



# MIL Update

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## Letter from Birsa Munda Central Jail, Ranchi

### **BJP Must Not Be Allowed to Reduce Jharkhand to a Police State**

[ In lieu of Editorial, this time we present before you a letter from General Secretary Com. Dipankar Bhattacharya who was arrested on 1 March while leading a massive protest demonstration before Jharkhand Assembly at Ranchi. Com. Dipankar also suffered lathi blows before he was arrested. As the Jharkhand Govt., spurred by political vengeance and with obvious green signal from the Union Home Ministry, has implicated him under false non-bailable charges like Sec.307 etc., he is at present lodged in Birsa Munda Central Jail, Ranchi, along with 40 other comrades. ]

Three days after the March 1 gherao of Jharkhand Assembly, I am writing this note from extremely overcrowded Birsa Munda Central Jail where I am currently lodged along with 40 other comrades. These 40 comrades include one young adivasi construction worker, Motu Oraon, who was picked up by the police nearly an hour after we were taken into custody. His only crime was that he happened to be standing near the site of the gherao and police lathicharge. Motu's wedding was scheduled for yesterday, but he spent the day in our company, privileged as a co-accused under section 307 and the Criminal Law Amendment Act!

This so-called central jail of Ranchi has a sanctioned capacity of accommodating 364 prisoners, but more than 2,100 prisoners are currently lodged here. The number keeps swelling as hundreds of poor and mostly dalit and adivasi prisoners who have been implicated in false cases are left to languish for years without any legal aid or judicial relief. These are prisoners who have already served their full prison term, but are being forced to overstay for months and even years. There are nearly a hundred septuagenarian prisoners who are incarcerated defying all judicial norms and court rulings. And then there are dozens of innocent Muslim youths from Doranda and adjacent neighborhoods in Ranchi, victims of the continuing spree of indiscriminate firing on the day of Eid last December.

Soon after the deck was cleared for the formation of Jharkhand, Advani and his colleagues made no bones about their vision of the new province. They wanted a model of police state. The first budget of the new state presented on March 2 this year has reiterated this priority earmarking as much as Rs. 90 crore for the police forces' modernization. All this talk of police modernization and improving the morale of the police are aimed at legitimizing the order of lawlessness imposed by the very machinery entrusted with the task of maintaining 'law and order' and the so-called 'rule of law'. This is all the more necessary for the Sangh Parivar in its bid to push through its project of saffronisation and appeasement of multinational capital.

If a police state thus becomes a political imperative in the saffron scheme of things, democracy remains the battle-cry for all who want to improve their own living and working conditions, and free Jharkhand from the clutches of communal fascists, mafia gangs and capitalist predators. After the formation of Jharkhand as India's 28<sup>th</sup> province and the installation of the RSS-led Babulal Marandi regime, the question has now been posed squarely on the agenda of the day : Whose Jharkhand? What kind of Jharkhand? The oppressed and fighting people of Jharkhand are determined to brave all odds to intensify the battle for democracy and secularism, for a new Jharkhand in a new India.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all comrades and friends who have condemned the police crackdown on the March 1 gherao of Jharkhand Assembly.

#### **P.S.**

The ongoing Taliban drive for demolition of rare Buddhist statues in Afghanistan has rightly evoked worldwide condemnation. The cries of condemnation emanating from the Sangh Parivar can however only be described as an exercise in political hypocrisy of the most repulsive kind. A perfect example of pot calling the kettle black. The history of pre-Mughal India is replete with instances of demolition of Buddhist statues and the Sangh never tires of glorifying this timeless civilization. And will anyone still tell us how the demolition of Babri Masjid in December 1992, the end result of what Advani and Vajpayee describe as independent India's biggest mass movement, was any different from the Taliban spree of destruction?

