

LETTERS

A STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY

It is a shame that the UPA Government chose to arrest Anna Hazare and thousands of satyagrahis for demanding an effective Lokpal and for betraying the people of the nation rather than allowing a peaceful protest fast to be held, just after the independence day. NAPM condemning the illegal arrest of activists, in numerous states and cities across the country held protest actions on August 16, burnt the weak Govt. Lokpal, met District Collectors, held human chains, took out rallies and called upon the government to heed this national call, not just for a strong Lokpal Bill, but bringing in systemic change against the corrupt, corporatized, communal, consumerist governance and development model.

It is absolutely unwarranted and unjustifiable that the Government, instead of continuing to engage in a dialogue, with the serious issue of corruption being raised by various people's groups has taken this regressive move to arrest activists and 5,000 campaigners and clamp Section 144 in the national capital and across cities.

NAPM has also already stated that this upsurge across the country must reach out to and involve the lakhs of dalits, adivasis, unorganized workers, urban and rural poor, women who actually face the brunt of corruption day in and day out. UPA or NDA, State or Centre; corruption has become an everyday menace at all levels and the people have reached a position of saturation and are not going to tolerate or take in and corruption anymore, whether by the State, society or private corporations.

NAPM also condemns the gunning down of Shehla Masood, RTI activist from Bhopal, who has been struggling to expose corruption in the city. The struggle, across India, is no more one for an effective Lokpal alone; it is a struggle to reclaim democracy from the corrupt, fascist forces ruling and controlling the country, its resources and the people.

Medha Patkar, Sandeep Pandey, Prafulla Samantara, Maj Gen Sudhir Vombatkere, Suniti S R, Sister Celia, Gabriele D, P Chennaiah, Ramakrishna Raju, Suhas Kolhekar, Akhil Gogoi, Anand Mazgaonkar, Mukta Shrivastava, Rajendra Ravi, **Madhuresh Kumar**

Anti-Nuclear Convention

An All India Anti-Nuclear Convention was held in New Delhi on 10th August from 10:30 am to 4: 30 pm, at the Speaker's Hall in the Constitution Club. Activists from various states of India including from Maharashtra, MP, Karnataka, Haryana, Punjab and Delhi attended. The convention focused attention on three slogans:

1. Stop construction of all new nuclear power plants; 2. Shut down all existing nuclear power plants; and 3. Implement universal nuclear disarmament.

A fourth slogan "Immediately stop all uranium mining" was also added consequent upon the discussions in the convention. Most of the people attending were those actually involved in struggles against nuclear plants.

The convention, presided over by Sanjay Singhvi, Gen. Secretary, TUCI, was inaugurated by K N Ramachandran, General Secretary, CPI (ML). In his inaugural speech he pointed out that nuclear power was being foisted upon the neo-colonial countries by imperialism only to assuage its own crisis. Pravin Gavankar and Mansoor Solkar of the Janhit Sewa Samiti and the Machhimar Kriti Samiti told of their experiences in the struggle in Jaitapur. Rajkumar and Dube of the Chutka Parmanu Sangharsh Samiti addressed the convention on the struggles against the proposed nuclear power plant in Chutka. They raised very pertinent points about the inflated projected per capita consumption of energy by the Government. A discussion also ensued on the meaning of development. Adwait Pednekar and Achin Vanaik provided expert inputs on various issues and Arun Velaskar, Madhu Mohite and Ramesh Gautam, also stated their views.

The convention ended with a resolution being passed resolving to build up an All India Democratic Anti-nuclear Movement.

Sanjay Singhvi,

Organising Committee for All-India Democratic Anti-nuclear Movement