has been allocated for so-called border management and Rs.2,100 crores in increase in pensions for the armed forces. The defence budget has been increased by a massive 34% to over Rs.1,40,000 crores, which is double the figure of 2004-05.

Economic reforms and increasing repression on the people are but two sides of the same coin. The first cannot go without the second, as free market fundamentalism entails ever increasing exploitation of the poor in order to enrich the big and powerful; this necessarily entails rising discontent of the masses, which has to be diverted or ruthlessly crushed. This discontent if effectively led can be lethal for the moneybags. It is therefore not surprising that the chief architect of 'economic reforms', Manmohan Singh, is also the principal initiator of the policy that the Maoists are the main internal threat to the country and must be crushed.

The Congress victory was partly an effective management exercise and partly a result of the deep squabbling within the major opposition party the BJP. The BJP was a house so divided that the ruling classes were not confident it would so effectively deliver the goods. There was massive infighting at the very top of the BJP leadership (which crudely came out into the open after the elections); there were big squabbles at the state level, like in Rajasthan and Uttaranchal, and finally there were even dissension between the BJP and the RSS with the latter backing many a Congress candidate (earlier too it has backed the Congress and Indira Gandhi). Though in policy matters there is little difference between the BJP and Congress, the ruling classes prefer a stable and strong government and party.

On the other hand the Congress had its election strategy ready more than a month before the elections were announced. Since the time of the 2008 budget it announced a whole lot of sops to the poor and utilized these huge funds to build its party mechanism and popularity amongst the masses. The minority affairs ministry disbursed 7 lakh scholarships to needy Muslim students giving the Congress a victory in 48 of the 121 districts with sizable Muslim population. Then in three states of Maharashtra, Tamilnadu and AP, it funded and promoted opposition parties to split the main opposition vote. In Maharashtra it propped up the MNS of Raj Thackeray which got an average of 1.4 lakh votes in 15 constituencies, which otherwise would have been lost to the BJP-Shiv Sena combine. In Tamil nadu the opposition vote of the AIDMK was split by promoting film star Vijay Kant's DMDK who got 10.1% of the vote. And in AP it promoted Chiranjivi's Praja Rajyam Party which got as much as 16% of the vote. In addition it attempted to build up a well-oiled organizational machinery under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi, who was also much promoted as the future leader of the country.

Yet in spite of all this, the actual vote percentage of the Congress was hardly 3% more than earlier and the decline of BJP's vote share was 2.9 per cent. Thus the Congress, with just over a hundred million votes or roughly 15 % of the total votes, has formed the government with a few other Parties all of which had a combined share of not more than 5 to 6 per cent or another 20 million votes. Actually one needs only 12% of the total vote to win a Lokh Sabha seat. In fact in a state like AP the Congress vote share dropped by 2.6% over the previous elections but the number of seats it gained was much more.

No doubt in these elections money flowed like water; and those with more money had greater chances. In addition, as always casteist, communal, regional and factional issues play a significant role. Finally, it was the direct sops to the poor — Rs. 1 or 2 per Kg for rice, free TVs, free power, etc etc. which most parties put forth. This is a policy of giving with one hand (for elections) and taking away with the other through price rise and other means.

Rout of the Revisionists

Prior to elections the Karat and Company were strutting all over the media with their so-called fourth front of anti-communal forces, most of whom had earlier been in alliance with the BJP (eg. TDP, ADMK, BSP, etc) All these allies have also been in the forefront of promoting US imperialist policies, which the CPI/CPM are supposedly opposed to. Nothing could be more opportunist than the rag-tag alliance put together mainly by the CPM.

The CPM and 'Left' were routed not only all over the country but also in their own home states of West Bengal and Kerala. In the country as a whole the Left Front MPs fell from 61 in the last Lokh Sabha to a mere 24 this time. In West Bengal it dropped from 35 to a mere 15. The CPM was particularly mauled. It won a mere 9 seats in West Bengal, to the TMC's 19 and the Congress's 6. In Kerala it won only 4 of the 20 Lokh Sabha seats. The rout of the CPM in West Bengal is particularly revealing as in Kerala it has always been a see-saw between the Congress and the CPM. The West Bengal election particularly requires some analysis.

What has appeared to be quite remarkable to many observers is the election result in West Bengal. How could such a 'Leviathan' like the CPI (M) that had been serving the ruling

classes more faithfully than many other political parties and ravaged this state with muscle-power and terror over more than three decades be beaten so convincingly by the ballot? How could it fall from eternal grace?

First of all, the CPI (M) has been defeated in West Bengal precisely because they are totally discredited and are not in a position to serve the ruling classes any longer. For the last few decades, since the CPI (M)-led 'left-front' came to power in 1977, they have transformed themselves from being revisionists into social fascists and have established some sort of a party dictatorship over every corner of society. Their accumulation of massive wealth, control over all branches of society, arrogance, trampling underfoot all democratic norms, rejection of all dissident voices and applying police forces to suppress all opposition and many other things have made them the most hated elements after the notorious Siddhartha Ray-led Congress regime of the 1970s. They had served the ruling classes ten times more faithfully than many others. Unlike what they preached in the early 1990s, they, in the later period have openly unmasked themselves and adopted all the anti-people policies of the State for which precisely they have been in power.

They have taken upon themselves the task to root out the Maoists with all brutality and have always urged the central government to send central para-military forces in large numbers to root out what the Prime Minister has described as the 'virus'. In fact, the Maoists/Naxalites had brought so much sorrow and pain for them, tearing off their 'leftist' mask, exposing them as revisionists and capitalist-roaders—something which leaders like Karat, Yechuri, Biman or Buddhadev can never digest. However, by so doing,

they have branded all dissident voices as those of the Maoists or of those sympathetic to their cause and thereby got themselves totally isolated from the people.

Although they came to power by taking the oath to abide by the Constitution, they have indignantly broken all laws and been forcing people to take up arms as that is the only language they themselves understand and speak. The recent revelation of huge stockpile of arms in CPM offices and leaders houses is an indication of how they ruled the state. The episodes of Singur and Nandigram and the ferocious land-grab campaign and people's mounting criticism and resistance to it had given the alarm signal to the ruling classes. It became clear to the ruling classes that this constitutional 'democratic set up' is at stake at the hands of this party; people have been losing interest in this 'democratic' set up in large numbers and the number is growing. The CPI (M) has already outlived its utility to the ruling classes and there is no need of it any longer. It should get out now and so the process has started. Beside, within the present international scenario where the US seeks to use India as its front paw in the region, both economically and militarily, it would prefer more pliable parties than the 'left'. Needless to state, in the next Assembly elections to be held in not so distant future, this longest surviving government, however much it might try to regain its lost position by crying a halt to the land-grab campaign, would be reduced to a state of deep coma.

Was this 'mandate of the people' in favour of the TMC or against the CPI(M) and its allies? It was primarily a verdict against the CPI(M) and its front allies. The hatred and anger against Buddhadev-Biman-Binoy & Co. was strong, all-pervading and increasing. The brutality perpetrated

by the CPI (M) hermits in Nandigram, genocide and mass rapes they committed, intimidation they indulged in with the full backing of the police machinery and continuous defence of these atrocities by the Chief Minister and the party bosses, had convinced the people that they have had enough of it. Protest demonstrations, processions, public conventions, hunger strikes, movements of other types where people from all walks of life participated boded ill for the ruling parties of West Bengal. It was on the crest of these struggles that Mamata Banerjee and the TMC rode to popularity and power.

Growing people's Disgust & Maoist Boycott

Boycott of polls has emerged as an important form of struggle in the elections held in April-May 2009. All the antics to refurbish the image of a system that had lost all credibility in the eyes of the vast majority of the Indian population and to pour new life into a rotten, stinking institution called Parliament had failed to create any interest whatsoever in the voter. The most publicized campaign by the NGOs, film actors, industrialists and eminent personalities in Mumbai saw only 43.52 per cent of the voters turning up, the lowest ever in the city.

Overall, the majority of the voters this time showed a greater awareness by staying away from the polls despite the 24-hour non-stop appeals by the media to the voters to exercise their franchise. In Chattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, MP, Orissa, and Kashmir, polling has been quite low with more than 50% of the voters rejecting the elections. In Bihar it was the lowest ever with just 42 % polling. If elections were held without the shadow of the gun, the percentage of votes polled would have been much lower everywhere. There are several

cases of people being herded together and driven to the polling booths to cast their votes. In Kashmir, with a population of just over 80 lakhs and six seats to the Parliament, election was held in five phases to ensure that the security forces overwhelm the voters and thereby ensuring a greater percentage of votes.

Besides, on this occasion, there were numerous calls to boycott the elections over local issues. This seemed a growing trend throughout the country. Also many types of organizations took campaigns to expose the elections, taking issues of corruption, etc. But, in this the most prominent was the organized boycott by the Maoists.

The reactionary rulers had tried by every means at their disposal to foil the call for boycott of elections given by the Maoists. They made elaborate plans to counter their campaign: elections in most of the areas in the guerrilla zones and main areas of armed struggle were held in the first phase itself. Two dozen choppers were pressed into service in these areas for surveillance and to provide operational support to the security forces in countering the Maoist forces. The ruling classes made all efforts to create an atmosphere of terror among the people in these areas by deploying all available central forces for at least a month prior to the elections; staged as many fake encounters as possible in order to eliminate cadres and people justifying these in the name of maintaining a free and fair atmosphere for the voters; tried to establish area domination and achieve better coordination with the anti-Naxal commando units and special forces in various states; and enforced voting under the shadow of the gun.

In the midst of such a massive state offensive, the Maoist Party, PLGA, revolutionary organs of

people's power in the countryside, and mass organizations successfully carried out a mass political propaganda campaign across the length and breadth of the country calling upon the people to boycott the elections and to establish their own revolutionary-democratic organs of political power, besides undertaking several tactical counter-offensives against the gun-toting enemy forces who were desperately trying to coerce people to vote. The propaganda campaign was so effective that there was hardly any electioneering by the political parties in most parts of the countryside in Dandakaranya (Dantewada, Bijapur, Narayanpur, Bastar and Kanker districts, and some parts of Rajnandgaon district); in many districts of Bihar and Jharkhand where the polling percentage had come down drastically from that in 2004; in West Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia voting was negligible and there was a near-total boycott in Lalgarh area in West Bengal; in Malkangiri, Koraput, Gajapathi, Ganjam, Rayagada and other districts in Orissa the boycott was extensive. Also in other places throughout the country effective campaigns were taken to educate the masses how this electoral exercise was not real democracy but an attempt to mere legitimize the growing fascist rule in the country.