"Oust the looters to save agriculture, Oust saffron to save the country" :

### Call given by All India Peasant Conference held in Faizabad

The All-India Peasant Coordination Committee held its conference in Faizabad of U.P. on 2-3 March. The conference, held at Narendralaya Sabhagar, was attended by over 500 delegates from 9 states. After the welcome address was delivered by Com. Akhilendra Pratap Singh, Secretary of CPI(ML) U.P. State Committee, the conference was inaugurated by Com. Swadesh Bhattacharya, Polit Bureau member of CPI(ML), who highlighted the adverse impact of globalisation on peasants of our country and underlined the necessity of a concerted action against BJP govt.'s anti-peasant policies adopted under World Bank-IMF-WTO directives. A 5-member presidium comprising Mahendra Chaudhary from Rajasthan, Khitish Biswal from Orissa, Ajit Das from West Bengal, Rajaram Singh from Bihar and Ishwari Prasad from U.P. was formed to conduct the proceedings. Shri S.P. Shukla, noted economist and former member of Planning Commission, Vishnu Bhagwat, former chief of Indian Navy, Com. Tandon of CPI(M)-led All India Kisan Sabha and other peasant leaders addressed to the delegates. The conference elected a 22-member body of All-India Peasant Struggle Committee, with Com. Pawan Sharma as its convenor.

The next day, on 3 March a massive rally of over 5,000 peasants from various states was held at Gulab Bari Maidan. It was presided over by Mahendra Chaudhary. Speakers at the mass rally included Com. Akhilendra Pratap Singh, former Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Vishnu Bhagwat, SP Shukla, peasant leader from Terai region of U.P. Com. Krishna Adhikary, Rajasthan Kisan Sangathan leader Com. Srilata Swaminathan, MLA and peasant leader from Madhya Pradesh Shri Sunilam, peasant leader from Andhra Pradesh Com. Bangar Rao, CPI(ML) MLA and peasant leader of Bihar Com. Rajaram Singh and Com. Swadesh Bhattacharya.

### Appeal to Party Ranks and Concerned Citizens

CPI(ML) had organised Jharkhand Assembly gherao on 1 March on the following demands: (1) Stop atrocities on dalits, adivasis and minorities; (2) Stop Koel-Karo Hydel Project; (3) Arrest the culprits of Ranchi "land scam" and return the land to tribals; (4) Appoint judicial enquiry on Doranda firing and punish the concerned officials; (5) Police officials responsible for Tapkara killings must be booked under 302 I.P.C.; (6) Suspend the medical officer related with the investigation of Kurpania rape and punish the concerned S.P.; and (7) Book the concerned police officials under Sec.302 who killed innocent Jaipal Rajak in Bokaro Steel City.

It can be mentioned here that within the short span of two months, the Jharkhand Govt. has ordered police firing thrice, and on the other hand, two successful bandhs have been observed against it, called by CPI(ML) and other democratic forces. Therefore, CPI(ML) had decided to gherao the Jharkhand Assembly peacefully to voice people's protest against Chief Minister Babulal Marandi's attempts to turn Jharkhand into a police state and also to raise issues related to Adivasis' land and the anti-Adivasi Koel-Karo Hydel Project.

During the gherao, when Com. Dipankar and other comrades, on their way to the Assembly, reached near the barricade, CRPF and RAF contingents posted there without the least provocation resorted to brutal lathicharge on them. The attack was led by the City S.P. Sampat Mina and SDO Sunil Singh.

Not only the arrested persons were manhandled, they were also given electric shocks through a special machine by the SDO himself.

After their arrest, out of the 41 comrades, nearly 30 were put in the police van for 12 hours. Com. Dipankar and 10 other comrades were put in 8 ft. by 8 ft. police lock-up of Jagannathpur P.S. (in H.E.C., Ranchi) for 14 hours. They were manhandled and mentally tortured by CRP and RAF jawans under the instruction of SDO and City SP. Attempts were made even to handcuff them, but the police could not succeed due to massive protest by our comrades. Then after 14 hours of arrest, Com. Dipankar and 40 other comrades were presented before CJM at his residence at 5 o'clock in the morning. Com. Dipankar and 5 other comrades were booked under Sec. 114, 147, 148, 149, 323, 324, 357, 188, 353, 307, 431, 506 of IPC and 7 criminal Act.

