

LETTERS

ARBITRARY RAID

Around 6.30 am a large contingent of armed Special Task Force Police, led by Deputy SP Rajendra Singh Shekhawat, descended on Kavita Srivastava's house claiming to be looking for a "khatarnak Naxalite". In Kavita's absence, the police harassed her 82-year-old father and two domestic helpers. The raid was apparently conducted at the behest of the Chhattisgarh police, with the help of a "warrant" that merely carried Kavita's address and the word "abhiyukt" (accused).

Kavita Srivastava, General Secretary, PUCL and Convenor of the Right to Food Campaign's steering group, has been a tireless defender of human rights for many years and has already been harassed earlier for her fearless opposition to the criminal activities of the Chhattisgarh government (arbitrary detentions, encounter killings, false cases, and such) under the garb of fighting Naxalism.

This is a wholly reprehensible act of targeting of human rights activists as well as a totally unacceptable attack on civil liberties in general.

Members of the Steering Group, Right to Food Campaign

Anjali Bharadwaj (Satark Nagrik Sangathan), Annie Raja (National Federation for Indian Women), Anuradha Talwar, Gautam Modi and Madhuri Krishnaswamy (New Trade Union Initiative), Arun Gupta and Radha Holla (Breast Feeding Promotion Network of India), Aruna Roy and Nikhil Dey (Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, Rajasthan), Arundhati Dhuru and Ulka Mahajan (National Alliance of People's Movements), Asha Mishra and Vinod Raina (Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti), Ashok Bharti (National Conference of Dalit Organizations), Binayak Sen (People's Union for Civil Liberties), & others

GADDAFI

Fidel Castro made the following statement at the start of the Libyan war: "The crude attacks against the Libyan people, which have taken on a Nazi-fascist character, may be used against any third world nation. ...If he [Gaddafi] resists and does not yield to their demands, he will enter history as one of the great figures of the Arab nations."

In response to the 7 June escalation of bombing of Tripoli by Nato and yet another attempt on his life and on the lives of his immediate family, Colonel Gaddafi said in a television broadcast: "Martyrdom is a million times better than surrender". He stressed "we have only one option; this is our country and we shall stay here till the end: dead, alive, victorious—it does not matter". This is at a time when Washington was offering the Libyan leader a deal whereby he could stay in Libya as long as he handed over power to its appointed puppets.

Gaddafi went on to say: "We are Libyans, we have nowhere to go, we are here to stay." Gaddafi lived true to his words to the end.

Lalkar, London