The main purpose of the Maoist boycott campaign is to educate the masses of the fraud of democracy in the country and that nothing can be achieved by staying within its confines. It is to educate them that if they require real change in this country they necessarily must come out of the confines of this so-called democratic system. Where the Maoists are not strong, they take up mere propaganda on this issue; where they wield

considerable strength the people respond to the campaign of the Party and boycott the elections. There is a misnomer amongst certain intellectuals that the Maoists force and impose their boycott call on the masses. This was reflected in articles like those which occurred in the *Economic & Political Weekly*, Issue No 18, Vol 44, dated May 2, 2009. Every one knows that the Maoist only use force against candidates who loot the masses and, where possible, prevent their campaign; but as far as the masses go it is just an opportunity to do a big propaganda/education campaign to wean them away from the electoral path and bring them to the path of protracted people's war. Also with the rise of a genuine democratic government (no doubt in rudimentary form) in Dandakaranya in the form of the Jantana Sarkar, and the establishment of alternative organs of power in Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, etc, it was an opportunity to propagate these real democratic institutions as the alternative for our country.

Yet, the ruling classes are terrified not just of this boycott call but even if the masses tend to show increasing apathy to this electoral system. For example, the government unleashed massive terror and arrested most activists in Haryana just for conducting a boycott campaign, which is a legal right. Just as much as all parties have the right to propagate for their vote, the people and their organizations have the right to propagate boycott and call on the people not to vote. But the government treats this activity as treason whether done by the Maoist, the Kashmiris, the people of the North East, or anyone else. Why are they so terrified, by this perfectly legal activity?

Electoral Outcome & The Future

The future must have to be seen in the light of the scenario of a deepening international crisis and its repercussions on the economy and the lives of the people of our country, the growing geo-political contradictions in the region as a fall out of the crisis, the growing fascist terror in the country marketed under the signboard of the "fight against terrorism", and the rising tide of people's movements.

First, the economy: The last three months have seen export orders fall by over 30% each month (compared to the previous year) since March 2009, indicating a further toll on the lakhs employed (mostly unorganized) in this sector. The Budget, which was to be expected, is full of sops for big business (it is said Mukesh Ambani himself gets a gift of Rs.20,000 crore in concessions), plans to open out more sectors to foreign capital, and continuation of the economic reforms in spite of the big crisis in the imperialist economies. Such policies are going to have a major impact on the employment potential (which has already been drying up) and further devastation in the countryside. The conditions of the masses will reach levels never seen before, where already 80% live on a mere Rs.20 per day. The people will have to mobilize on a big scale to resist these attacks on their living conditions. Lalgarh-type uprising is the call of the hour.

Second, with the deepening crisis the contradictions in the imperialist world are bound to increase as the scramble for markets and sources of raw materials becomes more desperate. With the contradictions between the US and the Russia/China

axis growing and Obama shifting the theatre of war from the Middle East to Afghanistan/Pakistan, India and its servile ruling classes will be drawn into the geo-political vortex, used as cannon fodder by the US. Continuous hysterical articles against China, recently appearing in the media, is an indication of the atmosphere being created by the US lobby in the country. The people of the country must firmly oppose war with neighbouring countries and not fall into the US imperialist trap, where wars will be promoted as being in the "national interests".

Third, growing fascist terror is inevitable, to suppress the rising discontent of the masses — a product of the drop in people's living standards. Here, as being continuously mentioned by the PM and HM, the main target will be the Maoists. In the light of this onslaught organizational forms will have to be adopted that can effectively face the attacks. Any laxity in this sphere will result in the people's forces and their leadership falling into traps laid by the government and the state/non-state forces.

Finally, with the deepening crisis and the increasing discontent of the masses the conditions open up for great revolutionary advances if correct and timely tactics are evolved — both centrally and at the state-level. There will be also great opportunities to utilize as well the growing contradictions in the ruling classes, which will inevitably grow as a result of the crisis. But this will only be possible if the revolutionaries are able to first and foremost protect their forces and not fall prey to the fascist onslaught. Let the democratic and revolutionary forces unite more firmly to forge hundreds of Lalgarhs all over the country.

Pt

TAMIL EELAM STRUGGLE AND ITS LESSONS

Ravindran

ON 18th May 2009, the President of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapakshe declared that the three decades of war against the LTTE has come to an end. He declared that the Sri Lankan army won a final victory against the Tigers. The Sri Lankan army and the government also claimed that the LTTE leader, Prabhakaran, and many of his lieutenants were killed in the battle and showed the photographs of the dead body of Prabhakaran in the electronic and print media. On 20th, the Sri Lankan government declared a national holiday to 'celebrate' this 'victory'. The timing of this declaration created suspicion amongst the people who are closely watching the developments in Sri Lanka, in India and all over the world. It appears that the Sri Lankan government deliberately spread this news after the announcement of parliament election results in India. While the Sri Lankan government and the UPA government led by the Congress party celebrated this, millions of sympathizers/supporters of Tigers and Eelam struggle all over the world were shocked in disbelief that the struggle for a separate Tamil Eelam would come to such an end. Within 24 hours, the Tigers rubbished the Sri Lankan government's claim and published that the Tiger's chief and many leaders of the LTTE are safe and the struggle for Tamil Eelam would continue until realizing its goal of achieving a separate homeland for the Eelam people.

Tamils, all over the world held protest demonstrations and in Tamil Nadu (TN), some violent incidents also took place. Although the claim by the Sri Lankan government that they have achieved a conclusive victory over the LTTE and the armed struggle for a separate homeland for Eelam can be disputed, at least for the present, there is no doubt that the Sri Lankan army

achieved a major military victory over the LTTE. How could one of the most powerful guerrilla forces, the LTTE, have faced such a defeat and how was the Sri Lankan army able to inflict such a defeat? With this defeat, whether the three and half decades of armed struggle for self-determination come to an end? Whether the Sri Lankan government will fulfill the genuine national aspirations of the Eelam people? Whether the Tamil people in Sri Lanka can live as equal citizens along with the Sinhalese? What will be the future of Tamils in Sri Lanka? These are the important questions for all those who fight for freedom, national liberation and for people's democracy and those who genuinely support the cause of Tamil Eelam. To understand the struggle for Tamil Eelam it is necessary to look into its origin and its growth.

Origin of the demand for separate Tamil Eelam

The Sinhalese people trace their origins in the island to the arrival of Prince Vijaya from India, around 500 B.C. Before the arrival of prince Vijaya the Tamils were already living in the Island. According to Sinhala historian and Cambridge scholar, Paul Peiris "*..it stands to reason that a country which was only thirty miles from India and which would have been seen by Indian fisherman every morning as they sailed out to catch their fish, would have been occupied as soon as the continent was peopled by men who understood how to sail... Long before the arrival of Prince Vijaya, there were in Sri Lanka five recognized Isvarams of Siva which claimed and received the adoration of all India. These were Tiruketeswaram near Mahatitha; Munneswaram dominating Salawatte and the pearl fishery;*

Tondeswaram near Mantota; Tirkoneswaram near the great bay of Kottiyar and Nakuleswaram near Kankesanturai". (Paul E. Pieris: Nagadipa and Buddhist Remains in Jaffna : Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch Vol.28)

By the time the Portuguese colonialists arrived in the Island in 1505 there were three kingdoms, namely one Tamil-based in Jaffna, and two Sinhalese-based in Kotte and the third at Kandy. In 1619, the Portuguese defeated the Tamil king and annexed the Jaffna kingdom. In 1656, the Dutch arrived and later in 1796, the British conquered the Island. In 1802, Ceylon becomes a Crown colony. In 1833, the whole of Ceylon for the first time was brought under a single administration by the British. Around the same period, the British started to bring the laborers from TN to work in the tea, coffee and coconut plantations.

About one fifth of the island's populations, of 17 million, are Tamils and somewhat less than three quarters are Sinhalese. The Tamils reside largely in the north and the east and on the plantations in the central hills, whilst the Sinhalese reside in the south, west and in the centre as well. The area of the Tamil homeland in the north-east is around 7,500 square miles or 19,509 sq. Kms.

In 1919, the Ceylon National Congress, comprising both Tamils and the Sinhalese, was formed under the leadership of Arunachalam Ponnambalam, a Tamil. Later, in 1921, he quit the CNC accusing that it represents only the Sinhalese. In 1947, the Soulbury Constitution was enacted which emphasized the unitary state under colonial rule. In 1948, the British left Ceylon handing over power to the Sinhala compradors. The Sinhala ruling classes regarded the island of Sri

Lanka as the exclusive home of the Sinhalese and the Tamil people as 'outsiders' who were to be subjugated and assimilated within the confines of a unitary Sinhala Buddhist state.

Immediately after assuming power in 1949, the Sinhalese ruling classes disenfranchised the plantation workers from TN. The passage of the Citizenship Act 1949 made more than a million Tamil plantation workers of Indian origin disenfranchised and stateless. In 1949, the Tamil Federal Party (FP) under the leadership of S. J. V. Chelvanayagam, who is regarded as the father of the Eelam nation, was formed. Its First convention was held in 1951 declaring its intention to campaign for a federal structure of governance, and for regional autonomy for Tamils living in the North and East. In 1956, Solomon Bandaranaike was elected on a wave of Sinhalese nationalism. Sinhala was proclaimed as the sole official language of Ceylon and other measures were introduced by the government to bolster Sinhalese and Buddhist chauvinism. J.R. Jayawardane, who became Sri Lanka's President in the 1980s, openly incited Sinhala chauvinism "...*The time has come for the whole Sinhala race which has existed for 2500 years, zealously safeguarding their language and religion, to fight without giving any quarter to save their birthright... I will lead the campaign...*" (J.R. Jayawardane, Sinhala Opposition Leader reported in Sri Lanka Tribune: 30th August 1957)

In 1958, Bandaranaike and Tamil leader Chelvanayagam signed a pact (B-C Pact) on a federal solution, devolving wide ranging powers to Tamils in North and east of Ceylon. But, within a week after signing the pact the government under pressure from the Sinhalese and Buddhist chauvinists unilaterally abrogated it. In protest against this, a peaceful disobedience movement was launched

by the FP. The government reacted by sending police and military forces to crush the movement and unleashed anti-Tamil riots in Sinhalese dominated areas. More than 200 Tamils died and thousands were displaced.

After a Buddhist monk killed Solomon Bandaranaike in 1959, his wife Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the world's first woman PM came to power. She continued the Sinhalese chauvinistic measures. In 1972, Ceylon was renamed as Sri Lanka and Buddhism given primary status as the country's religion. These measures further antagonized and alienated the Tamils in the Island. In 1964, the Sirimavo-Sastri pact was signed for the repatriation of stateless plantation workers to India. In 1965, the Dudley-Cheluva agreement, which is a diluted version of the B-C pact, was signed. The agreement was abandoned without being implemented due to opposition from the Sinhalese chauvinists and Buddhist clergy. In protest, FP's Tiruchelvam, Minister of Local Government, resigned from the cabinet.

In 1972 Ceylon became a Republic on May 22nd and was officially renamed the Republic of Sri Lanka. The United Front government enacted a Sinhalese-supremacist "Republican Constitution" for the country, which makes Buddhism the de facto state religion pushing Tamils, of both Eelam and plantation labourers, into second grade citizen.

