

KISHENJI'S OPEN LETTER TO HIS MOTHER

Up Against Deceit and Oppression

[On 24th November, 2011 Koteshwara Rao, more popularly known as Kishenji was murdered by the Joint Forces in cold blood. Perhaps he was captured a day earlier and after hours of inhuman and barbarous torture the police declared the same old story of encounter as it has been doing since 1969. The next day all the mainstream newspapers carried the story that was fed by the police and while adding some salt to their versions. They did not see the burn injuries on legs, some thirty to thirty-five knife or bayonet injuries on different parts of the body, close range shots of bullets on the body etc. Their reports were in themselves with full of contradictions and inconsistent defying the logic of brain. Anyway, Kishenji died a heroic death as others of his ilk, from Panchadi to Azad, and may be many.

Koteshwara Rao and his brother Venu Gopala Rao, wrote an open letter (dated January 1, 2009) to their mother and it was published in a Telegu daily 'Andhra Jyoti' on 15th May, 2009. As they could not see their ailing mother physically they took this device to reach her.

Mallojula Koteshwara Rao @ Prahlad, Ganesh, Ramji & Kishenji and Mallojula Venu Gopala Rao @ Bhupati, could not meet her for more than 30 years due to their underground life, even they could not go to their home on the death of their father to their village Peddapalli in Karimnagar District in Andhra Pradesh. They had to resort to this method, when their mother Madhuranma published a letter with her photograph expressing her wish to contact them in the same daily. The worthy sons replied, though belatedly, in their worthy way of expression, in an open letter in the vernacular daily 'Andhra Jyoti'. The mother, after this letter was published in the paper, came to know about her sons on 16th May, 2009 and felt happy that her sons were still alive, not encountered yet.]

MOTHER, HOW ARE YOU? WE both are well. Presently, we always discuss about you, not only we two brothers but your daughters-in-law along with party activists. Mother, now you are also the mother of all party workers. Your guts, your kindness for humanity is an ideal for all of us and we but follow suit. Your face and also the face of the late father at the time of leaving the house still afresh in our minds today, still we remember. Now, your photo, published in the paper ['Andhra Jyoti'] revived in our memories your blossoming face of those days. This photo has been seen by lakhs and even crores today, mother. Your earnest desires, your life-long struggle which are expressly known to us and we wish to spend a moment in your warm bosom, but the repressive state would not allow it.

At first, after seeing your photo in 'Andhra Jyoti', mother we composed a poem but failing to send the same to you, we published it in the party magazines which you may not be able to see or receive. Mother, we made a promise to you, that we would wipe out tears not only from your eyes but from the eyes of all the mothers. Whatever, we have reiterated at the time of leaving the house, we are continuing the same. You both not only gave birth to us, but also shaped our lives to become progressive thinkers with a responsibility towards society, and while so what to read and which way to think, and they are best methods and efforts by you and how could we forget the same!

To make grow our family from an orthodox brahmin family to a way of life of progressive family, you both laboured hard and it is a fact to be accepted dear mother! We are not having only blood and umbilical relations with you but our bondage is of hearts, thoughts and emotions and we have filled our hearts with these reminiscences of you always with a new way of

thinking. The role of parents of Shivaji, Bhagat Singh, and the role of the mother of Che Guevara was read by us in the books but the same we have realised personally in our lives from you, for almost twenty years of our lives. We spent much of our time with you at home. When you were alone, busy with domestic jobs, we tried to help in the same and though you humbly tried to dissuade us from the same, but we tried to help our financially affected family, though you tried to hide it from us. That both of you how tactfully, managed the show in front of the friends and relatives is never to be forgotten. Mother! For our convenience and for our development, you have done the same as other such parents would have done to their wards, and this is not our concept Mother! If that would have been so, the materialistic thoughts would not have been developed in us instead of our family's conventional and orthodox ideals. We would not have grown ourselves as Marxists. Father being an atheist with socialist ideology and yourself keeping away from the superstitions, supported him. You have also grasped the ideals of father, and we have taken the mantle from you and also from him and we would follow the same till our last breath Mother! This is not only an assurance, but also a belief and commitment, a hope and essence of our lives, Mother!

