

## **Letter addressed by the Committee of the People against the Police Atrocities to APDR, Lalgarh Mancha and the Intellectuals supporting the struggle of the people – No. 3**

To APDR, Lalgarh Mancha and the Intellectuals supporting the struggle of the people.

Dear Friends,  
Long Live the People's Struggle,

We hope you have received both of our previous two letters. We will hope that you will surely understand our way of thinking. Everyday many things are happening here. You must have heard of or know about most of these happenings. Even then we want to convey to you what we are thinking of and our report on various events that have taken place. Whatever decision you take, we are trying to present before you through these letters a clear picture of these occurrences. That is why we have written two previous letters and now this third one. Along with these, we humbly request you to make these available to the broader masses of people and send us your specific opinions in relation to these letters.

As we write this letter a 'bandh' has been called. The 'bandh' is being observed everywhere, but on the roads there is a larger than usual police deployment and patrolling is going on. This bandh has been called by the Maoists. What they are citing as reasons behind this bandh are – violations of human rights, violation of the rights of the people, and police atrocities. It is unimportant who or which party has called the bandh. What is important is that the demands brought to be forefront are also our demands in every way. They are also your demands. The Maoists claim that the people arrested in the last 10/12 days and alleged to be Maoists by the police administration are not Maoists at all. About the actual members of the Maoist organizations arrested by the government, the administration is totally silent. They do not even admit to arresting these people, let alone producing them before the court. That is why there is a grave risk of their being murdered. What little we know of the Constitution of the country tells us that a person must be produced before a court within twenty-four hours of arrest. According to the claims of the Maoists one of their comrades named Chandrashekhar (alias Biju) was arrested by the Joint forces on the morning of 16-4-10. On 14 April another person named Rajen was picked up by the Joint forces in the presence of all the villagers in Perrakuli of Salboni and on 15 April they also arrested two persons named Rajesh and Krishna at a marriage ceremony in Brindabanpur village in Jhargram. The Maoists claim that none of them have been produced in court so far. This is not the first instance of such a thing happening nor will it be the last. It happens all the time. Swearing in the name of democracy and the Constitution, arresting people courtesy governments in power in the state and the centre, not producing them in court within twenty-four hours or making them disappear has become quite common everyday affairs in the Jangal Mahal. That is why the time demands that – a tremendous popular movement has to be organized everywhere against police atrocities and against the usurpation of the democratic and constitutional rights. Otherwise, matters like police atrocities and usurpation of the democratic and constitutional rights can never be resisted.

Even though police atrocities and the terror let loose by the *Harmad Bahini* are getting more and more brutal everyday, the work and strength of our organization 'Peoples' Committee Against Police Atrocities' formed to fight torture by the police and to fight for the minimum democratic and constitutional rights of the people have become even more broad-based and widespread than before. The people fighting on one side against terror and on the other side they are trying to give shape to their own developmental activities under the leadership of

our organization. Through this letter we appeal with due respect to the progressive, democratic individuals, organizations and intellectuals who are opposed to police terror to come and stand beside the struggle of the people of *Jangal Mahal*.

Yesterday the joint forces have arrested three persons including Lochan Singh Sardar who was a member of our newly-elected team of spokespersons. Apart from this, we have received the news that Jagannath Singh, the President of our organization in the Belpahari area, has also been arrested. The police have admitted to these arrests. They said that these people will be produced at court tomorrow after sixty hours of arrest. Lochan Singh Sardar is a people's leader in the Belpahari area. Last year when his 12 year old son died he set out for home but could not see his beloved eldest son's body. That day, some 300 to 400 *Jawans* of the Joint Forces had kept his house surrounded in order to arrest him. Different newspapers, TV channels, radio stations have always projected him as a front rank leader of the 'Peoples' Committee Against Police Atrocities'. Not only the Jangal Mahal but the people of entire West Bengal knows him as a leader of our organization. Yet, now the administration is saying that he is a close associate of the Maoist leader Kishanji. This is the real character of the administration. Will you keep mum with most people when people involved in protest, struggling people, those who believe in democracy, human rights activists, those who oppose the displacement of the sons of the soil from their jal-jangal-jameen, are being dubbed with the appellation of Maoists? According to the government's belief that if one is stamped with the name Maoist no voice can be raised concerning their constitutional and democratic rights and no question can be raised about the torture perpetrated on them by the police. At present, almost the only topic of discussion in the Parliament and other forums is how to destroy the Maoists. It is not enough today to oppose the practice of dubbing someone Maoist and subjecting them to state terror, it is necessary also to oppose the torture being perpetrated on the Maoists as well as the anti-democratic and anti-constitutional activities of the government. Our organization honours the Constitution of our country. But observe how the Central and State governments themselves flout the Constitution! We demand that whether one is a Gandhibadi or a Maobadi, everyone should be tried before a court according to the constitutional tenets. Democracy would be in peril if you choose to remain silent in face of the fact that the Central and State governments and their police administration care a hoot for the courts of law and constitutional directives.

