

Press Release

1. We, the undersigned, strongly protest and denounce the arrest of a Shramik Sangram Committee activist and Krishak Committee organiser Mr. Mithu Ghosh from Gangra area of village Sonachura, Nandigram, in the wee hours of 12th February, 2008, the subsequent arrests of Bhumi Uchched Protirodh Committee organiser Mr. Sudhanshu Das and his son, too, who provided shelter to Mithu on the fateful night, relating them with the same case, implicating them in the same FIR, etc., and the hue and cry raised by the police about what they call the '*Arrest of a Maoist Organiser from Nandigram (!)*', in spite of the fact in the grasp of any knowledgeable person that Mithu and the aforesaid organisations for which Mithu worked are unrelated to the CPI (Maoist). But, anyway, we would like to add here a separate fact – that *the police has perhaps forgotten that having relations with CPI (Maoist) or carrying a copy of the allegedly Maoist literature "Peoples March" was neither 'illegal' nor 'prohibited' when Mithu was arrested.*

2. We find that the police surreptitiously added several documents later in the 'seizure list' which Mithu never distributed at any time during his regular visits to Nandigram over almost a year. Rather, Mithu had with him several copies of regular, open and legal publications, like "Sandhikshan" (in publication since 1972), "Shramik Istahaar" (in publication since 1974), "Krishak Path" (in publication since 1978) and Frontline etc.!

3. But the most shocking part of the police game is yet untold — **both the FIR and the police report that were later submitted to the SDJM (Haldia) court contain names of some of the editors of the abovementioned publications, almost all being senior-most leaders of Shramik Sangram Committee and Krishak Committee – and not only that, they contain the name of a well-known cultural activist Ms. Dr. Jolly Bagchi, , now a septuagenarian, a founder member of the cultural group Ganabishan, and also names of some other unrelated and/or fictitious persons — all of whom were allegedly present there at Sonachura at almost midnight on the 11th-12th Feb, '08!!**

This is indeed an ominous and evil sign, unprecedented in the past in Independent India, for the police to connect or implicate the topmost persons of political organisations in a case where a single individual was present on the spot!

4. It is the height of denial of the democratic rights of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of expression etc., which we condemn unequivocally.

5. **Hence we demand** that the government administration should take urgent steps to redress such grave errors by:--

A. Immediate and unconditional release of Mr. Sudhanshu Das, his son and Mr. Mithu Ghosh, and

B. Immediate withdrawal & annulment of the aforesaid FIR, Report, Seizure List, Cases etc.

C. Moreover, the administration should not dare to harass the persons mentioned in those fictitious documents.

Sincerely yours,

Sd/-

1. Mahasweta Devi
2. Bibhas Chakraborty
3. Tarun Sanyal
4. Subhaprasanna
5. Joy Goswami
6. Sabyasachi Dev
7. Dipanjan Roy Chowdhury
8. Pratul Mukherjee
9. Nabarun Bhattacharya

10. Dilip Chakraborty
 11. Sujato Bhadra
 12. Ashokendu Sengupta
 13. Bratya Basu
 14. Koushik Sen
 15. Arpita Ghosh
 16. Suman Mukhopadhyay
 17. Manish Mitra
 18. Ratan Basu Mazumder
 19. Biswanath Chakraborty
 20. Mihir Chakraborty
 21. Buddhadeb Bagchi
 22. Miratun Nahar
 23. Sujay Basu
 24. Srijan Sen
 25. Satarupa Sanyal
 26. Pallab Kirtaniya
 27. Ratna Mitra
 28. Partha Sarathi Sengupta
 29. Manik Mandal
 30. Meher Engineer
 31. Sunanda Sanyal
 32. Ashis Lahiri
 33. Prabir Mukherjee
 34. Tarun Kanti Naskar
 35. Anup Bandopadhyay
 36. Sudeshna Bandopadhyay
 37. Guruprasad Kar
 38. Manas Joardar
 39. Samir Aich
 40. Debal Deb
 41. Krishna Bandyopadhyay
 42. Partha Pratim Roy
 43. Shyamal Guha
 44. Sumita Samanta
 45. Partha Ghosh
 46. Chhatrapati Dutta
 47. Bhaskar Gupta
 48. Sanjay Saha
 49. Sibaji Banopadhyay
 50. Rana Saha
 51. Madhubanti Maitra
 52. Tamal Bhowmik
 53. Amitava Sarkar
 54. Chaitali Dutta
 55. Amitava Ganguly
 56. Amitava Das
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Jadavpur University
Jadavpur University

57. Sanjib Acharya	Jadavpur University
58. Samar Mandal	Jadavpur University
59. T. Ghosh	Jadavpur University
60. P.C. Chakraborty	Jadavpur University
61. Kalyan Roy	Jadavpur University
62. Swati Banerjee	Jadavpur University
63. Amit Roy Choudhury	BESU, Shibpur
64. Aveek Mukherjee	BESU, Shibpur
65. Subhasis Banerjee	BESU, Shibpur
66. Sukanta Das	BESU, Shibpur
67. Krishnendu Mukherjee	BESU, Shibpur
68. Rajen Kundu	Ramkrishna Mission, Rahara
69. Ananda Dasgupta	IISER, Kolkata
70. Amit Kundu	Asutosh College, Kolkata
71. Surasree Choudhury	Thakurpukur College
72. Arunava Adhikary	West Bengal University of Technology
73. Suvro Mallick	
74. Somdatta Bhattacharjee	
75. Soumya Guhathakurta	
76. Pulak Lahiri	
77. Tanmoy Mridha	