

LETTERS

KISHTA GOUD AND BHOOMAIAH

The Emergency during 1975-77 was a dark chapter in the history of India but today only a few remember that the demon of dictatorship in those days had cruelly gulped the peasant revolutionaries Bhoomaiah and Kishta Goud. They were reprieved twice before Emergency but in an atmosphere in which basic human rights were being trampled their lives could not be protected. In the early hours of 30 November 1975 they were hanged in the Musheerabad District Jail, in which premises the Gandhi Hospital has come up now. A meeting to remember Kistha Goud and Bhoomaiah was held at 6 pm on 30 November 2007 at Kaloji Foundation premises, Khairatabad. Sri Pattipati Venkateswarlu, eminent Advocate and Civil Rights leader, who was counsel for Kishta Goud and Bhoomaiah in those days, recollected the entire tragic saga. The participants regretted that the 'gallows' of Musheerabad District Jail at least has not been preserved and no memorial for the martyrs erected in that premises. It was decided that public opinion should be mobilized and a demand should be made to the Government that the place of 'gallows' in the Jail premises be identified, and, if it is vacant, be dedicated to the memory of these two peasant martyrs who were certainly the victims of Emergency. If not, a suitable place within the present Gandhi Hospital premises must be allotted for erecting a memorial to these two poor peasant revolutionaries.

I Mallikarjuna Sharma
Convener, Marxist Study Forum

MEDIEVAL BRUTALITY

All sensible democratic people are terribly shocked and horrified by the chilling scenes of brutalities let loose on the peaceful rally on 24th November 2007 of many thousand Adivasis organized by *All Adivasi Students' Association of Assam (AASAA)* to press their very just demand for the Scheduled Tribes Status in Guwahati. The gangster brigade supported by the Congress and its student wing, NUSI lynched more than 12 Adivasis quite openly. Hundreds were savagely tortured and left writhing in terrible pain on the roads in pools of blood. A number of Adivasis also went missing. The infernal scenario of Guwahati once again brings to the fore the perpetually brutalized existence of the Adivasis in India. It is no secret that the so-called civilized and privileged sections are guilty of such heinous crimes particularly committed on women.

Guwahati is one of the well-fortified cities in India. And the open AASAA rally was declared well in advance. It is also a cruel reality that on 24th November the state's police forces made their presence in large numbers during the rally. Guwahati witnessed premeditated gangsterism with the open complicity of the police forces. TV footages and media reports made it crystal clear that the Tarun Gogoi government of the Congress Party had directly played the criminal role of unleashing all such acts of violence on the Adivasis. The positions of the governments at the Centre and Asom converge in regard to refusing scheduled tribe status to the vast numbers of Adivasi people of Asom.

In the aftermath of the First War of Independence in 1857 when repression by the colonial rulers reached its peak lakhs of Adivasis from Chhotonagpur plateau were transported the Dooars, Tripura region while hundreds of tea gardens of Asom became solely dependent on Adivasi labour. It was the beginning of criminal exploitation of the Adivasis basically in tea gardens. It was also the end of the freedom of those people nestled in the forested lands for generations before the British rule.

On 24th November the deprived Adivasis rallied under the AASAA with the legitimate demand of six backward communities of Asom, namely the Adivasis, Koch-Rajbanshis, Tai-Ahoms, Morans, Matakas and Chutias to be included in the list of Scheduled Tribes. The irony is that the Adivasis including Santhals are recognized as Scheduled Tribes by the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 as amended by Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes (Modification) Order 1950, the North-Eastern Areas (Re-organisation) Act, 1971 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1976. It is the same old story that Mr Tarun Gogoi as his party leader promised the ST status before electoral victory and conveniently retraced his step as did other people in power.

Azad, Spokesperson,
CPI (Maoist) Central Committee