We believe there is another matter that should urgently come to your attention. We had named Mangal Mahato at number 51 and Manmatha Mahato at number 57 in the list of our martyred companions. We had said that the Joint Forces have taken them away and we considered them missing. The government have disclosed the location of those two 'missing' persons after so long a time. On February 7 last, Mangal Mahato was arrested by the Joint Forces from the Banstala Station in Jhargram. The Joint Forces are making the false claim that Mangal Mahato and Manmatha Mahato was picked up in Kokrajhor in Assam on April 21 when bringing arms for the Maoists. From February 7 to April 21 – how many hours have passed – must be more than 24 hours. The Police Super Manoj Verma, for the last two and a half months (that is, 1800 hours), had him taken from place to place in West Midnapur. No secret news no information on the Maoists could be extracted from him. The people of Jangal Mahal and his family kept up the protracted struggle and that is why we could trace our missing friend. We have talked about Mangal Mahato in our previous letters as well. He is a leader of the people and a teacher. The newspapers published in Kolkata carried news about Mangal Mahato on many occasions. If we simply ask questions about such violations of constitutional rights, these plots hatched by the police and their blatant disregard for the judiciary, would we get answers? Would we be able to trace our missing companions? Shall we just listen in silence to these ceaseless fabrications by the police and the administration?

If we do not protest vehemently the violations of minimum democratic and constitutional rights, the administration let none of us survive, neither us nor you.

Let us take a look at the pages of history now. The Editorial of the 'Sambad Bhaskar' of November 25, 1855 said:

*Gentlemen, what can we say about the cruelty, if you saw it with your own eyes you would have been bathed with your own tears, people related to the police forces brought in 50 Santhals from a place called Daminiko. Even people with hearts of stone will weep on seeing their condition. Those Santhals had been kept without food and in chains from the very day they were caught, did not get a single drop of water to drink, the moment they were caught the police put shackles on their feet, on their hands. These shackles were attached to chains and all fifty of them were dragged on that one chain, many of them developing sores on hands and feet from the rubbing of those shackles. The sores were bleeding profusely. Many had fallen down on the road, unable to walk. They were dragged along and because of that the skin all over their body was flayed. One old man had died from this continuous dragging. His body was sent to Birbhum on the back of an elephant. On the days spent on the way from Daminiko to Birbhum the chained Santhals were given no food. When the chains were taken off in front of the jail in Birbhum, they could not walk to jail, the foot soldiers pulled them into the jail wards all the while caning them. We do not know what happened to the poor wretches, I do not know. (Dhirendranath Baske, *The History of the Santhal Rebellion*, p. 111)*

155 years have gone by after the Santhal Rebellion. Much water have flown down the Ganges. British Colonisers are gone, giving place to the Congress rulers. During these years the Congress and the BJP in the Centre and in the state the Congress and for the last 30 years the Left Front under CPM leadership have enjoyed power. But in the lives of our Santhal, Kurmi, Ho, Munda, Bhumijo and other *Adibasis* practically no change have come. The struggle that we waged in 1855 for our right to *Jal-Jangal-Jami* still goes on even today, in 2010.