Mother! When the state repression is not allowing us not only to see you but also to write a letter to you, the only way left in front of us, is to write this open letter to you. Amongst the two of us, one had to leave the house in 1977 and the other in 1980, and never could be able to come to the house again and the fact is well and better known to the ruling classes or rulers, they brought on our village raids, to search the last tile and brick of our house, destroying and breaking them, and this democracy could well be understood by us. Not only our house, many other houses of the activists were destroyed and razed to the ground to spread the panic and terror, but in spite of all this, revolutionary war could not be stopped or contained, mother! That is why they are bringing new forms of attacks on the people.

As you have narrated to us the tappings on our doors from the time of Razakars and which till been has never stopped. The same routine has been hereditarily begotten from Nizam to our modern day democratic rulers, and they are still continuing the same tappings on our doors. The new SI who came to our village and the old SP who joined in our district never leave their khaki culture, and how can they Mother! If they could be effected or instilled to democracy or to progressive ideas or ideology, how could they continue in their stinking khakees? The government of the erstwhile nawabs or today's rulers, they would continue to tap the doors. That is why the call you have made along with other mothers of this country '...sons, I Never forget revolution' and that call if becomes a general slogan and a clarion call, the tapping on our doors would cease forever. Even after revolution the call of cultural revolution was given in China. And you know why the ruling classes are trembling. The landlord (govt) says that the path we have chosen is not correct and the govt wants us to return to mainstream (their path).

The people of Andhra Pradesh may be our leaders at Kannaguram or Krishnavenamma.... And till now, we have not faced any setback in absence of people's cooperation, but we faced set-backs due to our faulty strategy, resulting in losses, we lagged behind in political and ideological struggles. We have yet to overcome the loss completely. We have initiated the

required steps now. Though people could be mobilised for general struggles, but we have initiated the same against the state so that they can jump into the flames of the struggle. We have delayed the same while introducing some non-violable tactics, which caused losses, are now being corrected and we have to start these reforms in strategy to make up the gap of at least ten years, which we lagged. The moribund, claustrophobia and suffocation... This is our own fault Mother!

The same could have been initiated in Dandakaranya—that is how to counter-attack and also framing the draft for alternative people's govt. And while in the way of forming the Revolutionary people's committees at various levels, we have taken initiative of. This is called 'Janatana Sarkar' in the local parlance. This is the rudimentary democratic set up of the New Democratic government. Now, we are in the security of the people, stating proudly in the encirclement of 'Janatana Sarkar' challenging the ruling classes, Mother. Thus the future belongs to the people.

The squads, platoons and the leadership faced set-back on the other side of Godavari, has been compensated in Dandakaranya but we are also thinking to spread the struggle through Telengana and to western ghats, Mother! In this way we would form Telengana, not as non-Maoist one, but a Maoist Telengana. The physical conditions are not in favour of ruling classes as seen from the newspapers and dailies everyday. To exist, they are trying hard because, there is nothing left for the people from the parliamentary ruling parties and who would meet their end in this way.

Mother! you know about Chandra-babu Naidu. He sabotaged every movement of the people. Not only worked against us. But, on each and every opportunity, whenever he gets a chance, he poses that he is struggling on behalf of the people and he is always on their side. They are there to deceive the masses and recently he warned the ruling Congress about starting a mass movement, if the prices of diesel and petrol are not lowered. But still there are no such activities. He also published statistics of world prices of petrol vis-a-vis India. Not only in our state Andhra Pradesh, if he would start this movement including the people of the whole country for lowering the prices of petroleum and petroleum products, people of the country would have lauded him mostly. During the elections if the prices of these products would not be bridled, as the prestige and prospects of the ruling Congress would be at stake and they also came forward and lowered the prices of petroleum and diesel by some 5-10% to throw cold water on the efforts of opposition. Whatever their names- Chandra, Indra or Manmohan, all are the birds of the same feather and they are against the people and their welfare.