The kind of political vendetta resorted by the Government of Jharkhand under patronage of Union Home Ministry is unprecedented and portends ill to the democratic polity. This may be the beginning of the new phase of fascist repressive methods to silence political parties expressing the discontent of the common people. We urge upon you to take cognizance of the gravity of the incident and rise in protest against this onslaught on democracy. **The Party has decided to observe 7 March as all-India protest day. Send protest memorandum to the Governor (Fax No. 0651-301596) and Chief Minister (Fax No. 0651-252563 or 252561) of Jharkhand Government.**

-- Swadesh Bhattacharya, PB member

### Intellectuals in Patna Condemn Ranchi Incident

The incident of brutal lathicharge on CPI(ML) activists who were going to stage a peaceful gherao of Jharkhand Assembly protesting against Tapkara and Doranda firing incidents and demanding scrapping of Koel-Karo project is an open fascist act by Jharkhand Government, aimed at violating the people's democratic right to stage a protest. ... This act of Jharkhand Govt. is politically motivated and anti-democratic. We all strongly condemn this act and demand immediate and unconditional release of all arrested persons including Com. Dipankar.

-- Prof. AKP Yadav, Father Phillip Manthara, Prof. Kishori Das, PUCL, Prof. Santosh Kumar, Prof. Bharati S. Kumar, Prof. Shahida Hassan, Advocate, Mr. Khursheed Alam, Prof. Sadhu Sharan Suman, Mr. Basant Chaudhary, Advocate, Mrs. Meera Dutta, Mr. Vishwajeet Sen, Mr. NP Kuer, Shri Madan Kashyap, poet, Shri Alok Dhanwa, poet, Shri Shekhar, story writer, Prof. Ram Bineshwari Singh, Shri Ranjit Verma, Advocate, Prof. Niroj Sinha, Mrs. Laxmi Kumar, Mr. Virendra Kumar, Prof. Pradhan H Prasad, Prof. Rohit Raman, Mr. Shankar Singh, Mr. Chandrika Prasad.

### **Com. Dipankar's Arrest in Ranchi Evokes Nationwide Protest, Effigy of Babulal Marandi Burnt**

After receiving the news of arrest of Com. Dipankar and 40 other comrades in Ranchi on 1 March, a wave of discontent spread among Party ranks and general democratic personages. The Party called for observing nationwide protest on March 2. Immediately responding to the call, Party ranks all over the country organised rail roko, rasta roko, demonstrations, dharnas etc. to voice their protest against the arrest of Com. Dipankar and others and police repression.

At Hazaribagh Road station, Rajdhani Express was detained for 5 hours. GT Road was blocked at several places. At Nirsra in Dhanbad, a 3-hour Rasta Roko was organised in which about 250 people participated. They were subsequently arrested. The effigy of Chief Minister of Jharkhand was also burnt.

In Dhanbad, a militant rally was held on the main road and after the rally, a mass meeting was held. The effigy of Chief Minister Babulal Marandi was burnt in front of the District Court, blocking the road there. Com. Swapan Mukherjee, Upendra Singh and Sukhdev spoke in the meeting.

Akhil Bharatiya Coal Mazdoor Sangharsh Samiti in its all-India meeting in Munidih area of Dhanbad condemned the arrest of Com. Dipankar and other comrades and demanded immediate, unconditional release.

On March 2, statewide protest day was observed in Bihar. Roads were blocked in Darbhanga and Dumraon, rail lines were blocked in Mairwa. Various forms of protest including street corner meetings, effigy burning etc. were adopted in Patna, Arrah, Jahanabad, Mohania, Dumraon, Gaya, Samastipur, narkatiaganj, Bettiah and Muzaffarpur. On 4 March, Jahanabad bandh was organised. On 5 March, a dharna was organised in Patna in which apart from our Party, leaders from MCPI, SUCI, AICCTU, AIPWA, RYA, AISA, BPKS, Khet Mazdoor Sabha also participated. From 6 March Advani and Marandi's effigies will be burnt and statewide Chakka jam will be initiated from 7 March. The movement will go on till Com. Dipankar and other comrades are released.