#### THE ACTUAL INTENTION OF THE JOINT FORCES IS TO ENCIRCLE PATREE AND KALSIBHANGA VILLAGES

On April 23, 1600 *Jawans* of the Joint Forces encircled the two villages Patree and Baro Kalsibhanga. Patree is a large village in the Jangal Mahal. In this village live almost 350 families and in Baro Kalsibhanga 150 families from different communities. Supporters of different parliamentary and revolutionary parties reside in this village. Only three families belonging to leaders of the reactionary fascist CPM have fled the villages. For the last few weeks a relief camp organised by popular initiative is being run in Baro Kalsibhanga. Like many other villages these two have not surrendered to the Joint Forces and the Harnad gangs. Because of this the Joint Forces laid siege on these villages from April 23. These villages are now leading the resistance forces. All the villagers were herded in one place and were badly beaten. They were interrogated to find out the location of the absconding leaders of the People's Committee. The people of these villages refused to divulge any information to the police.

The 1600 policemen forced the people out of the relief camp and emptied out the camp. When it was learned that they had arrested 15 people and were taking them away, 300 to 400 women from the village went after the police demanding release of the menfolk. The

Joint Forces were forced to release the men. We will examine the reasons behind the repeated attacks on these villages.

The big landlord of Patree Jagannath Mahato is a leader in the CPM. He fled the village in November last. The paddy from his fields was harvested by the people under the leadership of the People's Committee and the money received from the sale of the crop was deposited in the development fund. The people of the village had appealed several times to the Panchayet and to the officials of the Block for irrigational facilities. Though the Chief Minister of our state swears in the name of development, no arrangement for irrigation has been done in this village. Now the people is initiating different developmental plans under the leadership of the development department of the People's Committee. The Joint Forces will not allow that.

There is a crisis of potable water in Kalsibhanga. The government has never done anything about it. Now the administration is propagating the falsehood that 'developmental work has stopped because the panchayet cannot function because of the agitation'. There was no development before the movement began; the government took no initiative since it started. The truth is, no developmental work was ever opposed by anywhere at any time. Even the Maoists did not oppose it. In fact, the Maoists themselves have done some developmental work and their leaflets regarding development have been seen in the hands of people. They have demanded, let the government clearly point out where did the Maoists oppose development. But the government did not do so. The real reason behind this is clear enough – whenever the people demand that the government should bring it out in the open how panchayets practice corruption, how corruption is thwarting the development that could be ushered in through work for 100 days or Indira Bikash Yojana, the governments begins to give lame excuses and begin false propaganda. And now they are trying to destroy the developmental work initiated and built up by the people themselves. The development wing of the People's Committee began a project to solve the problem of potable water in the villages. Particularly in Patree and Kalsibhanga 22 wells were restored within 15 days. This work was done by our development wing by bringing the people together in a common endeavour. We progressed quite far. The idea of cooperation flowered in the minds of the people. Thousands of common people are working day after day with common thoughts in mind, towards common goals, and that is strengthening the social bonds among them. However much they try, Chidambaram or Buddha will never be able destroy that bond, neither will they be able to win over the hearts of the people.

To destroy the developmental work born of popular initiatives, to disband the cooperation among the assemblage, they are repeatedly laying siege on these villages. Yet the people are not afraid. Hundreds of people in the villages of Patree and Kalsibhanga are taking steps to resist the savage onslaught of the Joint Forces.

#### THE ATTACK BY THE JOINT FORCES ON THE WOMEN GOING TO THE FORESTS TO COLLECT LEAVES AND THE VOW TO FIGHT AGAINST THAT BY THE PEOPLE

The Joint Forces are deployed in huge numbers around Gopiballavpur. The depredations of the Joint Forces and the Harnad gangs is increasing day by day. Previously the women of Jangal Mahal could not go to the forests because of the persecution by two men – Asoke Singh and Gujrat Khan – who were close to the Joint Forces and the CPM men. On April 23 (Friday), near Raisole village Asoke Singh was executed by the Maoists. According to their claim the dead man was a big timber merchant, leader of a gang of dacoits, and an informer of the police. Gujrat Singh (the Maoists have claimed that he was also executed following

the judgment of the people) and Asoke Singh were the two leaders of the timber mafia of Nayagram. They were also the right and left hands of the Secretary of the Nayagram Zonal Committee of CPM. Now, for quite some time, the women going to collect leaves in the forests are being tormented by the *Jawans* of the Joint Forces. A huge protest march was organised against this in Nayagram. Most of the marchers were women. Today, people are refusing to take torture lying down, they are ready to protest. We will not tolerate it if the *Adibasi* women going to collect leaves in the forests are harmed in any way. We will certainly go to collect leaves. In this season, our livelihood depends only on collecting leaves and other things from the forests.

