

India: Say No to Nuclear Power. Defend the anti-nuclear activists who are falsely accused

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India today is one of the few countries in the world seeking to pursue in an unabashed manner a nuclear programme. Both dimensions of it are damaging and reactionary. On one hand, any nuclear programme, however hidden under rhetoric of peaceful use, covers the potential for a nuclear weapons programme, as shown by Indira Gandhi and Atal Behari Vajpayee in Pokharan I and Pokharan II respectively. On the other hand, as Fukushima has been the latest accident, after Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, Hanford, and others, to demonstrate, there is no fool-proof and safe nuclear power programme.

Yet, for two linked reasons, Indian capitalism is determined to press forward with nuclear weapons and nuclear power alike. It brings massive contracts. And this kind of centralized power production benefits the top layers of the capitalists. And such power production, like electricity from big dams, goes for a skewed “development” policy that subsidizes luxurious living for the wealthy while exploiting the toiling people.

And nuclear weaponization has been the goal of the Jan Sangh, forerunner of the BJP, ever since 1951, as they see it as essential to securing a higher status for the Indian state in the global pecking order.

As a result, the latest offensive against anti-nuclear activists, while utterly false, malicious, and contemptible, is also understandable. India’s anti-nuclear activists, and organisations like the CNDP, many of whose leaders have been named in the leaked Intelligence document, are democratically minded Indian citizens. They are being reviled as “foreign agents”, in a stance that is typical of reactionary nationalism. Radical Socialist has been committed to a non-nuclear future for India, and stands by these activists and their campaigns. We call upon all socialists, environmentally concerned citizens, and democratic forces, to unite to defend the anti-nuclear activists from such false attacks.

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