Mother! in 1969 you can perhaps, recall for separate Telengana state, we burnt a bus in our village and went to jail. There was police firing in front of our school in 1969. But see, the separate Telengana has not yet to be materialised. This very slogan is being used still for gaining votes. Everybody today is singing the song of Telengana. This is the reality and heartlessness of the ruling parties. Telengana of 1945, of 1969- 71-even after that of 1977-99, and our experience about this struggle had gone sea-change. After acquiring experience of

Telengana struggle, which has increased four-fold, in class and quality, we could have become able to establish a Janatana Sarkar and not only this, we could prove in front of the masses, the form of people's alternative government and the real meaning of the people's govt. Marxism is the only zenith of world's working class and we can vouchsafe for it. We lag behind in translating the same despite having so much favourable situations such as world's present financial crisis, depression in markets, and the analysis we made from Marx to Mao and we may miss the train for the movement and as we know that these struggles would give birth to a class of new generation of leaders of people. Mother! you are also well aware of the historical revolutionary process. Yesterday in the BBC news the annual performance of Andhra Pradesh was discussed. Though our struggle is one year-old, the drowning of greyhounds in Balimela incident and while the govt. has not taken this as an isolated incident and on the contrary, voiced on the problems on the borders of Andhra-Orissa and tightened it to face the same in suitable manner. Everybody is aware of their utterings as you know. But the ruling classes generally view these incidents serially, but in spite of this their bureaucracy, did not dare to touch these various angles of revolutionary struggles, they realised these were the symbols of coming revolution! Social conditions, consciousness of the masses though being analysed by the ruling classes, but they have got no face to face the people, thinking that these are the incidents happening in a place, community and class, caste or creed. A local problem pertaining to a district, or state but they are not ready to face it outrightly (Green Hunt Operation as at that time not started yet—Translator). We are taking on these problems and start a struggle on people's problems, if not today but tomorrow. Some struggles might be abandoned abruptly and temporarily, but the same would have impact on the lives of the people permanently and also on the present day politics. This struggle may occur in a single state, the effect would be countrywide, and this is the principle of dialectical materialism.

Therefore, Mother! We are not only two, but crores of Kotannas and Venannas (Koti & Venu, names of two brothers their mother would call—Translator) have come out from the womb of this revolutionary struggle and still coming out. The future of the country is in the safe hands of these revolutionary youth. The news of the death of the father has been informed by one of our friends in a letter, and this solaced our hearts and wiped tears from our eyes. The letter stated "An individual who was committed to his ideals lifelong, a, great leader, as your father was, is no more. His genre is over." The day our father shook hands with me, on the day of my departure, our friends and colleagues poured praise on him though, but we could not come to you to wipe out tears running through eyes as because, the state is there in between, Mother! Not only this, our compatriots who walk day and night along with us, and who dedicated their lives in serving the people, when killed, thousands thronged to wipe out—the tears from the eyes of their mothers. In the same way, there are thousands or even lakhs of people with you today. My mother when we have trodden this path, not only for you mother, but for other crores of mothers, sisters, sisters-in-law and all the oppressed women, who feel proud of us. Not only you, we also feel proud for joining this struggle of emancipation.

Mother! you have asked and enquired about our health. Nothing to worry. We are on the move, day in and day out. But as you see that we are not walking like earlier period. But we feel pain for not being able to help those poor tribals who were with us before, but left the villages due to compulsion of encirclement and repression by the Salwa Judum people. The forcible camp-living by deceit with rumours by the state govt. and salwa judum made them to live in make shift camps set by them, without amenities and their children are dying every day without proper, medical care. We could not help them with our medicines, though with minimal resource, we could not due to hurdles put forth by this devilish govt. with the help of the para-military forces. In the situation, we created pressure on them to give some attention towards this aspect. We are informing this to you as our mother, but to all the other mothers to whom we think them as our mothers. Mother! we survived in this world from the milk of your breast. Before our birth, three earlier elder brothers breathed their last in dearth of milk from you before they opened their eyes as babies, and about which you have narrated several times to us. Therefore, the Bushes, Raman Singhs and Rajasekhars, whoever they might be, who made the children of Iraq, Argentina or Bangladesh suffer milkless childhood, we hate them, and we feel angry towards them with reddened eyes. But we do not hate individuals per se, but for the class for which they are supporting and this is the moot point of our struggles. This is the only yardstick.