We the poor *Adibasi* and the indigenous people of Jangal Mahal depend on the forests for our livelihood. With the wages earned from collecting the forest produce in this season, we buy our different daily necessities like salt, oil, and clothes for the whole year. The Joint Forces led by the Congress government at the centre and the left government at the state intends to deprive us of this yearly income. But we will go on living. We live on edible roots and leaves. We will combat the Joint Forces and the *Harmads*. The Home Minister Chidambaram at the centre dreams of handing over the riches of forest lands free of charge to the large corporations like Vedanta, Tata, Mittal and Jindal. The 'development' touted by Chidambaram and Manmohan will do nothing for the poor and oppressed people; only a few will benefit from it. Because of this 'development' the *Adivasi* and indigenous people will be displaced from their own households, lands and sources of income; their sorrows will multiply. Everybody knows this. The Manmohans and Chidambarams will do nothing in the interest of the Indian people, they serve only the United States and other rich countries of the world. We oppose this policy and will continue to do so. All the wealth of the Jangal Mahal belongs to the people, we will never hand it over to others. This cry is being echoed at every corner of Jangal Mahal.

#### THE BRAVE JOINT FORCES OF CHIDAMBARAM ARE SNATCHING EARRINGS FROM THE EARS OF WOMEN, ORNAMENTS AND MONEY FROM HOUSES

Four months back the Joint Forces looted Rupees 70,000 from the house of our spokesperson Asit Mahato. Things were happening in many places. After Chidambaram came to Lalgarh and licensed the Joint Forces and *Harmads* to pillage, the Joint Forces and the *Harmads* are looting everything unhindered.

On April 27 the marauding Joint Forces encircled Jagannathpur village near Midnapur and forced all men and women to sit together in one place. Then a party of the Joint Forces entered every house and in the name of searching took away the gold and silver ornaments of women, money gathered from selling of paddy and many other things. They also tore apart papers and documents. They forced women to take off earrings and took them away. Chidambaram, Buddha, Mamata will all feel very proud when they learn of the brave acts of the *Jawans* such as tearing away earrings from women. If someone kindly conveys this news to those great personages we will thank them on behalf of the people's Committee.

This is not happening in Jagannathpur only. In the name of new tactics, this going on in every village. In Kalibasa rural women barred the way of the Joint Forces when they were taking away eight persons. They were beaten up by the Joint Forces and started to loot the village. On the night of April 26 and morning of April 27 the Joint Forces attacked the villages Kendadangri and Bhoorsan beating up and arresting many people. As a result 21 people had to be hospitalized. Ornaments and money were looted from the houses there. The local leaders of the Congress Party had to condemn these attacks. Yet, they are not willing to join

the struggle against it. It is their Congress Party that is ruling at the centre and it is they who are sending forces to beat people, rape women, commit murder, arrest people and to loot what they can. But 'vote' is too great a compulsion. So they have to put up a show of opposing this in the interest of the ballot boxes. Our organisation is not too strong at Kendadanbgri and Bhoorsan. So they shed crocodile tears hoping that would fill their ballot boxes. The people does not want these self-seeking leaders, and will not try to woo them into the movement. Leaders will be born out of the people's struggle. Even though people had to leave the villages for now, they will further strengthen the movement against that army of looters. Two years back the Congress and the CPM protested violence against women with great fanfare by passing a bill at the Parliament. Starting from Sonia Gandhi of Congress, Brinda Karat of CPM, and Mamata of Trinamool now and they create a great hullabaloo about the rights of women, about the torture perpetrated on women. But by supporting the rampage of the Joint Forces they make it obvious that their clamour is simply a sham and serves only their thirst for votes.

