

LETTER

"Confusing the Confused"

Even 24 hours after the horrendous incident of the sabotage (not accident—let's emphasize) of the Howrah-Kurla-Jnaneshwari Express in West Bengal, which resulted in the death of about 148 innocent passengers, the CPI (Maoist)—which is being blamed for it—has not yet come out with any official statement—either denying or acknowledging their role in the incident. Their leaders like Azad or Kishenji, who otherwise at the drop of a hat, ring up journalists and hold press briefings in their hideouts, have curiously enough remained elusive and silent till now. Spokespersons of the People's Committee Against Police Atrocities (the mass organization supported by the Maoists in its campaign against state repression in Lalgah) have come out with statements denying complicity in the sabotage, and condemning such acts—although posters in their name (stating that the act of sabotage was a retaliation against the state's repressive policies) were claimed to have been recovered by the police from the site of the incident. It is thus a confusing situation which demands a probe by independent investigators from civil society. Meanwhile, in the absence of any firm, denial by the CPI(Maoist) leadership, the needle of suspicion will continue to be directed against them. It's high time therefore that the CPI (Maoist) leaders come out with an open statement regarding the incident—either acknowledging their role, or denying it.

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