Threatened by the growing state sponsored chauvinism Tamil parties formed the Tamil United Front (TUF) comprising the FP, Tamil Congress (TC) led by G. G. Ponnambalam, and Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC) led by Thondaman, which was renamed as TULF in 1976. A small group of youths formed a militant organization named the Tamil New Tigers (TNT); later in 1976 the name was changed into the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Jaffna peninsula to fight for

Tamils rights led by a 17-year-old Velupillai Prabhakaran.

In 1974, the Sinhalese chauvinists in collusion with the Sinhalese police attacked the attendees of the prestigious International Tamil Cultural Conference in Jaffna killing nine Tamils and injuring many. State discrimination against Tamils reached its peak with the introduction of "standardization" denying equal opportunities for Tamil students in admission to universities. This measure has not only denied higher education and employment for Tamils but also aimed at gradually eliminating the Tamils from holding posts in the state administration, police and army. In 1976 the TULF passed the "*Vaddukoddai Resolution*" to establish a "*free, sovereign, secular, socialist State of Tamil Eelam based on the right to self-determination*" to safeguard the very existence of the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka. In the 1977 general elections, TULF contested the elections with the slogan of separate a Tamil Eelam State. The Tamils overwhelmingly, more than 90%, voted for a separate Eelam. It was nothing but a referendum for the aspirations and right to self-determination of Tamils in a peaceful manner. But the Sinhalese-Buddhist chauvinists refused to recognize the rights and aspirations of Tamils; instead more state sponsored violence was unleashed to trample their genuine rights. In an attempt to crush down the Tamil identity and their history, the Jaffna Public Library, which contained many rare collection of books, over 95,000 volumes, including many irreplaceable and culturally important manuscripts in Tamil was burnt down by the Sri Lankan armed forces, under the direction of two ministers, Gamini Dissanayake and Cyril Mathew.

In the pre-liberation war period, in 1983 July, (which is called "*Black July*") the anti-Tamil pogroms, which were executed in a very planned way, was the most cruel and wide-spread

massacre. It took place not only in the north and east of Sri Lanka, where the Tamils are in a majority, but also throughout the country. More than 4000 people were killed and thousands rendered homeless. Their properties were either looted or destroyed, thereby wiping out their means of livelihood. Even in the jails, Tamil prisoners were brutally killed and their eyes gouged out. More than 1,50,000 people fled Sri Lanka as refugees to India and western countries. Directly inciting the riots, President Jayawardane said *"I am not worried about the opinion of the Tamil people... now we cannot think of them, not about their lives or their opinion... the more you put pressure in the north, the happier the Sinhala people will be here... Really if I starve the Tamils out, the Sinhala people will be happy."* (President J.R.Jayawardane, Daily Telegraph, 11th July 1983)

This incident was the turning point in the struggle for self-determination by the Tamil Eelam people. The Tamil people lost their faith in the 'parliamentary democracy' of Sri Lanka, which sought to consolidate Sinhala-Buddhist hegemony over the island, through a series of legislative and administrative acts such as disenfranchisement, state sponsored colonization of the Tamil homeland through the systematic settlement of Sinhalese in the North and East, discriminatory language and employment policies and 'standardization' of University admissions.

The struggle transformed from a non-violent, peaceful one into an armed struggle. Thousands of youths joined various militant organizations. They were initially trained militarily in India with the support of the Indian government as the Indian expansionists (then under the domination of Soviet social imperialism) wanted to utilize the issue to pressurize the Sri Lankan

government (then under US domination) to fall in line with its expansionists demands. The people realized that the parliamentary and peaceful methods have not only eroded their dignity and rights but also their right to live a decent life. Hence, they rejected the parliamentary politicians and whole heartedly supported the armed struggle. Hiding these facts the Indian government and the media, particularly the English newspapers and TV channels, have been making a big hue and cry about the armed struggle, using their terminology 'terrorism', deliberately distorting and propagating lies about the history of the struggle for Tamil Eelam. From then onwards, the LTTE, within a few years, became the most prominent organization representing the struggle for separate Eelam; in the process they violently crushing the other organizations, as almost all of them had become agents of, either the Indian or the Sri Lankan governments.

The Civil War and Peace Talks

In July 1983, the LTTE launched an attack on the military in the North of the country, killing 13 soldiers. Whipping up chauvinistic sentiments the Sri Lanka government organized massacres and pogroms in Colombo and other parts of the country. About 4,000 Tamils were killed, and thousands fled Sinhalese-majority areas. This marked the beginning of the civil war or *Eelam War I*.

After the commencement of the civil war in 1983, till the recent defeat of the LTTE, there were four wars and four peace talks were conducted. The first peace process started under the intervention of the Indian expansionists in 1985 at Thimpu, the capital of Bhutan. The LTTE and other militant groups participated in the talks by dropping the demand for a separate sovereign state for the Tamils and put forward the demands that the Tamils

must be recognized as a nationality; the north and eastern region of Sri Lanka must be considered as a single entity and the homeland of Eelam Tamil's right to self-determination, including right to secede, must be recognized. The talks failed due to the refusal of the Sri Lankan government to meet the genuine aspirations of the Tamils.

But the Indian and Sri Lankan governments signed the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord on 29th of July 1987, without any representation or participation of the people of Eelam or the militants who were waging the national liberation war. Instead, the Indian expansionists, who allowed the militant groups to set up their bases in TN and provided them arms, ammunition and military training, imposed the accord on them. The Sri Lankan government brought forward the 13th amendment to the Constitution, providing devolution of powers to Tamils. The LTTE and the people of Eelam rejected the Accord as it had provisions only for a Provincial Council under the unitary state of the Sinhala government, which was far from meeting their genuine demand for self-determination. Moreover, to implement the Accord, the Indian government sent a 1,40,000 strong 'peace keeping' force to the Northern and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka, as the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord did secure India its strategic interests. The Sri Lankan government agreed to India that *"Trincomalee or any other ports in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests"*.

The role played by the Indian government created suspicion in the minds of those who were genuinely fighting for national liberation. They felt that the Indian government betrayed and back-stabbed them. The relationship between India and the LTTE worsened further when the

peace talks were still continuing. On 4th October 1988, the Sri Lankan navy captured a boat and arrested seventeen LTTE men, including top ranking leaders Pulendran and Kumarappa at Point Pedro. The LTTE asked the Indian government to intervene and get them released. Protesting against the dubious role played by India, the leader of the LTTE's political wing, Lt. Col Thileepan began a hunger strike and subsequently died. But the Indian government tacitly supported the Sri Lankan government which began shifting the detainees to Colombo. Subsequently, all LTTE cadres in jail committed mass suicide, which sparked protests and clashes. The peace talks broke down and the civil war started again. The Sri Lankan government asked the IPKF to put down the rebellion. On 9th October 1988, the IPKF started an offensive against the LTTE code named "operation pawan".

They expected to complete the whole operation in a few weeks. Contrary to their expectations the IPKF got bogged down in the war losing more than 1700 troops with thousands more either injured or maimed. Finally they were forced to withdraw ignominiously in March 1990.

The election to the north eastern provincial council was imposed at gun point jointly by the Indian and Sri Lankan governments. While the LTTE boycotted the elections, other militant groups like the EPRLF which became stooges of the Indian expansionists, participated in it. Even today the Indian government and its trumpeters are clamoring for a so-called political solution to the 'ethnic conflict' centering around the same 'solution' imposed by the Indian expansionists in 1987. Of course, the Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinists opposed even this nominal 'devolution of power' to the Tamils. Later, the Sri Lankan Supreme Court struck down the 13th Amendment as 'unconstitutional'.

Opposition to the accord and the presence of the Indian armed forces in Sri Lanka gathered momentum among the Sinhalese also. The Premadasa government even supplied arms to their arch adversaries, the LTTE, to fight the Indian armed forces. Sensing the danger to their power, the Premadasa government asked the IPKF to withdraw. With the defeat of Rajiv Gandhi in the 1989 general elections and the pressure from TN, the V.P. Singh government ordered the withdrawal of the IPKF in March 1990. After the withdrawal of the IPKF a temporary truce was maintained between the LTTE and Colombo. But the war once again broke out in June 1990. Thus began the **Eelam War II**.

After the withdrawal of the IPKF, the LTTE consolidated its position in the northern and eastern areas. After Chandrika Kumaratunga's People's Alliance (PA) was elected to power with slogan of peace with the LTTE, a ceasefire agreement was signed in January 1995 and negotiations begun. But it too failed due to intransigent attitude of the Srilankan government. Eelam War III broke out in April 1995. The military onslaught by the Srilankan government turned more gruesome with the Lankan Air force jets bombing St. Peter's church at Navali killing 125 civilians and wounding 150 others. After seven weeks of intense fighting, the government troops succeeded in bringing Jaffna under its control for the first time in nearly a decade. As a mark of 'victory', Sri Lankan Defense Minister, Anirudda Ratwatte, raised the national flag inside the Jaffna Fort on December 5, 1995. The government estimated that approximately 2,500 soldiers and rebels were killed in the offensive, and an estimated 7,000 wounded.

The LTTE launched its counter-offensive in 1999 with "Operation Unceasing Waves" and 17 other attacks on the enemy recapturing all the lost territories. In that single

operation, conducted for less than three days, the LTTE killed more than 1200 Srilankan soldiers. It was as though two nations were fighting a conventional war. It also successfully captured the Elephant Pass (Operation Frog) cutting all land and sea supply lines of the Sri Lankan armed forces in the town of Kilinochchi and surrounding areas. On April 22, 2000 the Elephant Pass military complex, which had separated the Jaffna peninsula from the Vanni mainland for 17 years, completely fell into the hands of the LTTE. About 40,000 Sri Lankan troops in Jaffna were surrounded by the LTTE and were in a dire situation, and there was no other way for them but to surrender or get annihilated. It was only through the intervention of the Indian and US governments that this was prevented. The Vajpayee government openly threatened the LTTE not to advance further, or to face serious consequences. It even sent its naval ships to save the Sri Lankan soldiers. Not ready to defy the threats from the US and the Indian governments the LTTE did not move forward.

With the inability of the Sri Lankan ruling classes to impose a military solution to the national question of the Tamil people, the Ranil Wikramasinghe's United National Front contested and swept the 2001 elections on peace platform. With the mediation from Norway a peace process was started again in December 2001. After announcing a ceasefire for 30 days by the LTTE and reciprocated by the Sri Lankan government, a formal MoU was signed on 22nd February 2002 and a permanent ceasefire agreement, CFA, was formalized. To monitor the ceasefire an expert committee, the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission, was also constituted with Norway and other Nordic countries. The first peace talks were held at Phuket, Thailand on 16th

September, 2002, and this was followed by many rounds of talks. The LTTE agreed for a federal solution for the Eelam question, compromising from its earlier stand for a separate Tamil Eelam and put forward its proposal for an Interim Self-Governing Authority (ISGA). The government also on its part, for the first time, agreed to a federal solution, beyond the minimal devolution of power to the Tamils. The Tigers proposed that the ISGA would be fully controlled by the LTTE and would wield power in the north eastern region. The Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinists in southern Srilanka raised a big hue and cry, saying that Wickramasinghe was handing over the north eastern region to the LTTE, and pressurized the government not to formalize the peace agreement.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga opposed the ISGA and declared a state of Emergency. The Indian expansionists and their boot lickers like The Hindu, N. Ram, Subramanya Swamy etc. hiding the facts and truth (that the LTTE was even willing to compromise) from the Indian people, shouted from the roof top that the LTTE is a 'terrorist' organization only interested in subversive activities and not for any negotiated settlement. This fourth estate of Indian democracy really acted as the agents of the Indian big bourgeoisie and the Srilankan chauvinists in moulding public opinion against the genuine rights of the people of Tamil Eelam and their just armed struggle being waged by the LTTE. Despite not being able to arrive at any solution to the national problem, and though no headway was made in the peace talks, the ceasefire continued till July, 2006.