Our way is not correct and practicable, so said by many, and always they pour criticism on us. Also there are many people who walked with us, worked with us, unable to continue, felt frustrated, lagged, left us, might have denounced our path due to all this. They even became anti to us, and even sided with the enemy. Some, became fearful of roaring seas, high tide of rivers, surrendered, but we put our tents on the banks of Godavari and looked straight into the eyes of the future, my Mother! Revolution is not playing a game or embroidery sewing. It always teaches us iron discipline, on every moment, continuous study and learning, always attentive and alert, sharp wit and brain tactful and polite in speech. Any democratic atmosphere, without having humbleness, healthy human relations, fraternal affection, respect to each other, give and take policies, may be continued for a short period but not for long Mother! Therefore, some leave us in the mid-way but we and our people are continuing our journey towards our goal. In the process we are responding and attending the calls of so many mothers like you, and also sisters, brothers and fathers of this country.

You know, some of our activists laid down their lives in this war and you know names of some of them and even from the names advertised by the state through papers. The state playing as anywhere, its cruel role of mowing them down. Whatever it might be the majority of the people being with us, if we faced set back at one place we are continuing our struggle in another place and in the meanwhile the exploitative classes finding no other alternative left creating hurdles and hardships in the name of law but the struggles are spreading just like waves and prairie fires are aflame with a single spark.

Mother, Sankranti festival is in the offing. The rangavallis are put by ladies in front yards of the village houses but these cultural habits are fast eroding in the influence of imperialistic

culture. Our old festive cookies with rice, milk and molasses, berries, and other fruits, street fires have become old now. Now the imperialistic fast and junk foods from multinationals have taken their place. Our festivities are changed and also old cultural activities and in exchange our new generations were influenced by west. We are fighting against this poisonous culture on these festive occasions, you might shed tears for our absence, 'O' mother, we know it. Not only you mother, if you go to any village, district and state, or any place or language group, everywhere in India, it is a custom to say by the mothers and sisters of that place and of the language group that we had expected you for the festival and put some cookies and fruits into hands and it is the custom in every house-hold. This festive food is served in our country everywhere but with motherly and sisterly affection. We eat, but we cannot get the same as used to get in our own houses from the hands of our own mothers, and it is not our doing. Not only we, other activists also think in the same way.

Mother, now we will stop. There are never-ending stories of revolutionary struggle to be written. Though there is already much written literature on this. Mother, are you still continuing your habit of reading after meals? Yes, you have to read compulsorily these accounts. You have to read these new histories being created by thousands of your sons and daughters these days.

Lastly, we request you to excuse mother our delaying in giving our reply. We are sorry for that, only due to circumstances and repression of the state, we have received your news belatedly causing belated reply from us. The main culprit is the state, and you ask them for the reason. After receiving your information, we were making out, the way to communicate with you and the means. And we found the last resort in the shape of this open letter. When our father was alive, to one of his letters, we did not write a reply. But when we met later, he made us to realise, why we should immediately give reply to a letter. Till today we are following it in toto. We joined the Party, the leader at that time Seetharamaiah sir, had taught us to reply and answer every political attack on the party and also to reply to the representations from the people in time. We are trying till date to stick to that principle. The ideology of our party leaders, the writings of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Mao and their running of the state administration teach the same to us. Not only Satyam, Chandra, Maina, Tara but all other activists who are with us desired to express their greetings to you. They did not forget your patience and guts in which way and form our reply would reach you and when and for that your mental strain might have enhanced due to this delay, and there is not an iota of doubt in this. Therefore, again requesting you to excuse for the delay we are closing this letter here itself.

The lights in your eyes.... The children in your laps?

KOTI-venu

January 1st, 2009

[Translated from original Telugu by S M Rao]