

LETTER

**TEN MAOISTS!**

About ten months ago, ten persons whose homes are in the Berua Gram Panchayet No I of West Medinipur Sadar block were arrested in Pune because they were suspected to be Maoists engaged in nefarious activities against the state. The draconian UAPA was applied against them.

One of the arrested Ananda Mahato, lost his father just on the eve of the last assembly polls. Ananda's father was killed by the joint forces brought to the Jangalmahal area by the then Left Front Government of West Bengal. Those who were arrested in Pune were besides Ananda, Sushanta Mahato, Ajit Mahato, Nripen Mahato, Rabi Mahato, Satyajit Rana, Rudra Mahato, Rabi Hansda, Kadu Hembram and Pintu Mahato. No sane person would believe that these sons of ordinary peasant households had gone to Maharashtra in order to organise Maoist operations there.

The fact of the matter is that they were no longer able to bear the combined tyranny of the joint forces and the CPI(M)-led harrads, and went to Pune to find means of livelihood. Right now, Mamata Banerjee is maintaining the legacy of Buddhadev Bhattacharya and the joint forces continue to flex their muscles in jangalmahal. The harrad bahini of the CPI(M) has been replaced by the bhairab bahini of the Trinamul Congress. So, nothing is reasonably to be expected from her government as far as the fate of these ten prisoners, now lodged in Pune Central Jail, is concerned. At the recently held conference of the *Bandi Mukti Committee* (Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners) held at Students' Hall, Kolkata on 27-28 November, Samir Ray, a lawyer and civil rights activist of 'Medinipur' described the plight of these prisoners. The civil liberty groups working in Maharashtra should immediately take up the cause of them.

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