Mahinda Rajapakshe, who entered into an electoral alliance with the overtly chauvinist JVP, came to power defeating Wickramasinghe in 2004. Rajapakshe, who openly opposed the peace process planned for a big

offensive against the LTTE. Taking lessons from its earlier defeats he concentrated on mustering necessary support, economic, military and political, from its friendly countries, particularly India and China, and prepared its forces for a final assault. It also unleashed a diplomatic offensive against the LTTE, particularly in the western countries, where the LTTE has strong support among the Tamil diasporas. In addition, the government engineered a split in the LTTE and won over the traitor to the Eelam people, Karuna, to its side. This had not only weakened the LTTE in the eastern region considerably but many military secrets of the LTTE, hitherto not known to the government, also got exposed.

The **Eelam War IV** began with the Sri Lankan Air force launching an offensive on 26th July, 2006 on the pretext of opening the sluice gates of Mavil Aru, which had been closed by the LTTE. This was supposedly for supplying irrigation water to more than 15,000 villages in the east, under government control. The Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission persuaded the LTTE to open the gates. But the Sri Lankan government declined to stop the offensive stating that "the utilities can not be used as bargaining tools". The SLMM condemned the attacks and observed that "it is quite obvious they (government) are not interested in water. They are interested in something else."

From 2006 onwards the government forces gradually but steadily advanced and captured areas one after the other controlled by the LTTE. First it concentrated on the east gaining total control by July 2007. After winning militarily it consolidated politically by conducting an election farce and installed the traitor Karuna's party, the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Puligal (TMVP), in power. Then, in September 2007, it focused on the north, first capturing Mannar and then

other areas leading ultimately to capturing all areas controlled by the LTTE.

After the commencement of the civil war, in the last twenty five years, the territory controlled by the LTTE has either increased or decreased in accordance with the development of the war. But, until its defeat in the recent war, it always maintained some territory under its control. Within its territory the LTTE administered a parallel government. It had structures like the judiciary, police, revenue, TV and radio stations, finance and banking, immigration, businesses, agriculture etc. Militarily, the LTTE had grown from a 30 member guerrilla force in 1983 to a conventional standing army having thousands of troops. It had infantry brigades, women's brigades, commando units and specialized divisions for laying mines, sniping, firing mortars and artillery, resisting tanks and armoured cars, etc. The Tigers also had a naval wing known as the Sea Tigers and it is the only guerrilla force in the world that had an air wing called the Air Tigers. The LTTE had many marine vessels and a limited number of small aircraft.

The role of Indian Expansionists

Since the beginning, the Indian government always intervened in Sri Lanka keeping its expansionist interests in mind. While paying lip service to the plight of Tamils the Indian government extended tacit support to the Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinist ruling classes. In 1949, after the Sinhalese ruling classes assumed power, it colluded with them in disenfranchising the plantation workers of Indian origin and agreed to promulgate the Citizenship Act 1949 that made more than a million Tamil plantation workers stateless. In 1971, when the Sirimao Bandaranaike government was in imminent threat from the JVP uprising, the Indian government provided all help to quell

that rebellion because it did not want to lose its prominent status to China in Sri Lanka. Again in 1974, for the same reason, it ceded Katchattivu, a fishing island port of Tamilnadu from time immemorial, to Sri Lanka, brushing aside opposition from the people of TN and the state government. Today, as a result of this, more than four hundred fishermen from TN were killed and thousands were arrested and tortured and their fishing boats, nets and other equipments worth millions of rupees were destroyed by the Sri Lankan navy. Hundreds of protests and strikes by the Tamil fishing community and appeals from different sections of the people and all political parties to take necessary steps to protect the fishermen were simply ignored by the Indian government on the pretext that these fishermen are conduits for the LTTE.

In order to serve its expansionist interests the Indian government sought either to appease the Sri Lankan chauvinists or to pressurize them through the Tamil issue. In 1983, when anti-Tamil riots broke out in Sri Lanka, the Indian government, which was waiting for an opportunity to intervene, immediately stepped into the scene and provided arms to the LTTE and set up training camps in India. In 1985, on the pretext of opposing the bombing of Tamils in northern Sri Lanka, Indian Air Force jets entered Sri Lankan territory and dropped food and medicines violating all international law and norms.

The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord 1987 was signed between the Indian and the Sri Lankan governments not to bring a solution or give some succor to the oppressed Tamils, but to bring the whole of Sri Lanka under its influence. It literally threatened all Tamil groups to fall in line. When the LTTE and the people of Tamil Eelam opposed the Accord, it launched military operations, to crush their genuine national aspirations. Of course, it failed

to impose its will on the people who were determined to endure any hardship in the struggle to achieve national liberation, and they returned after a humiliating defeat. In order to weaken the national liberation movement and convert it into an instrument in pushing its expansionist ambitions the Indian government, through its intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), conspired to split and infiltrate the LTTE. It also converted the other militant groups like EPRLF, ENDLF as its stooges, providing all protection to them while opposing the struggle for a separate Eelam. It made many attempts to assassinate the LTTE chief Prabhakaran and other top ranking leaders through its agents like Mahendraraja Mahthaiah, who was second in command in the LTTE. But all such attempts by the Indian rulers were ruthlessly crushed by the LTTE.

The Indian government actually took full part in the genocidal war against the Tamil people by providing all military help to the Sinhala government. It not only provided sophisticated weaponry, radar and other war machines to Sri Lanka but also sent its military personnel to Sri Lanka to train them, and on some occasions, provided 'on the field training'. When people of TN and some revolutionary and nationalist organizations accused its connivance in the crime, the government tried to distort the facts. But ultimately it was forced to accept that it supplied arms, supposedly only for 'defensive purpose'. It banned the LTTE in India on the pretext of the killing Rajiv Gandhi, thereby curbing the democratic rights of people in India, particularly in TN, to extend their support to the legitimate struggle for Tamil Eelam. It pressurized the state government to arrest those extending support to the Eelam struggle. Scores of Tamil nationalists and revolutionaries were arrested under the NSA and

other draconian laws for their support to the struggle. It engaged its navy and coast guards to conduct surveillance in search for LTTE speedboats or other supply vessels. On many occasions it tipped off the Srilankan navy, causing enormous damage to the Eelam struggle. Fishermen from TN were arrested by the Indian coast guards on flimsy grounds, such as they were supplying beedis, lungies, battery cells etc to the LTTE. It also unleashed a slander campaign against the struggle for national liberation, particularly against the LTTE, through its embassies and also through its agents like the Brahminical Subramanyam Swamy and (anti) 'national' newspaper The Hindu.

Officially it is estimated that over 70,000 people have been listed as killed in the war since 1983. However, an independent study performed by the University of Washington and Harvard Medical School, states the estimate may be as high as 3,38,000 killed. When the genocidal war reached its peak between October 2008 and May 2009, killing more than 50,000 people and injuring double that, the Indian government did not even utter a word of condemnation against these gory killings. According to some reports the Indian government assured the LTTE Political chief Nadesan and another top ranking leader Pulidevan to lay down their arms, and asked them to surrender to the Sri Lankan army and said that it has already spoken to the Srilankan President who has also agreed to provide amnesty for them. Trusting the assurance given by India, they came out raising a white flag to surrender before the army, only to get shot at point blank range. The wife of Nadesan, who was a Sinhalese by origin, unarmed and resisted this dreadful crime, was also shot dead cruelly. The day when the Sri Lankan government claimed to have killed the LTTE chief Prabhakaran, it is reported that about twenty thousand civilians were killed in just two days.

It was also reported that the news of the killing of Prabhakaran was floated intentionally to divert the world's attention from these gory killings. Outrageous atrocities like raping dead women Tigers was videotaped and circulated on the internet by the bloodthirsty Sri Lankan army together with the selling of human parts of the dead women Tigers, like meat in the market place. None of this evoked any indignation from the rulers of the so-called biggest democratic countries in the world. On the contrary, the National Security Advisor K.N Narayanan admired the Sri Lankan butcher Army Chief Sarath Fonseka as the "world's greatest Army Chief". In the last six months not even once did the UPA government in Delhi ask Colombo to stop the killing of civilians. All it has done was to 'appeal' to the neo-Nazis to 'provide' more 'no fire zones' or NFZs for the civilians to take shelter, when the mercenary army was anyhow bombing the so-called NFZs, killing thousands of women, children and the aged. It was nothing but a fraudulent act aimed at deceiving the people. The role played by the Indian government was very well acknowledged by the fascist Mahinda Rajapakshe when he said "*the help and support extended by the Indian government is very much satisfactory*". After the Sri Lankan government declared that the war was over, we can find posters in Colombo hailing the Indian government for its support to crush the liberation struggle. Even after the conclusion of the genocidal war, the Indian government dispatched its military personnel to clear the mines laid by the LTTE. Disregarding the support extended to the Eelam struggle by the people of TN and their age-old ethnic/umbilical relation with the Eelam Tamils, the Indian rulers executed their expansionist designs. There is no exaggeration to say that it was a war conducted by the Sri Lankan

government in collusion with the Indian government.

A decade back, in 1998, J.N. Dixit who served as Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka between 1985-89 made no secret of the Indian government's interests in the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka when he openly declared that:

"...Tamil militancy received (India's) support as a response to (Sri Lanka's) concrete and expanded military and intelligence cooperation with the United States, Israel and Pakistan. The assessment was that these presences would pose a strategic threat to India..." Repeating the same opinion the external affairs minister Pranab Mukherjee in March 2009 told the parliament "*in our anxiety we should not forget the strategic importance of that island, and it is not only their security, it is closely connected with our security..... Surely, we would not like to have international players in our backyard*".