CPI(ML) activists and supporters held a militant 'March to Home Ministry' here in Delhi. In Delhi, protesters were stopped at Parliament Street Police Station, where they held a meeting and burnt the effigy of Jharkhand Chief Minister Mr. Babulal Marandi. The march was led by Com. B.B. Pandey, Rajendra Pratholi and Ranjit Abhigyan.

In Calcutta, Party activists led by Com. Kalyan Goswami and Jayatu Deshmukh staged a demonstration before Raj Bhawan on 5 March. Thirty comrades were arrested while entering Raj bhawan. Elsewhere in Calcutta main roads were blocked. A memorandum demanding Com. Dipankar's unconditional release was handed over to the Governor.

### **Left Leaders' Jointly Condemn Com. Dipankar's Arrest**

Com. Jalauddin Ansari, State Secy. of CPI, Com. Krishna Kant of CPI(M), Com. Tarakant Prakash of RSP, Com. Nripendra Krishna Mahato of Forward Bloc, Com. Amriteshwar Chakravarty of SUCI, Com. Ajay Chaudhry of MCPI and Com. KD Yadav of CPI(ML) have in a joint statement condemned the arrest of Com. Dipankar and other comrades in Ranchi on 1 March.

### **Movement Demanding Com. Dipankar's Release Mounts**

The movement to get Com. Dipankar Bhattacharya unconditionally released is gaining momentum day by day. Party's Jharkhand State Committee has started massive indefinite dharna at Albert Ekka Chowk, Ranchi in which thousands of people from various districts of Jharkhand are taking part. The Party has decided to observe all-India protest day on 7 March, the day on which telegrams and faxes protesting against the arrest of Com. Dipankar and other comrades will be sent to President of India and Governor/Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Meanwhile a memorandum has already been sent to the President of India. The Party has decided that in case the Govt. does not release Com. Dipankar and others, "Ranchi Chalo" (March to Ranchi) will be organised on 14 March.

### **Mass Meeting in Neyveli**

A public meeting was conducted in Neyveli Main Bazar on 20 February on behalf of Neyveli Lignite Corporation Workers' Solidarity Union (NLCWSU) and Tamil Nadu Democratic Construction Workers' Union (TNDCWU), both affiliated to AICCTU. Comrades M Selvaraj, R. Ravichandran and T. Pichaimuthu, respectively President, Gen. Secy. and Treasurer of NLCWSU and K Krishnamoorthy, Cuddalore District Secy. of TNDCWU presided over the meeting. AICCTU president Com. S. Kumarsamy in his address hailed the NLC union comrades for winning 'secret ballot system' through struggle and court verdict.

### **Mazdoor Ekta Manch Formed at Bhagalpur**

In the process of forming workers' solidarity forums in towns and industrial centres in order to develop unity and class consciousness within working class movement, a workers' convention was organised on 4 March at IMA Hall, Bhagalpur. More than 80 delegates from rail, bank, telecom, insurance, postal, electricity, state govt. employees, primary education and local body etc. participated in the convention. It was inaugurated by noted left intellectual Com. TP Verma, who exhaustively delivered on the adverse effects of globalisation and liberalisation policies pursued by the Indian government on the life on the working class and vast masses of our country. Com. Pradip Biswas, president of AIIEA (Eastern Zone) also expressed his views. Com. SK Sharma, veteran bank employees leader, presented the approach paper. Com. Pradeep Jha, Coordinator of Mazdoor Ekta Manch, Patna spoke of the new needs of the working class movement and called for liberating working class movement from its sectoral narrowness and trade union rivalry. Com. Nand Kishor Prasad (insurance) and Com. Rambali Prasad (state govt. employees) were also present. In the end, a 20-member committee of Mazdoor Ekta Manch, Bhagalpur was formed taking representatives from all the above-mentioned sectors. Com. S.K. Sharma was elected its convenor.

