

# **COMMITTEE FOR THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS**

**185/3 Fourth floor, Zakir Nagar, New Delhi**

15/05/09

**Defend the right to freedom of expression and political opinion!**

**Release all the political prisoners who have been booked for exercising their right to not vote in Yamunanagar!**

**Condemn the attempts of the government to foist false cases and negative profiling of the political activists!**

The Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners (CRPP) take strong exception to the manner in which the police officials have resorted to a witch hunt of people who have exercised their right to not vote and had politically exhorted to the people of many villages in the Chhachhroli areas in Yamunanagar under the banner of Shivalik Jansangharsh Manch. These people have only resorted to exercising their democratic right in a democratic country that India claims to be to ask the people not to vote. And this is a constitutionally guaranteed right. To indulge in sensationalism and hostile profiling of the people involved in the campaign as anti-nationals and hence deserved to be charged under several sections such as 124-A, 153-B, 34 IPC, 125 RP Act of year 1951 smacks of nothing less than outright prejudice and pre-meditated attempts from that arm of the state who supposed to uphold the law so that justice prevails.

The state police and the CIA have launched themselves into a hyperbole and declared prize money of Rs. 11000 for anyone who would furnish information about the Maoists anywhere in the state. This again is a desperate attempt from the side of the state to deal with a political issue as a mere "law and order" problem. It also defies all reason and logic to understand this aggressive witch hunt indulged in by the state police and the CIA depicting the whole attempt to go on a poll boycott campaign through posters as a major threat to the national interest! The responsible person that he is, the SP Vikas Arora and his deputy Mukesh Kumar should explain how Shivalik Jansangharsh Manch is 'anti-national' when they resort to a campaign among the people to not vote as the local representatives has completely failed in protecting the aspirations of the common people. Does that mean talking for the interests of the people, the common citizen of this country, tantamount to being 'anti-national'? The responsible and learned men in khaki should explain. It is interesting to note that immediately after the arrests the police are quick to add that they have increased the surveillance while the SDM Bilaspur has held meetings with the villagers and assured them full protection. Full protection for people from whom? From those who will talk in favour of their interests?

The act of the police and the government of Haryana defy all logic of a democratic polity. It exposes the worst face of a system which is scared of its own image. In a metro like Delhi, funded NGOs and pro-establishment organisations like the Youth For Equality have been campaigning for the right to not vote making a song and dance of the section 49 (O). Nobody bothered to arrest them. No one talked about any 'anti-national' designs and mind you there was no price money also.

When the poorest of the poor people resort to their democratic right and come forward to assert themselves the government and all its arms takes law and procedures to their hands and indulge in the worst kinds of arbitrariness. It is high time that all democratic people should stand up and expose this double standards and demand justice.

The CRPP calls upon the Haryana government and police to immediately stop the witch hunt of people having political opinions that might have a note of dissent with the status quo. Historically Haryana State has used Sedition charges to suppress voices of dissent. Around 50 peasants were charged under sedition in the Kandela Peasant Movement of Bhartiya Kisan Union during the Chautala regime in 2003. In 2007, 9 persons were charged under the same act while demanding residential plots on the Panchayat Village Common land. In the same year, 11 students were charged under the same act when they were protesting against Private

University Bill. All these cases were proved false in the Court. The present arrested Poonam was also targeted in that case and was acquitted only in the previous month. Now she was staying at her parental house while again being arrested by Police after a media hype of Election boycott call given by Shivalik Jan Sangharsh Manch in Chhachroli region and the alleged Maoist presence there.

In the past 20 -25 days the police have arrested 14 people from different places to plot a major story. These include Poonam(24) r/o Brhaman Khera, Bintu(26), Charan Singh (22) r/o Bhund Kalan and Mukesh. They were arrested in the sequence: Poonam on 20 April from Brhamkhera, Bintu and Charan Singh on 9 May from Bhund kalan, Mukesh from Bhund Kalan on 10 May. This was followed by the arrests of Subhash and Dinesh, from Khijrabad Anaj Mandi. All of them are being portrayed as Maoists. Yet another five more have been arrested from Jind. The arrested are Rajesh, Ved Pal, Tilku, Sanjiv, Devinder.

The CRPP once again demand an immediate stop to all such arrests and framing of political activists of the Haryana government not to say the unconditional release of all the activists who have been part of the vilification campaign of the state and police. We demand all the forces fighting for democratic rights to protest against this undemocratic, authoritarian and fascist designs of the Haryana government.

In Solidarity,



Gurucharan Singh  
President

Amit Bhattacharyya  
Secretary General

SAR Geelani  
Vice President



Rona Wilson  
Secretary Public Relations