The Indian intervention in Sri Lanka is not just due to its geo-political importance. In their rapacious greed they are also interested to loot the whole of Lanka. Between 1990 to 1996 exports from India to Sri Lanka increased by 556%. In 1998 the Indo-Lanka Bilateral Free Trade Agreement (ILBFTA) was signed between India and Sri Lanka granting full tax exemption for the goods imported from India and business with Sri Lanka took a leap following this agreement. Indian compradors invested heavily in Sri Lanka. CEAT India, Asian Paints, L&T, Ashok Leyland, Taj Group Hotels, Tata Tea, ACC, Ultra-Tech & Ambuja Cements, RAMCO group of industries, Indian Oil Corporation, Mahindra & Mahindra, CADILA Drug company, Exide Batteries, TVS, Britannia, Ansal real estate company, Jet Airways, Sahara and Indian Airlines, ICICI, UTI, LIC, Arvind Mills, Airtel and many more big

bourgeois houses started their business in Sri Lanka. India's investments, which ranked 16th place in 2000 moved up to 4th place by 2005. In 2002, India thwarted Colombo's move to bring the Chinese Petroleum giant, Sinopec, into Sri Lanka and pressurized it to handover the Trincomalee bulk petroleum storage to Indian Oil Corporation and signed an agreement to invest about \$75 million for 35 years to set up more than 100 petrol bunkers. In return it agreed to provide all military assistance to Lanka in its war against the LTTE. It also helped the Lankan navy in its surveillance of Sea Tigers movements in the Indian Ocean region and supply intelligence inputs.

Now, the vultures are already vying for the booty in the 'reconstruction' of northern and eastern Sri Lanka. A MoU will be signed soon between India and Sri Lanka for laying under sea power lines to connect the power network in the two countries at a cost of Rs. 2,292 crores.

The Tamil Eelam issue (whether 'support' or opposition) was only a tool for India to use it against Sri Lanka. Before 1987 it played the role of 'helping' the Eelam struggle against the chauvinistic Sri Lankan to increase its influence there. Once it gained control the 'saviour' turned into its opposite helped the Sri Lankan rulers to defeat the LTTE, which was the main organization waging an uncompromising struggle for a separate homeland for the Tamils. Wiping out the LTTE not only helps to maintain 'peace' in Sri Lanka but also in TN as national sentiments is always inimical to India, the prison of nationalities. It is always apprehensive about the nationality movement erupting in TN. Any development of the national movement in any form, not necessarily armed struggle, necessarily faces ruthless repression from the rulers in Delhi. National movements in Kashmir, Punjab,

Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Gorkhaland etc. in the last fifty two years are a testimony to this.

The role played by the so-called International Community

Sri Lanka is situated in a very strategically significant location in the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean has 47 countries and several islands around it. China and the US/ India are the countries mainly competing to gain control over this region. The US has a naval and air base in Diego Garcia. India, apart from its own areas around the Indian Ocean, also has considerable influence over the Maldives. China has a base in the Cocos islands near Myanmar.

The Indian Ocean is a vital waterway in which half of the world's containerized cargo, one thirds of bulk cargo and two thirds of oil shipments pass through. Its waters carry heavy traffic of petroleum products.

The US signed a ten year Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) with Sri Lanka on 5 March 2007 which provides, along with other things, logistics supplies and refueling facilities. The US already has Voice of America installation at Trincomalee, which can be used for surveillance.

As already mentioned, India got an assurance, as part of the Indo-Srilanka Accord 1987, that "*Sri Lanka's agreement with foreign broadcasting organizations will be reviewed to ensure that any facilities set up by them in Sri Lanka are used solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military or intelligence purposes*" and that "*Trincomalee or any other ports in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests.*" Of course, this was a time when US-Soviet conflict was at a peak, with India on the Soviet side. Since then,

international equations have changed and India is today acting as the main stooge of the US in this region.

China, which has been a net oil importer since 1993 is the world's No: 2 oil consumer after the United States. China accounts for as much as 40% of the world's crude oil demand growth during the period 2000 to 2004. Access to energy resources is a very critical factor for continued Chinese economic growth. Hence, China has stepped up efforts to secure sea lanes and transport routes that are vital for its oil supplies. After the 2005 Tsunami disaster, China gave \$4 million additional 'aid' to reconstruct Galle, where its arms supplier Noringo's arms godown is situated. When it closed down this godown in 2007 it agreed to supply more advanced weapons, from Poly Technologies, at a cheaper price. Subsequently, in April 2007, Poly Technologies supplied \$36.5 million arms to Srilanka. A \$150 million contract was given to China's Huawei, which has close links with the Chinese intelligence wing MSS, to build a country-wide infrastructure for communications. Also China finalized an agreement with Sri Lanka to build a port project at Hambantota on the island's south coast which can be used to ensure safety of its oil tankers. Recently, in June 2009, after the conclusion of *Eelam War IV* it signed an agreement for the \$ 891 million Norochcholai Coal Power project. The Chinese companies were granted an Economic Zone and an agreement was signed for 33 years. Huichen Investments Holdings Limited is to invest \$28 million in next three years in the Mirigama Zone. For the first time a specific area was given to a foreign country; that too near Colombo. China is making major inroads into Srilanka causing much concern in the US-India Axis.

These are the major countries which

have approached the Tamil national question in Sri Lanka in accordance with their strategic geo-political and economic interests in mind. The US imperialists made a big hue and cry about killing of 'innocents' and a 'humanitarian crisis' when the Sri Lankan army was about to finish the war. It never made any affirmative action to bring the war to an end when the genocidal war was taking place from September 2008 onwards which witnessed more than 50,000 civilians being killed. It's howling about human rights violations and shedding crocodile tears for the 'plight' of 'innocents', which is only a veiled threat that the Sri Lankan government should not do anything prejudicial to its interests — i.e keep China at bay. But with China making big inroads into Sri Lanka the US is mounting its pressure. Already an American lawyer, who once worked as an advisor to the Sri Lankan President, Mahinda Rajapakshe, (now disassociated), is preparing to file a suit of war crimes by Sri Lanka in a US court. Interestingly Mahinda Rajapakshe's brother and Srilankan Defense Secretary Gottebaya Rajapakshe and the army chief Sarath Fonseka are both having US citizenship. The US can, at anytime, make use of this to pressurize the Srilankan government, in its contention with China in Sri Lanka.

China not only supplied sophisticated weaponry and aids to the neo-Nazis but also scuttled the efforts even to pass a UN Security Council resolution condemning Sri Lanka on the killing of thousands of civilians. India also played the same role by not only opposing the resolution but also lobbied some other countries to vote against it.

The UN which has sent its observer, Vijay Nambiar, to investigate the conditions of the civilian in the

NFZs, gave almost a clean chit to the Srilankan government. It is not out of place to point out that his brother Satish Nambiar is an advisor on defense related matters to the Srilankan government. One brother advises how to crush the national liberation war ruthlessly while the other brother oversees for any violation of 'human rights'. There were also serious accusations on the UN Secretary General, who also visited Sri Lanka soon after the genocide, to 'monitor' the plight of civilians. He actually covered up the killing of innocents and other war crimes committed by the Sri Lankan military fascists. In fact the UN passed a resolution hailing the Sri Lankan government's victory over the LTTE 'terrorists'. The UN defacto sanctioned the genocide of Tamils even when millions of people, particularly the Tamils, were protesting all over the world condemning the killings and demanding an end to this genocidal war. Even after fourteen Tamils, including a Tamil from Eelam committed self-immolation in front of the UN in Geneva, they could not be bothered.

Disregarding the protests and peoples opinion all over the world, these reactionaries are united in carrying out gruesome massacres of innocent people, displaying outright contempt for all democratic norms of civilized society in crushing the struggle for freedom and for a rightful separate homeland for the Eelam people who have been undergoing a systematic ethnic cleansing programme for many decades. The same type of massacres have been committed and are being committed by these reactionaries in Iraq, Afghanistan and now in the Swat region in Pakistan which is testimony to what extent these butchers will commit heinous crimes to serve their predatory interests. Whatever differences that may be visible, it is apparently only on how to gain a

strategic upper hand in the region to pursue their imperialist/expansionist interests.

Defeat of the LTTE and its Lessons

The LTTE which conducted the national liberation war successfully for more than three decades was not only defeated in the *Eelam War IV* but also lost all its bases and thousands of its soldiers were killed, injured and arrested. It will take quite considerable time for them to recoup and continue their struggle for a separate homeland. The war led by the LTTE was an inspiration for all those who are fighting against exploitation, injustice and oppression, particularly those waging armed struggle. The defeat of the LTTE is not only a great loss for the people of Tamil Eelam but also for all those who are waging armed struggle against the oppressors. It is but natural that the defeat of such a powerful militant force may create certain amount of despair among the people who have been supporting/sympathizing with this struggle. Therefore, to understand the reasons for its defeat is very necessary to take lessons for all nationality movements worldwide and also for the forces waging armed struggle in India and South Asia.

The following could be the main points for consideration:

a) The LTTE has been a militant organization leading the national liberation war for more than three decades. Throughout this period it has faced many ups and downs and now it has lost all its bases. But it has never compromised its goal of a separate "*Tamil Eelam*", even in the most trying circumstances. Nevertheless, its ideology and class basis is bourgeois in nature. Due to this, it was not able to distinguish between the friends and enemies of its cherished goal of Tamil Eelam. Its approach towards — its own people, i.e. Eelam Tamils, Muslims living in north-eastern Sri Lanka who are also part of Tamil Eelam, Tamils living in the plantations

in the central part of Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese people, Tamils in India, who extended all types of support to the cause of Tamil Eelam, the bourgeois parties in TN, the Indian government and the imperialists — all these varied forces were tainted with a bourgeois outlook. It did not take the class differences between the ruling classes and the oppressed masses into consideration when it dealt with Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism and targeted even the Sinhala toiling masses. This provided ample opportunities for the Sri Lankan ruling classes, which is already thriving on chauvinism, to incite anti-Tamil pogroms and commit any type of atrocities over the Tamils in the guise of 'protecting' the Sinhala nation and divert the Sinhalese masses from their real problems. Although it may not be possible to win over the sympathy of the Sinhalese masses in their struggle for a separate homeland, due to the domination of chauvinistic sentiments, it should have avoided the killing of innocent people. Moreover, when organizations like the Lanka Sama Samaj Party (LSSP) upheld the Eelam people's right of self-determination, including the right to secede, there was a possibility of waging a united struggle against the Srilankan ruling classes, however feeble it may be. But due its bourgeois nationalist outlook, the LTTE did not take these aspects into consideration while evolving its tactics. Even in its relations with its own people, it did not take the class differences into account. To be precise, it took the stand of supporting the bourgeoisie when there was a conflict between the working people and the bourgeoisie. Similarly, it concentrated more on getting the support of the bourgeoisie and its parties in TN than striving to get the support of the broad masses. The broad masses — workers, peasants, students, youths, petty-bourgeoisie and the intellectuals — extended their support voluntarily due to Tamil national sentiments, and

upholding the just cause of a separate homeland for Tamils. The people of TN, the revolutionaries and other democratic forces, extended their unflinching support to the Eelam struggle, including the LTTE. But the LTTE even instructed its cadres strictly not to have any connections with the Maoist organizations in India. It is the same story even at the international level. The LTTE has built a strong network amongst the Tamil diaspora all over the world. But it did not make any serious attempts either to build close relationship with the struggling people or organizations or get their support. Rather it concentrated on securing the support of the imperialist governments or of influential people in the government. It was not just a national exclusivist attitude but more than that it was a class outlook which emphasised more on the bourgeoisie than on the people.