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*Com. Dipankar Bhattacharya's Statement on the  
General Budget, 2001-2002*

### **Capital-friendly, Anti-poor Budget**

The only principle followed in this year's budget is appeasement of capital and further impoverishment of the poor. While the demands made by the industry chambers have been more than fulfilled, desperate cries for increased allocation for social sector and rural development have simply gone unheard.

The dismantling of administered price mechanism coupled with the continuing demolition of the public distribution system will aggravate the current agrarian crisis and leave the small farmer and poor consumer completely vulnerable to the whims of the market.

The accent on accelerated disinvestment will only result in many more BALCO type sellouts. In sharp contrast to this clamour for strategic sale of majority shares of profit-making PSUs is the government's continuing criminal silence on the future of the sick and closed industries.

The so-called rationalisation of tax and interest rate structure is also tilted heavily in favour of the big investors while the small-savers will be hit hard by the 1.5% reduction announced in the interest rate on small savings.

The budget has signalled draconian changes in labour laws. It will leave employees free to hire and fire workers while the proposed relaxation of contract labour regulations will depress wages and intensify job insecurity.

The 'new deal' announced in the budget is clearly a raw deal as far as the toiling masses and the poor are concerned. Rural and working India will have to rally against the disastrous implications and impact of Yashwant Sinha's market-friendly anti-poor budget.

### **Dharna by Peasants in Rajasthan**

CPI(ML), CPI(M), CPI and Kisan Sangharsh Samiti jointly organised a token dharna before district collectorate on 26 February on the demand of uninterrupted supply of electricity for eight hours and withdrawal of false cases against peasants. A memorandum was submitted to the Collector in which the demand to fulfil government's own commitment of supplying electricity uninterruptedly for 8-hours was reiterated.

### **Meeting Against Union Budget in Gujarat**

A mass meeting was held near Dudheshwar Chowki in Ahmedabad of Gujarat on 5 March to protest against anti-poor union budget, 2001-02. Apart from mill workers, students and intellectuals also attended the meeting. Addressing the meeting Com. Ranjan Ganguli, incharge of Gujarat Party unit exposed the pro-multinational and anti-poor, anti-worker nature of the budget and said that the proponents of so-called Swadeshi and nationalism are in fact selling the self-dependence and sovereignty of our motherland to multinationals. Com. HJ Pagare, Secy. of Ahmedabad unit, labour leader Com. Laxmanbhai Patanwadia, Baburam Yadav, SS Tiwary, Nandlal Singh, GDS Mansuri etc addressed the meeting.

When the effigy of the union budget was being burnt at the end of the meeting amidst the slogans "Atal Bihari-Yashwant Sinha, down down!" police intervened and arrested 11 comrades including Com. Ranjan Ganguli, Laxmanbhai Patanwadia and HJ Pagare. The meeting was presided over by veteran communist leader Com. Kantilal Dabhi who strongly condemned the autocratic role of Gujarat police.

### **Effigy of Budget Burnt in Delhi**

CPI(ML) Mandawali Committee held a demonstration against anti-poor budget at Sabzi Mandi on 28 February and burnt its effigy. The meeting was addressed by Com. Suneeta and Gautam, members of Delhi State Committee, Ravindra Sharma, Samunder Paswan, Ashok Kumar, Ravi Kumar and Vibha Gupta, who demanded rollback of anti-poor provisions.

In Shahdara area, Party unit took out an anti-budget march on 28 Feb. evening and burnt the effigy of the budget at Natthu Colony Chowk in a demonstration. It was addressed by Com. Shashi Bhushan of RYA and Ram Abhilash of CPI(ML).

In Okhla area, the effigy of budget was burnt on 1 March at Kalkaji Depot by DTC workers. The demonstrators were led by Com. Santosh Roy, NM Thomas and Dinesh Singh.

### **Mandawali Nagarik Sabha Conference**

Second conference of Mandawali Nagarik Sabha was held in East Delhi on 4 March. BB Pandey, Rajendra Pratholi, Suneeta, Ravindra Sharma, Madhunisha, etc. addressed to the delegates. A 22-member executive committee was elected with Samunder Paswan as its president.

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