

India: Resist Operation Green Hunt, Reject 'Maoist' Anarcho-Militarism!

Saturday 22 May 2010, by [CPI \(ML\) Liberation](#) (Date first published: 18 May 2010).

After ambushing 75 CRPF men in early April, Maoists have struck again in Dantewada. On 17 May afternoon, a passenger bus was blown up in a landmine blast that left more than 30 passengers killed and at least another 15 passengers seriously injured, some of them reportedly quite critical. The bus was carrying some 50 odd passengers including some Special Police Officers (recruited by the state in the course of the Salwa Judum campaign), but there were no state police or CRPF personnel. In 2003, the PWG had targeted a bus in Warangal in Andhra Pradesh, for which they had subsequently offered regrets and apologies, but this time around the Maoists have feigned their ignorance about civilians being present in the bus.

In terms of casualties, this is the fourth major Maoist action since February. While two of these actions concerned only the state forces (the attack on the EFR camp in Silda in West Bengal in February and the ambush of CRPF personnel in April), the other two incidents, a massacre in a village in Bihar's Jamui district and the blowing of the passenger bus in Dantewada, involved large numbers of civilian casualties, including many poor adivasis. Such indiscriminate attacks, divorced from any immediate context of people's struggle, and the resultant large-scale loss of human lives, are clearly indefensible. Removed from the issues and struggles of the people, such incidents only alienate the broad masses and end up strengthening the very state and its repressive campaign the Maoists claim to be fighting.

The state has indeed been quick to exploit the situation. In an interview to NDTV, Chidambaram called for a 'larger mandate' to tackle Maoist insurgency that would possibly involve air-support. He said security forces and concerned chief ministers all had been demanding air-support for anti-Maoist operations. The same channel also cited a survey which indicated considerable 'popular' support for army intervention. Chidambaram said the 'people' were ready for harder options while it was only the government which was exercising caution and restraint! While some Congress leaders, Digvijay Singh in particular, attribute the Chhattisgarh incidents to the utter failure of the BJP government in the state on the 'development' front, the BJP is accusing the Congress of pursuing a soft and half-hearted line.

By all indications, there is a growing ruling class consensus for a more aggressive military campaign even while ruling out the option of direct army deployment in the immediate context. The issue of anti-Maoist strategy however figured quite prominently in the May 17-19 Army commanders' conference in New Delhi, and the Army is clearly getting ready for a larger and more central role, however indirect. Television channels too have lost no time to project the Dantewada episode as a 'turning point' in the ongoing operation. The so-called Digvijay Singh school of 'democratic' opinion in the Congress is no dissenting voice giving primacy to development and political solution – it is essentially a contention between two repressive strategies, the BJP's discredited and defeated Salwa Judum model of Chhattisgarh model versus the Andhra model of the Congress.

Meanwhile, the Home Ministry has intensified its campaign against human rights activists and civil society organizations that have questioned the theory and practice of Operation Green Hunt. Chidambaram misses no opportunity to threaten dissenting intellectuals with dire consequences

under the draconian UAPA. After the latest incident in Dantewada, he immediately demanded an answer from the intellectuals and civil society activists as if they were responsible for the incident! The May 22 issue of Tehelka talks of some IB communiqué listing 57 organisations including prominent civil liberty organizations like PUCL, PUDR and APDR and well-known communist parties like CPI(ML)(Liberation) as 'front' organizations for Maoists! With every passing day, Operation Green Hunt is increasingly turning out to be nothing but Operation Witch Hunt!

This witch hunt will certainly have to be resisted, and resisted by insisting on and carrying forward the logic of people's struggle and democracy. It is true, that peaceful protests are often considered weak and subjected to state repression, as is happening right now in Orissa where the government is trying to crush all opposition to the Tatas in Kalinganagar and POSCO in Jagatsinghpur by unleashing state repression and state-sponsored corporate coercion. But this cannot justify the indiscriminate acts of the Maoists which only alienates the masses and ultimately ends up weakening people's movements and strengthening the state. The resistance to operation green hunt will therefore have to go hand in hand with the rejection of Maoist anarcho-militarism.

P.S.

* From ML Update. A CPI(ML) Weekly News Magazine
Vol. 13, No. 21, 18 - 24 MAY 2010.