Ideologically the LTTE was very clear that MLM is inimical to its interests. Once, it gave the slogan for a “*Socialist Tamil Eelam*”. But within a short period it withdrew it as it was against its class interests.

b) The LTTE started the armed struggle for national liberation as a guerrilla force with only a handful of committed activists. During the “Black July”, a large scale anti-Tamil pogrom in 1983, its strength was merely 30, and at the beginning of *Eelam War IV* it is estimated at between 30,000-40,000. The Sri Lankan military officially announced that about 22,000 LTTE guerrillas were killed and 10,000 more wounded, arrested and surrendered during the last phase of the war. Any organization which fights for the seizure of political power must seize territory from the enemy and establish it's/people's rule. Therefore the war will transform from a guerrilla war into positional warfare and the army will transform from a guerrilla army into regular/conventional army. Before the commencement of *Eelam*

War IV in July 2006, the LTTE held 16,000 sq.kms of territory in the north and eastern Srilanka under its control and ran its own civil and military administration in these areas. From this, it gradually started to lose control over the territory over a period of nearly three years. After one year, by July 2007, it completely lost its control over Trincomalee in the eastern province after its defeat in Thoppigala. The government immediately conducted the election farce and installed its agent and renegade Karuna's party in the provincial government. After capturing the eastern province the Sri Lankan army concentrated its attack in the Northern Province. From September 2007 onwards the LTTE started to lose its territories one by one to the Sri Lankan army. In this whole period the LTTE clung to the positional warfare style despite losing territory and being further weakened and more vulnerable to enemy attacks. Even then it did not change its positional warfare method back to guerrilla warfare. The principle of positional warfare is that by retaining or capturing a position the victory in the war is achieved. Once you lose that advantage it is futile to continue the same thereby providing more opportunity to the enemy to concentrate his attack on the remaining positions. Instead of expanding the area of operation and adopting guerrilla methods, when the enemy is focusing his attack, it withdrew its forces along with the people to a lesser and lesser area. This tactic was suicidal because you don't have sufficient area for maneuver. The flexibility in changing from one form of warfare into another, in accordance with the condition and the needs of the war, was not adopted by the LTTE, despite it having developed the war from scratch to the highest level. With vast experience of waging different forms of warfare — guerrilla warfare, mobile warfare and positional warfare —

why did it falter? It expected that with the growing civilian casualties the world community, say imperialists and Indian governments, would force the Sri Lankan government to stop the genocidal war. But all these reactionaries, as we have seen earlier, were interested more in achieving their own interests and none of them were really concerned about the sufferings of the people or helping them to achieve an honourable settlement against national oppression. The LTTE Chief Prabhakaran once said in 1993 that “*Every country in this world advances its own interests. It is economic and trade interests that determine the order of the present world, not the moral law of justice nor the rights of people. International relations and diplomacy between countries are determined by such interests. Therefore we cannot expect an immediate recognition of the moral legitimacy of our cause by the international community. ... In reality, the success of our struggle depends on us, not on the world. Our success depends on our own efforts, on our own strength, on our own determination...*” Despite having a reasonably correct understanding on the imperialist and reactionary powers, the LTTE failed to put that into practice.

c) The LTTE has been waging a national liberation struggle uncompromisingly against the Sri Lankan government for the last three decades. Although this struggle was directed against the comprador ruling classes in Sri Lanka, objectively it was also directed against imperialism. But the LTTE never had any anti-imperialist orientation or programme in this struggle for national liberation. Its programme for an independent, self-reliant Tamil Eelam was aimed at achieving a separate state from the comprador ruling classes and not from imperialist exploitation and oppression.

Not only that, it considered the imperialist governments as the friends of Tamil Eelam and always tried to get their support for their struggle. Even in the recent war it expected US imperialism, the number one enemy of the world people and the leader of all counter-revolutionary ruling classes throughout the world including Srilanka, would come to their rescue, till the last moment. This had blunted the anti-imperialist consciousness among the people of Tamil Eelam and the guerrillas.

d) As the Eelam liberation war transformed from guerrilla warfare into positional warfare its dependence on modern and sophisticated weapons increased tremendously. It mainly depended for its supply from imperialist countries and the international arms market. Hence, it lobbied with those in the echelons of power in these countries. Realizing this, the Srilankan President Rajapakshe successfully used his diplomatic channels to stop the arms supplies. Similarly it also curbed the funds to the Eelam struggle from the expatriates living in Europe and North America. This dependence from imperialist countries harmed the LTTE when these countries helped the fascist Rajapakshe in the 'war on terror'. Self-reliance, not only in economic and political affairs but also in military supplies is most important for the guerrillas fighting against the reactionary ruling classes.

e) It had a faulty approach on the question of the united front. It failed to unify all the forces that could be united against the common enemy. In fact its approach was against uniting all those forces fighting against the Sri Lankan army. In its struggle for domination and leadership position it not only eliminated other petty-bourgeois militant groups, most of them became agents of the Sri Lankan or Indian government, but also genuine forces fighting for separate Tamil

Eelam. Revolutionary forces like the National Liberation Front of Tamil Eelam (NLFT), People's Liberation Front of Tamil Eelam (PLFT), Proletarian Vanguard Organization (PrOVO) with MLM ideology and a New Democratic Programme were not allowed to function in Tamil areas. Either they were asked to stop their activities or summarily killed.

f) The regional differences between the three regions of Tamil Eelam namely, Jaffna, Wanni and the Eastern region, particularly between the north and the east, were not taken into consideration. This enabled traitors like Karuna to utilize this sentiment and turn the people of the Eastern region against the LTTE.

g) Due to the wrong handling of Muslims it antagonized the Muslim community, which is a part and parcel of Tamil Eelam. The forcible eviction of 28,000 Muslims from Jaffna, leaving all their belongings, in October 1990, seriously affected the struggle for Tamil Eelam. The ruling classes, always waiting for an opportunity to divide the people, utilized it and created a permanent cleavage between the Tamils and Muslims. The elites among the Muslims compromised with the Sri Lankan ruling classes and weaned away a considerable section of the Muslim population from the struggle.

h) The LTTE's approach is that "Heroes create history" instead of the Maoist dictum of "People create history". Following from this they adopted bourgeois methods of developing the war instead of the Maoist method of developing People's War. For example, in the national liberation war against the mighty superpower, US imperialism and its puppet regime, the great Vietnamese people led by the Communist Party drowned their enemy in the "ocean of armed people". Whereas in the Eelam liberation war the people only supported the war waged by the

LTTE. In a typical bourgeois outlook the LTTE did not arm the people in the war against the Sri Lankan army despite the masses enduring the horrors of three and half decades of civil war. It failed to assimilate the historic truth and experiences of the struggling people all over the world that it is people and people alone who are the real creators of history and any struggle, however militant and protracted; deviating from this will inevitably face defeat.

Conclusion

Even with all these mistakes and limitations the LTTE fought uncompromisingly till now. It had sacrificed thousands of its cadres and leaders for this cause and set a glorious tradition. Undoubtedly the defeat of the LTTE in the recent war is a setback in their long struggle. But three decades of armed struggle and the genuine aspirations of people of the Tamil Eelam for a separate homeland and their sacrifices will not go in vain. Although the Sri Lankan government scored a major victory and was able to weaken the LTTE, and thereby the national liberation movement, the conditions for the growth of such movements still continues to exist even more seriously. Besides, they fought valiantly to the very end not cowering down before the enemy or surrendering to them. This will inspire a new generation of revolutionaries to pick up the gun, learning from the mistakes of the past.

Even two months after the conclusion of the war more than 3,00,000 Tamil people are still languishing in the NFZs, which are worse than Nazi concentration camps. Even today neither independent media persons nor international aid agencies are allowed to visit these camps. The news leaking from these camps narrates the horrible condition in which the Tamils are forced to suffer. Young men and women are systematically separated from their family members

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MONITORED FOOD PRICES - A MEANS OF EXTRACTING HUGE PROFITS FROM POOR THROUGH INDIRECT MEANS

Arvind

IN JULY THE country 'celebrated' the cheapest car in the world, while the poor man's food, *dal* (pulses), sky-rocketed. With vegetables and meat having gone off the poor-man's diet, now even *dals* have become unaffordable. *Arhar (tur) dal* was around Rs.34 per kg just after the 2004 elections, Rs.54 before the 2009 polls, Rs.62 just after the polls and now at over Rs.90 a kg. It has become unaffordable to most. It is a clear case of UPA arrogance, with no elections immediately, to raise prices kept under control before the election, due to its brute majority, to allow prices to rise astronomically without any fear of being overthrown or displaced. This is nothing but the gift of a supposed 'stable' government. 'Stability' has permitted this unbridled loot.

But it is not just *dal*, all the basic necessities of life have risen by over 25% in the last year. With people's wages stagnant, or even dropping, this means a 25% drop in the living standards of the people in just one year. While the government much trumpets the rise in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) as having gone to a record low of minus 1.7% recently, at the ground level the consumer price index has been sky-rocketing. For this we do not need to see the government's much-manipulated figures but speak to any housewife. They know better the reality.

Potato prices, another common man's food in the North and East, has gone up 200%, from Rs.5 per Kg last year to Rs.15 per kg now in Kolkata. In Mumbai potato is selling at 90% higher than Oct.08. Onion prices zoomed 20% and 40% in Chennai and Kolkata in the last 10 months. Sugar prices have gone up roughly 40%. Prices of vegetables have gone up by Rs.10 per kg in just one week.

The price rise due to drought warning is a fraud. Of course, a

drought will push up prices even further. But prices have been rising for five years since the 2004 elections. Take the years between 2004 and 2008 when there were good monsoons. And in more than one year we had claimed 'record production of grains'. The price of rice went up 46%, of wheat by over 62%, *atta* (wheat flour) 55%, salt 42% and more. By March 2008 the average increase in the prices of such items was already up by well over 40%. And now, after the elections, they have risen dramatically in the last three months.

The agricultural minister has said the rise in price of *tur dal* (pigeon pea) is due to black-marketing and hoarding, but was silent on the trade in futures. In fact the ban on trading in wheat futures was lifted even before the results of the 2009 elections were announced in May. And existing bans on other items are also being removed.

The price rise since 2004 could be the highest ever, except during the pre-Emergency period. Food prices may have gone up but airline tickets have come down. Corporate profits have gone up, even in this period of crisis, while lakhs have been thrown out of jobs. With over Rs.3 lakh crores of concessions to the corporate world it is not surprising they are still making profits.

But if we want to see the type of windfall profits that business and the traders are making we just have to look at the case of sugar, dominated by the Agricultural minister himself. Sharad Pawar's NCP controls 70% of Maharashtra's sugar cooperatives. These cooperatives have been known to give crores in the elections to their candidates, which is recovered immediately by a hike in sugar prices. In 2007, a private institute, of which Pawar is President-for-life, published a report which said 70% of them were supposedly sick. As Union Agricultural

Minister, Pawar then announced a financial package worth Rs.400 crores for these 'sick' cooperatives.