Also being looted are motorcycles along with ornaments and money. Anyone riding a motorcycle in villages or on the roads will be stopped by the *Harmads* and the Joint Forces and their motorcycles will be snatched. The Joint Forces never return these bikes, neither will they give a receipt for the impounded goods. Generally many people in villages do not have driving licenses. Cars are often not registered in their owners' names. Two-thirds of people buy used cars and carry on work with them. So, most of them do not take the trouble of changing the registration. Whenever Joint Forces enter a village they destroy cars. Later on the *Harmads* come and take away the vehicles. People riding motorbikes on roads just abandon the bikes and run away when they see the Joint Forces. Because they know, they will never get back the bikes, and, they try to save their own lives first, preferring to stay away from jail.

Wherever the Joint Forces and the *Harmads* are going, they are looting property, destroying things, arresting, killing and beating up people. The practice of accusing ordinary villagers to be criminals and beating and arresting them, is increasing the unrest and pain in the lives of the rural people. This unrest, this pain and discontent lead to the spread of the conflagration of rebellion. History has proved this time and again. If the armies of Chidambaram and Buddha do not change their ways, the culprits will surely be burned in the forest fire of rebellion in the *Jangal Mahal*.

MANOJ VERMA CANNOT FIND THE HARAMD CAMPS SITUATED JUST BEFORE HIS EYES

However much the Joint Forces and the *Harmads* torture and murder people everyday, the DG Bhupinder Singh and Manoj Verma, the SP of West Midnapur will never own up to the fact. On the other hand, for the last one year at different times Bhupinder Singh and Manoj Verma have suppressed the fact of the inhumanities of the Joint Forces and the *Harmads* and are spreading canards in the names of the leaders, the workers and the supporters of the People's Committee. That they are lying is quite clear not only to the people of *Jangal Mahal* but to all the people of West Bengal. That they are the boot-licking lackeys of Alimuddin Street, is known to all. They only carry out the orders originating from Alimuddin Street.

The leaders of the CPM leaders of the *Harmad* kill, rape and loot are never arrested by them. Rather, they are given security. It is actually they themselves that supply arms and ammunition to them and protect the camps. If some vehicle of the *harmads* is stopped by

mistake or a member is arrested, they are immediately released. It is easily understandable how Manoj or Bhupinder Singh honour their vows to maintain law and order and what kind of democracy and peace are being established by them.

In the last letter we wrote about the incident of 15 April when Ramsai was arrested from his own marriage venue. That day 55 to 60 people including old men and women as well as children were brutally tortured by the Joint Forces. Their brutality surpassed even the tortures perpetrated by the British police. Ramsai's family has filed a case against the OC of Jhargram and other police officers because of this inhuman behaviour. Before this, on 2 February 2009 the police guards and *Harmads* had murdered people under the leadership of Anuj Pandey. A private case was filed against this as well. The case yielded no result – it never will.

The act PESA or 'Provision of the Panchayat: Extension to the Scheduled Area Act' has not been needed for the *Adivasis* anywhere till now. The administration and the political parties began stressing that the act is essential for the well-being of the *adivasis*. But we reaped no benefit. Think about it – on one side the police administration is continuing armed repression, on the other side they are asking for activating PESA. How can the two coexist?

We wrote about the *Harmad* camp in Midnapur town in the previous letter. On 23 April a new camp has been set up at Bhallukgunna. This is an area that is situated on the way to Midnapur from Shalboni. This *Harmad* camp is opposed by the people. Because of this the people blocked the road at Keranichati in Midnapur on 23 April. The blockade went on for two hours. SP Manoj Verma arrived. The people demanded that the *Harmad* camp must be disbanded. The Police Super said he will inquire about it. Imagine! The camp is right there before his eyes. And he cannot see it! Alimuddin says, the Police Super Manoj Verma is there to establish the rule of law for which the *Harmad* camps are essential. It is less said the better about the protector of law and order of the state the Police Super Surajit Kar Purakayastha. He supports Manoj Verma's view that *Harmad* camps must be established to uphold law and order. The likes of Manoj Verma, Purakayastha, Bhupinder Singh are giving legal sanction to one after another *Harmad* camps when the people are totally against them. People will continue to fight everywhere against these *Harmad* camps. We request you to apply your mind to it and find out how we can fight against the *Harmad* camps, what legal steps we can take.