Take the present post-election scenario. Sugar prices which were Rs.26 in July are now Rs.35 and are set to go up to Rs.40 per kg by *diwali*. Production of sugar was 150 lakh tones this year compared to 263 lakh tones last year. Every year the average utilization of sugar is 210 lakh tones. But, there existed a stock of 80 lakh tones taking the total availability to 230 lakh tones. This is more than sufficient and shortage cannot be the reason for the phenomenal price rise. It is nothing but a manipulated situation to give massive profits to the sugar lobby led by Sharad Pawar. With sales of sugar amounting to roughly to 180 crore kgs monthly the sugar lobby, with a Rs.8 increase in prices, makes an additional profit of a massive Rs.1,440 crores monthly – over-and-above their normal profits. This bonanza has to be paid for by the common man. Not a single political party says a word about this gigantic loot.

The present price rise of essentials is nothing but a massive loot by the semi-feudal agrarian mafia, the loot by imperialism and compradors by trading in futures and artificially hiking up prices and the hoarding and blackmarketeeing of the big traders, linked to the above two forces. Those who suffer are the peasantry and the consumer; the peasants are still getting a pittance for their produce, while the consumer has to pay huge rates for their daily needs.

While both the producer and consumer are in deep distress the sugar mill /cooperative bosses (who have vice-like control over purchase of sugar cane and sell of sugar), big business (who trade in future) and big trader are making windfall profit.

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CONDEMN THE GENOCIDE OF THE TAMIL PEOPLE BY THE SINHALA CHAUVINIST, NEO-NAZI FASCIST RULERS OF SRI LANKA!

LET US UNITE TO FIGHT AGAINST UPA GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT TO RAJAPAKSE'S GENOCIDAL WAR ON TAMIL NATION!!

THE situation in the LTTE-controlled areas in northern Sri Lanka has become extremely delicate and dangerous with an average of almost 500 Tamils being butchered every week by the Sinhala chauvinist army since the past three months and the number increasing with every passing day. The virtual silence by the so-called International community is criminal to say the least, and its feeble calls for a pause in the fighting, a cruel joke. In fact, it is precisely based on the active support and military aid provided by the various imperialist powers as well as by the Indian government that the racist and fascist Rajapakse government had embarked upon the current all-out brutal assault on the Tamil areas in July 2006 by unilaterally breaching the 2002 cease-fire it had entered into with the LTTE.

The brutal onslaught by the Sinhala military had resulted in acute humanitarian crisis in the Tamil areas pushing hundreds of thousands of Tamil people into a state of starvation and misery. The incessant and indiscriminate bombing of entire areas had left thousands of civilians dead or wounded with no scope for medical treatment. These sadists have not permitted any independent observer into the conflict zone from outside, denied permission to UN and other international aid agencies and observers, even to Red Cross workers and media personnel. There has been a total news blackout. It is obvious that the fascist Sinhala rulers do not want their genocidal war and their crimes against humanity to be known to the outside world.

Even as they go about butchering, maiming and evicting tens of thousands of people, the neo-Nazi rulers are putting forth cynical claims that they are “freeing” the Tamil civilians from LTTE’s clutches, that their aim is to crush the LTTE and

not to harm the ordinary Tamils, and that declaring cease-fire would not be of any help to the civilian population and would only help the LTTE, and so on. They shamelessly describe their genocidal war as a “rescue operation” and give out figures of those “rescued”. Having gained a series of victories over the LTTE with the active aid and guidance of various imperialist powers and the Indian expansionists, these blood-thirsty hounds do not want to give any breathing space even if that meant the decimation of a significant proportion of the Tamil population in the LTTE-held areas. The Sri Lankan army has entered the no-fire zone—a small piece of territory covering around 17 sq km—and is resorting to heavy bombardment leading to huge civilian casualties. Even those who are fleeing are shot dead by the Sinhala chauvinist soldiers in sharp contrast to the photographs aired in TV channels showing how the Sinhala soldiers are helping the Tamil civilians. The reality is that every refugee coming out from the so-called no-fire zone is treated as an enemy, as a probable LTTE “terrorist”, and is subjected to intense interrogation and even eliminated under the slightest suspicion. Tamil women are being sterilized forcibly to check the growth in Tamil population. Hospitals, orphanages and refugee shelters are bombed and the trucks carrying relief supplies are blocked by the Lankan army. The aim of the Sri Lankan rulers is to drive out the Tamil population from the area and herd them into concentration camps so that they do not again unite to wage war for a separate Tamil Eelam. It is with this crooked aim that they have been exerting continuous pressure through uninterrupted bombing of the areas held by LTTE.

The Indian ruling classes had always backed the Sri Lankan state in its war

against the Tamil nation. In fact, it had even sent the Indian army in the name of peace-keeping force in 1987 but had to turn back after three years when it lost a few thousand soldiers in the hands of the LTTE. The ruling Congress party even had to pay the price by losing its leader, Rajiv Gandhi. The Indian state has been giving all sorts of aid to the Sri Lankan government in crushing the LTTE. The shifting of some of the defence personnel injured in the fighting in Tamil areas to Chennai for treatment reveals the extent of involvement of India in the war aimed at the extermination of the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka.

While these are the facts, the spokespersons for the Indian government, and the various political parties in Tamil Nadu have been claiming that they fully sympathise and stand by the Tamil people, that they support their demand for a separate *Eelam*, and that they are exerting pressure on the government of Sri Lanka to resolve the humanitarian crisis arising out of the war. With an eye on the impending elections in Tamil Nadu, every political party is pretending to be sympathetic to the cause of Tamil Eelam and putting up postures opposing the attacks by the Lankan army. All this is mere eye-wash. Parties like Jayalalitha’s AIADMK and Congress had all along been bitter opponents of the struggle of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Karunanidhi’s DMK has always pursued a dubious stand, on the one hand posing to be supporting the Tamil cause, while on the other, extending support to the UPA govt which has been assisting the Sri Lankan govt in the genocidal war against Tamils. Moreover, the DMK has crushed people’s protests against the Sri Lankan govt. All these parties wish to see the LTTE decimated as they know how strong is



Butcher of dalits Continues Scott Free in Mumbai

Twelve years have passed since the massacre of eleven dalits at Ramabai Nagar in the heart of the most so-called modern city of the country. Not only did the dalits have to face the humiliation of the desecration of the Dr. Ambedkar's statue, during their protest they were mowed down by the police led by the State Reserve Police Force (SRPF) sub-inspector, Manohar Kadam. Though this man was found guilty by the government-appointed Gundewar Commission for being directly responsible for an unjustified police firing, Kadam has spent barely 48 hours in jail in these 12 years.

In July 1997 one morning the dalits of Ramabai Nagar in Ghatkopar found their statue of Ambedkar desecrated by chappals. In the course of the protest the police resorted to unprovoked firing killing 11, many of whom were bystanders at the spot. In protest against these killings entire Maharashtra was paralysed for over four days. Yet, till today, let alone bringing those responsible for the desecration to book, state has been harassing the protestors and has been fully complicit in allowing the perpetrators of the mass murder to go scott free.

Finally, two months earlier on May 5th 2009, the session's court found Kadam guilty of culpable homicide and sentenced him to life imprisonment. Kadam was whisked off – not to jail, but to a hospital. There he remained until a vacation bench of the Bombay High Court granted bail despite the fact that he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Even after the Gundewar Commission Report came out the then Shiv-Sena/BJP alliance government refused to take any action on Kadam. Though a Congress-led government came to power in the state in 1998, it took no action in spite of many pre-election promises.

In 2001 as a result of two Dalit writ petitions, the Bombay High Court ordered an end to the inaction. The government filed an FIR against Kadam, but he was taken to hospital and then granted bail. Further proceedings remained stalled for many more years though the police initiated new 'rioting' charges against the residents of Ramabai Nagar Colony, including many who had been injured in the police firing, in an attempt to intimidate the eyewitnesses.

The dalit butcher, Kadam, still roams freely with full government protection, while the dalits of Ramabai Nagar let alone getting justice faced not only death of their loved ones but continuous harassment and arrests. It is clear that no justice can be expected through the prevailing system. Kadam and his ilk needed to be handed out a sentence proclaimed by a people's court; while the state harassment and victimization of dalits can only be countered by a huge mass movement built by all democratic people against any and every type of caste oppression and humiliation.



the influence of the *Eelam* struggle for self-determination on the people of Tamil Nadu. At the same time they know they would be isolated if they did not support the right of the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka for self-determination and condemn the war of genocide unleashed by Rajapakse's Sinhala racist regime in Sri Lanka.

The CC, CPI (Maoist), calls upon the people of India to wage a united struggle demanding immediate halt to the aid given by the Indian government to the Sri Lanka rulers, to sever all diplomatic relations by India with the Sri Lankan government if it does not stop its war of genocide immediately, and to allow all the refugees from the war-ravaged areas into Tamil Nadu without any harassment. The people of Sri Lanka should realize that the current war against the Tamil nation is an unjust war waged by an oppressor nation over an oppressed nation. Besides, it is a ploy of the Sri Lankan rulers to divert the people's attention from the deep

crisis afflicting the country. Giving legitimacy to the war would mean lending legitimacy to the further strengthening of the Sri Lankan fascist state machine that is going to be increasingly directed against the vast toiling masses of Sri Lanka who dare to wage struggle against oppression and exploitation. It is the duty of the working class and oppressed people of Sri Lanka to unequivocally oppose the war of genocide and force the government to immediately halt its brutal crimes against the Tamil nation. The aspirations of the Tamil nation cannot be crushed through brutal fascist means. Even if the LTTE suffers a setback today, the unfulfilled aspirations of the Tamil nation will give rise to a more militant national liberation movement.

The central committee, CPI (Maoist), demands:

An immediate declaration of cease-fire by the Sri Lankan Army and end to the

genocidal war it had unleashed on the Tamil nation!

An end to all aid and support by the Indian government to the terrorist regime in Colombo!

An impartial enquiry into the war crimes committed by the Sri Lankan military such as mass murder, use of cluster bombs and other chemical weapons, bombing of civilian targets etc!

Recognition of an independent, sovereign Eelam which is a legitimate inalienable right of the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka!

Azad,
Spokesperson,
Central Committee,
CPI (Maoist)
April 24, 2009

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district. In less than 18 hours the SIB had abducted, tortured and murdered the comrades and threw their bodies at a place more than 1000kms away. Such is the sophistication of the criminal lawless gang in AP called SIB which never had any accountability whatsoever whether under the TDP regime of Chandrababu Naidu or the Congress regime of YS Reddy. This lawless gang, along with Greyhounds, resemble in all ways the death squads in Latin America under US-backed tin-pot dictatorships during the 1960s through 80s, and have a notorious criminal record of abduction and murder of hundreds of revolutionaries such as comrades Puli Anjanna, Shyam, Mahesh, Murali, Sande Rajamouli alias Prasad, Vadkapur Chandramouli alias BK, Sathyam, Madhav, Matta Ravi Kumar, Somanna, Yadanna, Padma, and innumerable other martyrs.

Comrade Patel Sudhakar Reddy, also popularly known as Suryam in the revolutionary camp in Andhra Pradesh and as Vikas in the CC and the newly formed Party after the merger of CPI (ML)[PW] and MCCI in September 2004, has become one of the established leaders of the Indian revolution and a member of the central committee of CPI (Maoist) after a long illustrious revolutionary career. Hailing from Kurthiravula Cheruvu village in Mahbbobnagar district in South Telengana, he began his revolutionary life as a student activist of Radical Students Union in the early 1980s when he was studying his bachelor's course in Gadwal town in Mahboobnagar district. Later when he was doing his Master's degree in Osmania University in Hyderabad he joined the movement as a full-time organizer. Ever since then he made significant contributions to the erstwhile CPI (ML)[People's War] and the CPI(Maoist), and the Indian revolution as a whole.

Responding to the call of the Party to build a guerrilla zone of armed

agrarian revolutionary struggle in North Telangana and Dandakaranya with the goal of transforming them into base areas, he went to Eturnagaram-Mahadevpur forest in North Telengana in 1983 and worked as a commander of the guerrilla squad. Later he was transferred to Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra where he worked until 1988. He was shifted to the work of purchasing arms for equipping the speedily growing armed guerrilla squads of erstwhile CPI (ML)[PW]. He played a crucial role in supplying arms to the Party but was arrested in 1992 in Bangalore based on a tip-off from an arrested person. He remained an exemplary communist leader in jail where he spent almost seven years. He was released in 1998 and was taken into the AP state committee in the state Plenum held in 1999. He served as its secretariat member from 2001 to mid-2003 when he was transferred to other work allotted by the CC. He played a prominent role in building the movement in Dandakaranya in its initial years and later in the state of Andhra Pradesh. He was taken into the CC in 2005 and as a member of the CC he made significant contribution in formulating the central policies and plans.

Martyrdom of com Vikas is an irreparable loss to the Indian revolution and to the CPI (Maoist). He was an exemplary model to be emulated by all revolutionaries. Even in the midst of severe enemy repression he maintained a calm posture and instilled immense confidence in other cadres. He had also contributed much in studying the enemy tactics. He was known for his sincerity and dedication, deep commitment to the cause of the oppressed people, creativity and solid determination to fulfill any task entrusted to him, and militant fighting nature. Even in the severest hardships comrade Suryam never showed any vacillation or tension which gave immense confidence to the cadres around him. In one incident in early

2003, for instance, when he was working in Nallamala forest region, the enemy suddenly came near the camp and there was tension inside the comrades present at the camp. But seeing com Suryam who just sat coolly others regained their cool and waited for the next step. Com Suryam sent instructions to the members of the defense team asking them to put up stiff resistance in case the enemy attacked and to continue firing until everyone else had safely retreated. No wonder, his very presence instilled great confidence and a fighting spirit among the cadres and the people. Comrade Suryam also played a prominent role in planning and executing political actions and gave guidance to the action teams which executed former Home minister of AP, Madhav Reddy, and the attack on the then Chief Minister of AP, Chandrababu Naidu in 2003. The enemy has been itching to lay his hands on comrade Suryam, who was considered the most wanted in AP, and succeeded at last in May 2009.

In the Party committee meetings, right from the district committee meetings to AP state committee meetings to the meetings of the CC, comrade Vikas played a crucial, and many a time, a decisive role, as he had a clear grasp of the situation, did his homework thoroughly before attending the meetings, lacked dogmatic approach, and hence could come up with creative and feasible solutions to problems confronting the Party and the movement. His presence in the committee meetings contributed immensely in solving many complex problems. His transfer from the work in AP to central work in the middle of 2003 had an impact on the movement in AP but the decision to shift him had to be taken by the CC due to the priority of central work.

There are many revolutionary qualities that have to be emulated from comrade Suryam: his sense of humor, frankness in criticism of the ►►

PLGA FORCES ATTACK POLICE, FREE COMRADE SUNIRMAL!

THE PLGA guerillas carried out a daring daylight attack on a police team in the court premises in Lakhisarai district of Bihar on the afternoon of 23rd June, 2009 and freed comrade Misir Besra (Sunirmal) and 3 other jailed comrades after gunning down a policemen and hurling bombs. The ambush of the police team took place around noon when com. Besra and other comrades were being escorted out of the court. The guerillas grappled with the five-member police team escorting com. Besra, even as their comrades fired shots and hurled bombs. The guerillas also snatched away a carbine and two rifles from the police escort team.

According to media reports, the guerillas in plain clothes drove into the court complex on 10 motorcycles and the pillion riders began firing. They simultaneously attacked the court premises, the DSP office and the DDC's (District Development

Commissioner) office. The police force stationed there were unaware of



what was the target of attack. As the confusion continued they took away

their comrade. The police said that *"Besra was hand-cuffed and held with a rope. The attack was too swift and there were lots of crowds on the court premises."* It is notable that none of the civilians were even injured in this daring and well coordinated operation even though this incident took place amidst a huge crowd of people.

Comrade Besra who is popularly known as Sunirmal was nabbed in Khunti district of Jharkhand. He was a member of the Politburo and Central Military Commission of the CPI (Maoist) at the time of his arrest.

A large number of comrades, including senior comrades, are incarcerated in the jails all over the country. The state is re-arresting them even after they are being released on bail. If they continue in this way of illegal detention the revolutionaries will find no other alternative but to free their comrades in this way.

► mistakes in Party line and policies, mistakes and weaknesses of other comrades as well as his own, initiative and creativity, diligent study of events and experiences of other movements and committees, alertness to changes taking place in the enemy camp, domestic and international arena so as not to lag behind events, and seriousness of purpose in every task taken up by him or entrusted to him by the party. This quality he displayed from the very moment he joined the Party 27 years ago. That is why the higher committee always reposed confidence in him and rested in ease after giving him charge of a specific department or work. At the time of his martyrdom, he was involved in a very important work that is indispensable for formulating tactics by the various party committees, particularly the CC. His martyrdom at this critical juncture of the revolutionary movement is an

irrecoverable loss and will have a serious effect on the movement as a whole.

Comrade Venakatayya alias Prasanna hails from Cheryala mandal in Warangal district, AP, and was actively involved in the student movement in AP for almost a decade and served as a leader of the All India Revolutionary Student Federation in AP. He took charge of the student movement in AP after the martyrdom of comrade Bhujanga Reddy alias Praveen. He was shifted to technical work in 2004 and has been working in the technical field since then. His contribution to the collection of material regarding enemy's policies, plans and movements was noteworthy. He was always jovial and adjustable with any comrade. He took every work given to him quite seriously and hence the higher committee entrusted him important work with

complete confidence in him. In his martyrdom the CPI (Maoist) has lost a young and energetic comrade with promising leadership qualities.

The contribution of comrades Suryam and Prasanna to the Indian revolution will never be forgotten by the CPI (Maoist), the PLGA and people. They will continue the struggle for the liberation of the country with redoubled vigor and hatred for the exploiters and traitors who rule the country. The reactionary rulers of India, with the active assistance of the imperialists, vainly hope to suppress the Indian revolution by eliminating the central and state leadership of the CPI (Maoist). By this, they think they can deprive the oppressed people of leadership and suppress their struggle for land, livelihood and liberation. But this conspiracy of the reactionary rulers will remain a mere day-dream. Thousands upon thousands of worthy

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CONDEMN THE BRUTAL MURDER OF COMRADES PATEL SUDHAKAR REDDY AND VENKATAYYA!

ON May 23 The CPI (Maoist) and the Indian revolution had suffered another major and irreparable loss. On that fateful day, at about 10.30 am, comrade Patel Sudhakar Reddy alias Suryam alias Vikas, who is a member of the central committee of the Party, and another district-level comrade Venkatayya alias Prasanna, were arrested by the SIB goons of Andhra Pradesh police, were brutally tortured and murdered in the early hours of 24th. They were arrested from Nashik city in Maharashtra. The dead bodies of the two comrades were thrown in the Lavvala forest in Tadwai mandal of Warangal district, AP, and the usual story of an encounter was concocted. The Chief Minister, Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy who was in Delhi repeated this concocted police story without an iota of shame. The police claimed that one AK-47 rifle and a 9mm pistol were recovered from the dead along with three kit bags. To mislead the people as part of the psychological warfare waged by the state in its all-round war against the Maoist movement, a statement was issued by the APSIB in the name of the CPI (Maoist) spokesperson comrade Azad, to the effect that comrade Suryam (Vikas) had indeed gone to Warangal on some work. Later the CC of the CPI (Maoist) issued a statement disowning the statement given in the name of Azad and exposing the SIB's psychological war.

The CC of the CPI (Maoist) issued a call to the entire Party and people to observe *bharat bandh* on June 12 to protest against the cold-blooded murder of these two beloved comrades. A petition was filed in the High Court by the Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee for conducting a re-postmortem on the body of the martyrs, and upon

the Court's order, it was carried out on May 26 on the body of comrade Vikas while comrade Prasanna's body was cremated earlier by his family members. The manner in which the re-postmortem was conducted was condemned by the civil rights organizations, several political parties and other democratic-minded individuals as a hoax since it was done secretly without allowing comrade Sudhakar



Reddy's brother or others inside when the autopsy was being conducted. Comrade Varavara Rao said that he would file a case against the Warangal police chief Sajjanar for contempt of court as they did not allow the family members of the deceased at the time of re-postmortem. Various political parties condemned the murder describing it as a fake encounter and demanded a judicial enquiry. Maoist prisoners in the Cherlapalli jail in Hyderabad and Warangal central jail went on a hunger strike, protesting against the encounter of Sudhakara Reddy.

They demanded that fake encounters be immediately stopped.

However, neither the lawless public *goonda* ruling the police state of AP, YS Reddy, nor the neo-Nazi criminals hiding behind a certain degree of sophistication and gentlemen appearance ruling at the Centre—Manmohan Singh and Chidambaram—bothered about fake encounter killings and the trampling underfoot the fundamental rights supposed to be enshrined in the Indian Constitution. All they want is the elimination of the Maoist leadership at any cost. These unconstitutional criminal acts are not carried out by some police officials at the district or even state level. They are planned and executed under the direct guidance and direction of the top political leadership—YS Reddy in AP and Manmohan Singh-Chidambaram at the Centre. Comrades Vikas and Prasanna are the first victims of the fascist repression unleashed by the newly re-elected blood-thirsty government of YS Reddy in Andhra Pradesh and the Congress-led UPA government in the Centre.

Comrade Vikas went to meet comrade Prasanna at about 10 on May 23rd morning in Nashik city. He informed another comrade with whom he was staying at that time that he would attend the appointment and return within one hour. He called up after half-an-hour and informed that none had turned up for the first contact and that he would see for the second contact at 11 am also and then return by 11.30. And that was the last that was heard of him. He, along with comrade Prasanna, were abducted from the appointment place in Nashik, airlifted to Warangal which is more than 1000 km away, tortured throughout the night, murdered in the early hours, and their bodies were thrown in Lavvala forest in Warangal

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