#### YOU MUST NOT PLAY GAMES WITH THE SCHOOLING OF THE STUDENTS OF JANGAL MAHAL

A few days back examination centres in 5 colleges in West Midnapur were cancelled and centres were set up in far away Midnapur town. They cited the reason to be the disturbed situation in *Jangal Mahal*. Now 1500 students from Gopiballavpur, Manikpara, Jhargram, Kapgari and Shilda will have to go to Midnapur town to sit for their examinations. How would so many students go to Midnapur? Where would they stay? This is a big question today. Naturally, questions are being raised as to who is responsible for this conspiracy? Why are they doing this? Madhyamik, Higher Secondary examinations could be held, then why is this change in the Home Centres being effected? The administration and the political parties are now engaged in dramatics. Today the lives of 1500 students are jeopardized. We have not heard any intellectual, any human rights organization, any student organization say anything about this. Madhyamik, Higher Secondary examinees and examinees in all degree examinations were exempted from all our programmes. We will continue to do that in future. We are ready to confer with all student organisations and individual representatives of

students to see and determine what more can be done about this. The conspiracy to destroy the studies of the learners through this change in examination centres has to be opposed by all of us. We have to unmask the conspiracy hatched by the CPM government in this changing of the centre. Since the decision for changing the centres of examination has already been taken, the government must arrange for the boarding and lodging of these 1500 students.

## DIFFERENT POLITICAL PARTIES ARE ONLY INTERESTED IN BALLOT BOXES, NOT IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE

All political parties like CPM, Congress, TMC are only interested either in holding on to their seats of power or seizing those seats from others. They are not at all interested in the interests of the people. This became clear once again in recent session of the Parliament. The largest partner of the UPA government at the Centre is Trinamool. They make a show of opposing the rise in general commodity prices and in the prices of Petrol and Diesel only in words. Yet, as soon as a resolution to cut down prices as a no confidence motion was proposed in the Parliament they promptly voted against it. They put forward the same argument citing compulsions of coalition. When the CPM was a partner of UPA at the Centre, they used to do the same thing – verbally opposing the anti-people policies of the government and supporting the government on the floor of the Parliament. Exactly what the Trinamool did this time. Actually, neither Congress, nor Trinamool, nor CPM wants to build up a meaningful movement against price rise. When they are outside the government they show as if they are against the anti-people policies and when they are in the government they ratify those anti-people policies in the Parliament. When the Singur-Nandigram movements were going on the Central government was supported by CPM. That is why the Congress did not say a word against the atrocities of CPM. Rather, they supported it. The condition of TMC now is similar. With an eye on the 2011 Assenbly Elections, organising false movements against petrol-diesel price rise, saying nothing against the government concerning price rise, all these are targeting only the state government. But we all know and understand that both the Central and the State governments are responsible for price rise. If the TMC was really concerned about people's interests they would have built up a continuous movement against price rise and the rise in the price and would have become vocal in the Parliament against the rise of the rise of the price of petrol and diesel. We understand from this behaviour of the MPs that none of them work for the people's well-being and are only interested in power and seats. For them the people are only vote machines.

Under the leadership of the People's Committee the people of *Jangal Mahal* have been organising movements against price rise continuously. They have been observing 'o-randhan' (boycott cooking), fasts, bandhs, and blockades. When we hold meetings against price rise, the Joint Forces hired by the Congress, TMC and the CPM. When our workers and supporters try to organise movements against price rise, they are arrested. When this happens neither the TMC nor any other party oppose it. This makes their anti-people stance very clear to everyone. That the MPs of our country are working only for money and seats – you know it better than we do. That is why request you to tear away the mask worn by the MPs in the present Parliament.

Let us bring up another issue in relation to this. Recently, the Trinamool leader Sisir Adhikary and the Minister of State for Rural and Development have said: "After the Parliamentary elections the *Harmads* of CPM have murdered 225 of our workers and supporters. The highest number among the murdered are from Bankura-Purulia and Burdwan." He also said:

“In 26 places in Bankura and Purulia the *Harmads* of CPM run camps. They are operating from these camps.” (Bartaman, 8 April, 2010) It is clear from this statement that there are Harmad camps and TMC workers have been murdered by them. The question is –It is their government at the Centre, he is an important Minister in that government, so what is the Congress saying about these camps? Instead of clearing these camps, their Internal Affairs Minister Chidambaram comes to *Jangal Mahal* and gives a clean chit to the marauding Joint Forces and Buddha’s police. Now he is also legalising the creation of Special Police Officers. Why is not Sisir Adhikary and the leader of his Party Mamata not raising their voices against this, not organising movements against these?

The Joint Forces sent by their own government at the Centre together with the *Harmad Bahini* is committing murders, arresting innocents, beating up people, burning houses, raping women and the TMC is not organising movements against that. Now and then keeping the elections in mind, they are making a show of protest against the Joint Forces. If they really wanted to oppose the torture by the Joint Forces and the *Harmads* they would have become vocal both inside the Parliament and outside. When their MP Kabir Suman wished to protest in the Parliament they would not have prevented him from doing so. What is more important? Power? The interests of the Coalition? Or, the people’s interests?

The truth that we have understood from the behaviour of different parties is that it is the only aim of all the parties – Congress, Trinamool, CPM, BJP – in the *Jangal Mahal* is to stop the movement of the people, to drive away the People’s Committee and the Maoists. The ultimate aim is to displace the *adivasi* and the indigenous peoples from the *Jangal Mahal* and hand over the *jal-jangal-jami-khdaan* to the big corporations like Jindals, Mittals, Tatas in the name of industrialization, Exactly what is going on in the other states in India where *adivasis* live. That is why TMC or Congress, the ears and eyes of the Joint Forces, do not protest against the attempts to re-establish the rule of the *Harmad* gangs. Indirectly they support the terrible depredations of the Joint Forces and the *Harmads*. Mamata Banerjee, the leader of Trinamool, had protested against the rape and barbarous murder of Tapasi Malik as well as the rape of women by the *Harmads* and their savagery in Nandigram. That helped her cross the *Boitarani* river of the elections. Now, when her government at the Centre and the State government is sending the Joint Forces and the *Harmads* to the *Jangal Mahal* and who are raping *adivasi* and indigenous women and torturing them, why is she so silent? There is only one reason – if by remaining silent I gain votes, why should I speak out? The Centre and the State are trying to silence every one raising the spectre of the Maoists. The government makes people believe that if anyone protests the attack on the Maoists they will bring down state terror on their heads by invoking different black ordinances and laws. These days, except for a few, the intellectuals and organizations do not make raise any protests at all. The Central and the State governments using are this silence to perpetrate inhuman torture on the all democratic people who dare to raise their voices against different anti-people policies and carry on anti-constitutional and illegal activities.

The Parliament is in an uproar over the corruptions involving crores of rupees in the IPL. Such uproars over many such corrupt practices have been taken place in the past. When the cats jumps out of the bag, it becomes evident that all parties have a finger in the pie. Ultimately all uproar die down. The same thing will happen this time as well. Whenever another party will come to power, it will make a show again of probing such matters. They will try to win votes for confidence or no confidence using demands for CBI investigations. Everyone knows what will be the fate of such probes. No good for the people come out of such affairs and as ever they remain sunk in their habitual darkness. Every year prices go up. The opposition parties call *bandhs*. The parties that come to power change the face of

the governments – changes the ministers and leaders. Nothing changes in the lives of the people. All this you know. For the last 62 years we have seen the leaders and the ministers. We are tired. We are sorry. We have become filled with hatred. When time comes for voting, we get promises. Then comes the time for breaking the promises. Having seen this since birth, we have become fed up. We do not want to be cheated anymore. We want our rights, We want to protect the honour of our mothers and sisters. We want state terror to stop. We want the Joint Forces and the *Harmads* to leave. We do not want that development which will transfer land and natural wealth to Jindal-Mittal-Tata. We want development in our lives. You fight for human rights, for democracy. The drama of protest played by ministers, MPs, Prime Minister, Home Minister, and all the parties against IPL scandal, price rise, and supporting the sending of the Joint Forces have given birth to deep hatred in the minds of the people of *Jangal Mahal*. You are democracy loving humanists. When the rights of the people, the norms of democracy, human rights and dignity of the people are being crushed underfoot, is it not your duty to raise high the flag of democracy and human rights and join the protest and battle for justice?

Friends, that is why it is necessary to come down to the streets to protest against state terror, whether on the Maoists or the People's Committee or people anywhere in West Bengal. Not producing before courts after arrest, killing in false encounters, we have to protest against these barbaric acts. It vitally necessary to struggle and take whatever steps necessary for the eradication of the illegal *Harmad* camps set up by CPM which are in the process of being legalized in the name of creating Special Police Officers.

We have learned from our long struggle at Lalgarh that the rights of the people for jal-jangal-jami cannot be earned by waiting for the Ministers and political parties to act and by begging for human rights. These can only be achieved through struggle. As long as we do not gain our rights, as long as state terror will hang over heads, the people of Jangal Mahal will continue to fight – this is our strongest vow. We hope we will have intellectuals like you and the organisations who believe in human and democratic rights on our side.

Friends,

We have informed you through this our letter of what is going on here and what our thoughts are. We will be waiting for your help and cooperation of all kinds. On 14 April, you held a protest meeting against Operation Green Hunt and spoke out against the atrocities against the adivasis where the writer Arundhati Roy and other intellectuals were present. We thank you most sincerely for that. We hope you will take these letters to the people and make them aware of the sufferings and protest struggle of the people of Jangal Mahal.

A few days back we had a conference of the People's Committee against Police Atrocities. An initiative has been taken to further strengthen our Committee and different resolutions were adopted. We have unanimously elected Kanai Hansda as the President. We have co-opted other friends into the Committee and elected three Vice-Presidents too. There will be three Joint Secretaries and five spokespersons (Chhatradhar Mahato has been retained as a spokesperson). We have elected a Treasurer and some new members have been added to the Central Committee. Even in the midst of state terror we will continue to strengthen the People's Committee Against Police Atrocities and will further escalate our movement.

We convey our heartfelt thanks to Writer Arndhati Roy, Human Rights activist Sujato Bhadra and all those intellectuals and organizations who organized the meeting against Operation Green Hunt on 14 April. We hope you will hold many such protest meetings against the Operation Green Hunt and in support of the Adivasi and indigenous people of all India.

A few days back Dipak Sarkar, the District Secretary of CPM, West Midnapur and a member of the State Committee said in unequivocal terms that they will turn Lagarh into another Keshpur. That is why they are increasing the number of Harmad camps and hatching plots to widen their informer circle to enhance information sources. They are also intensifying the deployment of the Joint Forces. The people are also getting prepared to combat them.

Everyday, the number of people murdered, people missing and arrested by the Joint Forces and the Harmads is increasing. Harmad leaders like Dipak Sarkar are trying to increase the number of camps to shed more blood in the forests, the coalition of Congress and Trinamool at the Centre and the Left Front government at the State level are sending a number of companies of soldiers of the Joint Forces. They want to kill more people and torture even more intensely in the coming days. In this terrible situation, the people are ready to fight with more determination to restore democracy and human rights in the *Jangal Mahal*. When the government itself flagrantly violates its own laws and rides roughshod over democracy and the constitutional rights of the people of the country, the people have every moral right to wage their just struggles. We hope you will stand beside us in this struggle and fight against the violations by the government of democratic norms, human rights and resolutely carry out your duty.

29-4-10

Hool Johar

Kanai Hansda (President)

Sidhu Soren (Secretary)

Asit Mahato (Spokesperson)

Santosh Patra (Vice-President)

People's Committee Against Police Atrocities)